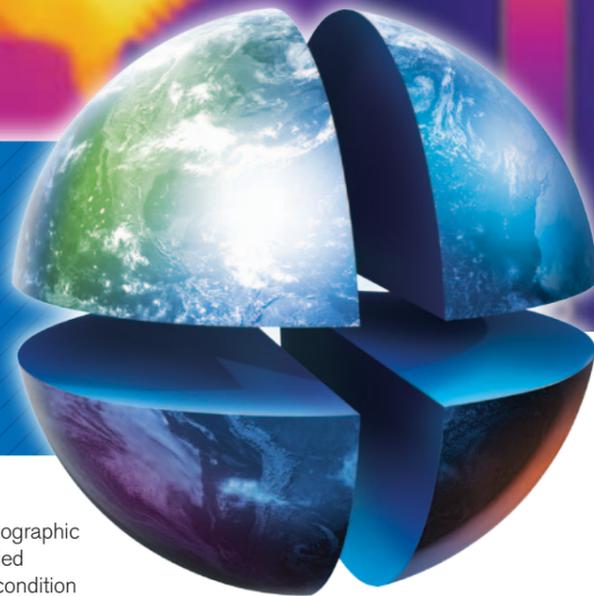


THE RECIPE FOR EFFICIENCY

CUSTOMERS OF FOOD AND BEVERAGE COMPANIES ARE INCREASINGLY SEEKING SHORTER TURNAROUND TIMES FOR EVER MORE COMPLEX PRODUCT PORTFOLIOS, TO RESPOND TO VARYING MARKET DEMANDS. SO MANUFACTURERS NEED ALL THE TOOLS THEY CAN GET, TO MAINTAIN PRODUCTION EFFICIENCY AND MANAGE COSTS.



Dave Manning-Ohren
Condition Monitoring
Manager, ERIKS

Condition Monitoring tools, for example, used to their full capability, can significantly improve efficiency. A thermal imaging camera is capable of everything from detecting a damaged link in a drive chain generating extra friction and heat, to evaluating the effectiveness of doors and seals.

Thermography plays a vital role in monitoring product quality in food production because of the wide variety of temperature-controlled operations involved. As a non-contact method for monitoring and controlling 'temperature critical' products, it is invaluable in the control of cooking or sterilisation processes. It is also becoming increasingly important throughout the distribution chain for perishable food materials, and for temperature control of frozen and fresh food to help maintain product quality and reduce safety risks.

Heat casts light

Thermal imaging cameras measure infrared radiation, then represent temperatures with

colours on an LCD monitor. A thermographic survey by an experienced and certified operator is a swift and inexpensive condition monitoring option, which can save thousands.

A recent thermal imaging survey by **ERIKS** at the Coors brewery in Burton cost less than £1,000, yet highlighted potential savings of around £60,000 per annum from a relatively modest investment in repair work.

Optical Gas Imaging cameras also use thermographic technology, to detect leaks – safely scanning thousands of components per shift, with zero downtime. Because gases are opaque in the infrared wavelength, the cameras can 'see' the leak, and a trained technician with a high-end camera can detect more than 20 different toxic, explosive and flammable gases – often including those normally difficult to detect, such as carbon monoxide.

Efficiency in store

Sharper management of maintenance, repair and operations (MRO) procurement and stores activity can also make significant improvements in plant efficiency and economy. Accessible, well-organised stores

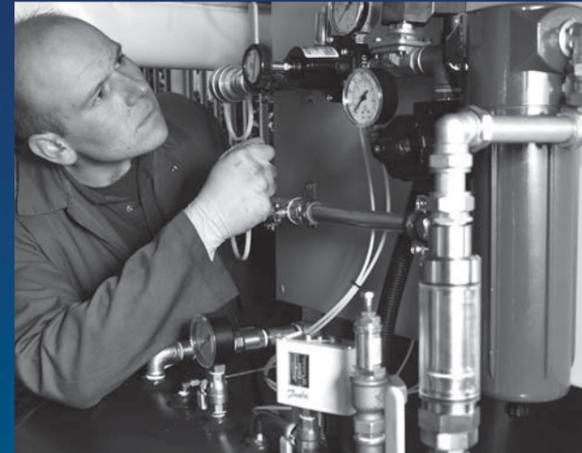
keep the factory floor running smoothly, because engineers can quickly find the equipment they need. A well-organised store is also easier to manage because stock replacement requirements are more visible.

ERIKS recently helped a major food manufacturer reduce MRO costs while increasing productivity. Their paper-based stores management system was replaced with a paperless software solution, and barcoding enabled the 7,500 stock items to be accurately traced. The streamlined system also capitalised on the data gathered to deliver a flow of highly useful management information.

The above examples highlight some of the ways plant engineers can reduce total cost of ownership. By partnering with an experienced solutions provider with expertise in a range of technologies, food and beverage manufacturers can maintain product quality and variety in this challenging economic climate, while still managing costs.

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