

PowerDry enhances label adhesion for Yards Brewery's bottles

A brewery making the leap from local to regional gains an air technology edge in their newly expanded facility

Graduating from successful local microbrewery to becoming a major regional brewery was an important turning point for Yards Brewing in Philadelphia, PA. However, the expansion brought new challenges as well as increased opportunities.

The company began as a hobby shared by two college friends and grew from a garage operation offering just one ale into a full-fledged microbrewery with a range of brews in 1994. After first going pro, founding partners Tom Kehoe and Jon Bovit initially crafted cask-conditioned ales using a tiny, three-barrel brewing system in a small facility in Philadelphia. They capitalized on the city's history, offering brews based on recipes from Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Franklin, and George Washington as well as a keg-only stout beer. Their products, including lines such as ESA (Extra special Ale); Philly pale ale; IPA (India Pale Ale); Brawler; Entire Porter and The Old Bart, were a hit with local bars, restaurants and beer retailers. The company's popularity soon taxed their modest equipment and their initial modest garage-sized space. Over the past 18 years, the company made a series of moves into increasingly larger facilities.

At the same time that demand for Yards' products grew, so did the company's need for better bottling technology. Bottles were moving through the bottling line without being dried first, and the resulting wet bottles meant a high rejection rate due to the labels not sticking to the bottle; and/or not getting them on straight. The rejection rate varied with humidity: as high as 25% during the summer but significantly lower during winter months. When rejected bottles were recirculated through the labeler, extra time and labor were required as brewery employees had to peel off the partially applied labels before putting the bottles through the line a second time.



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An ITW Company **PRODUCTS**

Paxton Products, an ITW Company
10125 Carver Road
Cincinnati, OH 45242

1-800-441-7475
sales@paxtonproducts.com
www.paxtonproducts.com

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Yards contacted Evco Industries was about supplying the glue for the bottle labels. Evco, a Paxton distributor, suggested a customized PowerDry solution which fit the brewery's needs and the size of their operations. A Spyder version of Paxton's PowerDry system ensures that the 110 bottles which move through the production line per minute are thoroughly dry so that the Yards' two bottle labels, one on the neck and the other on the body, adhere properly to the glass.

Yards Plant Engineer Daniel Dolan was impressed with the ease of installation of the Paxton system as well as the results it delivers. Dolan states, "We installed the blower and enclosure underneath the accumulation table, with a top outlet. The spyder manifold was positioned above the single line conveyor, just before the bottles enter the labeling machine. It takes up almost no space at all—which is pretty impressive considering how effective it is. We used to



deal with a lot of wasted time and aggravation from the wet bottle problem. I wasn't sure if that problem could be solved without an enormous and expensive piece of equipment but the PowerDry System dries them comprehensively." Dolan was also impressed at the PowerDry system's low maintenance demands: "A lot of times, when you get more technology in a plant, you have to pay for it with more work keeping the system running. But the PowerDry doesn't create any extra hassles like that. This system is great, even better than we expected."



For more information on Power Dry, [click here](#) or scan this QR code with your smart phone.

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