

Mochi Manufacturer Scales Business with Markoprint®

Little Moons has been making gelato wrapped in a sweet, soft dough since 2008. The specialty dessert product originated as a Japanese specialty - made by steaming and pounding rice flour until it has a chewy texture. Little Moons then innovated the product by marrying it with a gelato filling.

Several years after entering the market, Little Moons branched out into retail, securing an agreement to sell its mochi balls in Whole Foods Market. Within three months of launch, Little Moons had become the retailer's best-selling ice cream.

With retail sales booming, it became apparent that the company needed a more efficient coding method than using date guns with stickers.

"Sales growth was strong, resulting in the need for a more efficient method to apply date codes to cartons," explains Little Moons founder Howard Wong. "We chose the RF Lite, an entry-level carton and sleeve coding system, which fit Little Moons' requirements perfectly.

"In opting for the RF Lite, we were effectively realizing our dream of driving the cost out of offline coding, without driving out the quality. We wanted a coding solution that was easy to buy, easy to set up and easy to use, bringing the benefits of automated marking within our reach.

The RF Lite takes flat cardboard sleeves or cartons, feeds them through a printer to be coded, and stacks them again ready for use. It can handle pack shapes and sizes ranging anywhere from 40x70mm to 300x200mm and can be easily adjusted to swap between sizes. With a linear speed of 60m/min, up to 250 of the company's 8" long packs can be printed per minute, all from a machine with a tiny footprint of less than 2 ft x 2ft.



In addition, Little Moons particularly liked the small footprint of the RF Lite. Overall, it wasn't the cheapest machine, but it represented the best value. Plus, it allowed the staff to code batches of cartons on demand.

The RF Lite uses Markoprint®, a clean coding inkjet technology which is ideal for a high-end product such as Little Moons, as it creates clear, crisp codes.

Little Moons wanted a high-quality code that wouldn't detract from the overall appearance of the box. The code also had to be in a compact font and accurately placed, as the coding area was very small. A continuous inkjet printer struggles to produce very fine, small print, as the drops get too close to one another and you end up with a mess. High resolution Markoprint®, on the other hand, is in its element when producing small fonts with clarity and precision.



Markoprint® X1JET



Little Moons is currently coding about 1000 retail cartons per day using the RF Lite. This is the same volume as it was coding using the old handgun system, but it takes a fraction of the time.

Most importantly, the RF Lite represents a future-proof coding system - it has the capacity to code twice or even three times as many cartons as at present. This means Little Moons is safe in the knowledge that if it fulfils its ambitions of growing retail to 50% of its business, coding won't be a limiting factor.