



## Autobag helps Cardinal Health develop automatic medication dispenser and reduce labour requirements by 80%

Cardinal Health develops solutions for many aspects of the medical marketplace and is committed to revolutionising the way medication and pharmacy supplies are distributed within healthcare facilities.

### The Problem

Company	:	<b>Cardinal Health</b>
Product	:	Medication packs
Machinery	:	Custom OneStep™

Cardinal Health has recently developed a centralised pharmacy dispensing system called 'Pyxis Homerus<sup>®</sup>' which stores medication, retrieves it upon request, packages it into a unit dose and applies a bar code label. The systems are fully integrated and serve large central pharmacies supporting major health institutions.

Previous automatic dispensing systems add a final manual step to the dispensing process by removing individual patient medications that have been dispensed and placing them manually into a zip lock bag. Cardinal Health wanted to avoid this additional step of using manual labour and instead automate the whole process, however they only had a six-month timeframe to complete the project.

### The Autobag<sup>®</sup> Solution

Cardinal Health approached Automated Packaging Systems (APS) in search of an automated bagging solution that would easily integrate with their new dispensing system and could be manufactured within the challenging timeframe. The engineers at APS worked closely with Cardinal to design a flexible, custom engineered packaging solution that was based around the Autobag OneStep 'print and pack' system.

**Thomas Tudor, Manager of the Machine Automation Group for Cardinal Health** comments, "The Custom Engineering and Integration group at APS were great. They are experienced experts who easily understood my application and worked closely with me to develop a solution unique to my requirements. I knew their product quality was excellent, and was pleased to discover that their system integration capabilities were outstanding."

The new system operates at 30 bags per minute and dispenses the individual patient's medications into a bag overprinted with the patient details. The bag is then automatically heat-sealed and detached into a dispensing bin.

### The Result

Benefits of the new automated system include a significant reduction in staff required to support the centralised pharmacy operation. "Some customers have gone from ten pharmacy technicians down to two thanks to this new system," says Tudor.

The system will dispense up to 1000 medications per hour, 300 different medications, and up to 20 medications per bag.

Everything about the patient order is pulled and packaged automatically with comprehensive information stored in the bar code and printed directly onto the bag for enhanced security.

The in-line printing also reduces costs by eliminating the need for a separate label printing and insertion operation.

Cardinal Health has seen rapid market acceptance of its new Pyxis Homerus automated pharmacy dispensing system and expects sales to grow significantly because of the productivity and patient safety improvements it offers. The new system allows health care providers to streamline their operations, reduce costs and save time.



A CASE STUDY IN THE BENEFITS OF AUTOMATED PACKAGING

machines

materials

service

s y s t e m s   a d v a n t a g e