

SMI chooses the Agr PPT3000 for validation

SMI has selected Agr International to provide pressure testing equipment for their quality management and testing program. The Agr PPT3000 Packaging Pressure tester will enable SMI to qualify bottles created in their design center and ensure that they meet pressure strength and volume expansion design goals.



Unlike Agr's typical PPT3000 user, SMI does not manufacture and/or fill bottles for commercial sale. SMI is one step up the supply chain, providing equipment and expertise to others to blow, fill and package PET containers.

Founded in the mid 70's by Luigi Nava, in the city of San Pellegrino Terme (BG) Italy, initially set up as a machine shop, SMI later began supplying shrink wrappers to the local packaging market. Over the years, they extended their business to include palletizers and conveying systems. Most recently, through SMI's Smiform division, they have expanded their product line to include rotary stretch blowmolders and filling systems. They offer a series of economical, ecologically friendly rotary stretch blowmolders with an output of

Right: The fully equipped laboratory is used by SMiform to qualify customer bottle designs as well as to test their SMiform blowmolding machines during final checkout. A number of Agr testing devices are used in this laboratory in addition to the PPT3000.

up to 36,000 bph. They also offer fully integrated systems under the Ecobloc® brand that combine blow molding, filling and capping into a single operation.

The PPT3000 is currently installed in SMI's central testing laboratory, co-located with their manufacturing facility and advanced technical design centre in San Giovanni Bianco (BG), Italy. In the design center, SMI engineers work with customers to create designs and graphic renderings of bottles to be produced. Once the design is

rendered and verified to be in accordance with the customer requirements, the container is further developed, enriched and turned into a detailed project. Prior to final sign-off on a container design, the Smiform staff rigorously analyses preforms and containers and subjects them to severe tests of quality control. The PPT 3000 is used extensively at this point of the design cycle to verify that the bottle design, meets pressure, volume expansion and the shelf-life expectations of the customer.

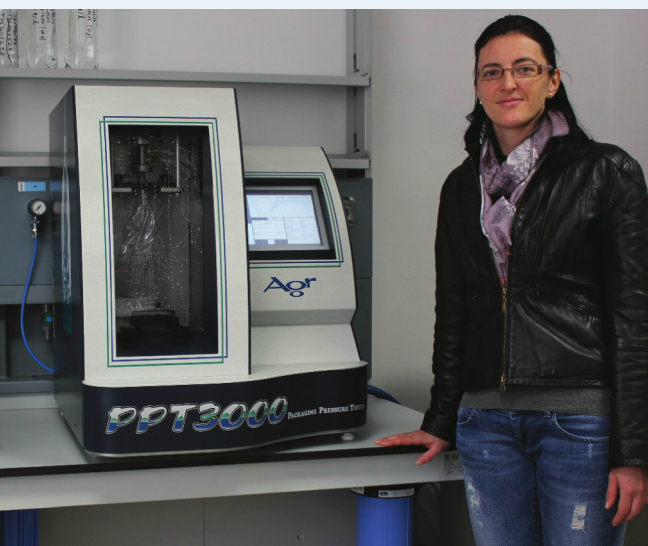




Above left: SMI corporate laboratory facilities



Above right: SMI corporate headquarters



Above
Erika Luiselli, SMI
Technical
Production
Department
Manager next to
the Agr PPT3000

According to Erika Luiselli, SMI Technical Production Department Manager, *“We are using the PPT3000 in a number of ways; to validate bottles produced in prototype molds to ensure they meet SMI Quality Specifications and to test our blow molding machines during final checkout in order to certify and guarantee that the bottles produced with these systems conform with what was prototyped by our customer at the initial stage of their project. Following qualification, results from the PPT3000 tests are submitted to the customer as part of final acceptance process.*

“In addition to machine and bottle qualification, SMI uses the PPT3000 to test the behaviour (expansion) of bottles during the filling processes. “This information is very useful during the design of containers that will be produced by our integrated blow-fill systems (ECOBLOC).”

In their quest for a new testing system, SMI personnel investigated a number of pressure testing options but in the end, selected the Agr PPT3000 for two reasons: 1) the prestige of the AGR PPT3000 brand, always considered as leader in the market with diverse capabilities and proven performance, 2) a local sales and service contact point with the Agr Italian location nearby to facilitate a prompt service response and swift spare parts availability. After sale support for Agr systems at SMI is provided by Agr Europa, SRL. Located in Montecchio Emilia (RE), this office provides sales and support customers in southern Europe, the Middle East and Africa.

“We think that the introduction of the Agr PPT3000 in our laboratories has brought considerable improvements in our daily testing activities, increased the level of accuracy and improved the time efficiency.” offered Luiselli.

The Agr PPT3000 is a workhorse for the PET packaging industry and is relied upon to manage bottle quality by major bottle

manufacturers and brand owners around the world. The PPT3000™ offers high-precision pressure, volume expansion testing capabilities for PET containers with the versatility to perform a number of standard and custom test profiles. Furthermore, in addition to traditional tests, the PPT3000 can also be used to provide immediate predicted shelf-life characteristics of individual PET containers for CO₂, O₂ or water loss, in a matter of 60 seconds.

“ *The SMI acquisition of an Agr’s PPT3000 has opened a new collaboration between our companies. Agr is always committed to provide the latest quality and process control instruments to our customers in order to improve and protect packaging performance. SMI’s PPT3000 was purchased with Agr’s Total Care program, an extended full-featured service package that provides several benefits including an extended warranty period for the product.* **”**

Davide Bartoli, Agr Service Manager / Regional Sales Engineer for Agr Europa, SRL.

Agr International Inc. develops and manufactures a full line of laboratory, on-line quality and process management devices for containers and similar products for the plastic and packaging industry. Agr products can be found in container manufacturing and filling operations around the world. The Agr headquarters and main manufacturing facility is located in Butler, PA, USA.

Contact: www.agrintl.com or <http://bit.ly/Agrppt3000>