



Colussi Group Case study



Colussi Group boost performance by upgrading to Videojet Thermal Transfer Overprinters

Colussi Group is a privately-owned Italian company operating in the food sector. Since being founded in 1911, the traditional company has remained committed to its constant pursuit of excellence. As a result, the now well established business has found great success in the quality food sector across Europe and the world.

Its activities include the production and sale of a complete range of high-quality products including pastas, rice, baked products and pastries.

Colussi Group has seven manufacturing and packaging sites across Italy, producing a total of over 200,000 tons of finished products per year. Each Colussi brand (**Colussi, Misura, Agnesi, Flora, Saporì Siena 1832**) is individually recognized by consumers for quality and variety, which in turn has brought the company much success in Italy as well as more than 60 countries worldwide.

The Group's growing presence abroad serves as tangible evidence of a positive development trend, which is the result of innovative products and the appetite for strategic growth management.



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Paolo Pennisi, Group Engineering Director



Addressing challenging production needs

Colussi Group undertakes a demanding production schedule in a continuous cycle of 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. At one plant alone there are 8 ovens and 21 lines, demonstrating the high performance environment Colussi Group currently manage.

Unexpected downtime is a big problem. This means reliability and efficiency play an important role in the selection process of packaging line equipment and printers.

The packaging of a given product can quickly and frequently change due to the number of products packaged for different brands, and not just Colussi Group's own brands but also those of third-party companies. Colussi's core product range most commonly use bags, flexible film and cases. **As a consequence, Colussi have been driven towards using thermal transfer overprinters (TTO) for bags and film, labelers for cartons and all secondary packaging, as well as some continuous ink jet printers.**

Complying with food labelling standards

All products manufactured by Colussi must comply with standard food labelling regulations and therefore most codes being printed contain alphanumeric characters and bar codes.

The product codes consist of:

- production lot
- expiry date
- internal identifier code (plant and production line)
- exact time of production

"Our products must comply with industry regulations, so it is necessary for them to contain a code specifying the production lot and expiry date.

Since we work with mass distribution outlets and retailers, we must also meet the logistical requirements set by them, so we normally use bar codes for the automated management of our supplies for secondary packaging. In order to optimize our internal organisation, we have introduced an internal identifier code into our standard codes, as well as the exact time of production/coding. In this way we can always go back to a given shift and production line, and can check any situation," explains

Paolo Pennisi, Group Engineering Director.



Keeping the lines up and running

Despite having rigorous internal quality measures to prevent coding errors, Colussi Group understand that removing as much human intervention as possible and making operation simple would be an added benefit to their QC procedures and help safeguard supply chain traceability.

Colussi Group approached Videojet with the aim of improving equipment availability and service quality. **Their primary objective was to improve the overall reliability and performance of their TTO printing equipment.** In 2007, they tested five TTO machines from five different companies to determine their performance. Following rigorous trials, Colussi Group decided the Videojet Dataflex offered greater reliability, a good quality/price ratio, and better technical and commercial response time on a day-by-day basis. As a result 24 Videojet Dataflex printers have been installed since.

"We have received significant advantages with the new Videojet machines... the main benefits are that we have made gains in the quality of coding and thus the number of products labeled off-line is greatly reduced. This results in a saving of time and therefore of costs because it reduces the amount of waste, which is one of our goals at the corporate level. In addition we reduced downtime on the line thanks to the immediate availability of Videojet technicians and the telephone support, which provides us with quick answers with little waiting."

The operators were highly satisfied with the new Videojet printers, describing them as very easy to use. The unique CLARiTY™ interface was a contributing factor as its bright color touch screen and WYSIWIG display assisted the production team in keeping the machine's availability and performance under control and at its peak, consequently improving the quality of the product's coding. The added benefit of Videojet's built-in Code Assurance software, which reduces operator errors, ticked all the boxes for Colussi Group.

"We greatly appreciate Videojet's spirit of collaboration and the ability to always reach people who are available and ready to meet our needs. The machines are very reliable and their performance meets our high standards. We also acknowledge the high degree of innovation involved in the process."

Even the best technology requires some level of maintenance to ensure the smooth running and reliability of the machine. Colussi Group were keen to take advantage of a Videojet maintenance contract as it gave them complete peace of mind that their lines would be running at maximum availability.

"We have a Videojet maintenance contract on our machines, and this was one of the important factors in our choice. It offers clear advantages that allow us to save time when managing critical situations, as well as to reduce line downtime, thus providing us with gains in terms of reliability"

What's next for Colussi Group and Videojet?

The Colussi Group's future is full of new challenges, as well as ambitious development plans to allow the Group to increase its presence in markets with high potential by leveraging its 'Italianity', its expertise in the field of food processing, and the principles which have always inspired it.

Videojet are proud to be considered a small part of that future to help the company meet its four core values:

Quality
Innovation
Integrity
Respect



"We are interested in seeing other innovations from Videojet, such as the new 9550 labelling machines, so we can understand more about what is available on the market that could suit our business needs"

The Colussi Group is committed to ensuring productivity, efficiency and competitiveness, as well as to promoting and spreading the Italian culinary tradition beyond the country.

100 years of history attest to and outline the profile of a great Italian food group: Gruppo Colussi.

Call **0870 242 1759**
Email **uksales@videojet.com**
or visit **www.videojet.co.uk**

Videojet Technologies Ltd.
4 & 5 Ermine Centre, Lancaster Way, Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire PE29 6XX / UK

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