

CASE FORMING/PACKING/SEALING



## CASING THE JOINT

Flexible and efficient case packing machinery steals the spotlight.

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**W**hile film noir heists and case packing innovations have little in common, those jewel thieves and packaging companies have some similar goals. Busy production lines in crowded workspaces need to work quickly to pack up the goods and get them out the door with as few hiccups as possible.

### The need for speed

Like a classic heist without a high speed chase, a packaging line without speedy equipment leaves a lot to be desired. A-B-C Packaging Machine Corporation ([abcpackaging.com](http://abcpackaging.com)) has just the machine for such lines. The Model 330T case erector/bottom sealer allows for high-speed, reliable case erecting and tape sealing. Its heavy, channel steel box frame construction, mechanical main drive and solid walking beam case transfer provide reliable operation with minimal wear and maintenance.

To add to its efficiency, the Model 330T automatically indexes case stacks into position for continuous case feed. The case infeed can run warped cases, hand-marked cases and cases with poor manufacturer's joints, making the Model 330T suitable for everyday production needs. To achieve cases that provide optimal packing and palletizing, cases are squared during transfer by the walking beam transport system and a dual belt conveyor maintains the square through tape sealing.

Keeping with its speedy packing, the Model 330T allows for speedy adjustments to the line. The no-tools changeover allows for extended case range from seven-inches long by 5.75-inches wide by three-inches high to a maximum of 22 3/4-inches long by 16-inches wide by 15-inches high. Operation is controlled by PLC electronics, which can be accessed through a touch screen operator panel.

### The getaway driver

Even the best burglars can't take more than they can move. High stakes robberies require innovation solutions. (Remember those Mini Coopers in *The Italian Job*?) Packaging lines often require just as innovative solutions to keep things running smoothly. AFA Systems Inc ([afasystemsinc.com](http://afasystemsinc.com)) has developed a rare gem with its one-of-a-kind case transporting system, the TR-QCP Transrector Robotic Case Packer. The TR-



The Model 330T case erector from ABC seals with tape at speeds up to 35 cases per minute.

QCP completes the case erection, loading, gluing and sealing process without the use of lugs and chains. A gantry robot picks and builds the case. Then, the case is secured to the robot's end effector and transferred through the rest of the process so it can be loaded, sealed and discharged. Because this method eliminates the lug and chain arrangements used on most case transporting systems, end users benefit from the reduction of components for simpler maintenance and fully automatic changeover.

Speaking of changeover, the TR-QCP provides quick and repeatable changer in less than two minutes. It boasts an ergonomic Flat Stack Magazine, which requires no adjustments when changes over case sizes.

### The trusted sidekick

A great heist team needs a second in command—every Clyde needs his Bonnie. So it makes sense that every packaging line needs a flexible and trusted machine to keep things moving even when the plot takes an unexpected twist. OYSTAR Group's ([oystargroup.com](http://oystargroup.com)), OYSTAR A+F brand offers just such a product. The SetLine Wrap-around Packer provides a variety of end-of-line packaging solutions for a wide range of products. The SetLine machine can pack cups, cup sets and various bottles into trays or cases and apply display presentation sleeves. It can also sleeve primary packs into multi-packs prior to packing them into trays or cases. The modular design allows the machine to be linked directly to filling equipment or used alone. Additionally, OYSTAR A+F supports integration so that SetLine can handle incoming products and trays and work with downstream components up to and including complete palletizing solutions. SetLine can be also combined with OYSTAR A+F Tray Erectors. The dual-axis robots used by SetLine allow it to run a variety of counts and formats for various materials such as paperboard, chipboard and corrugated materials.



◀◀ The TR-QCP Transrector Robotic Case Packer is the first to operate free of lugs and chains.

On top of being adaptable and versatile, SetLine offers the speed and finesse required of the best partners in crime. It can pack cups up to 140mm in height at speed up to 43,000 per hour and bottles that height at speeds up to 30,000 per hour. The end effectors pick product with grippers rather than suction, which helps maintain seal integrity. Also, the grippers work through robotic motion rather than pneumatics to minimize maintenance and maximize efficiency. Because SetLine does sleeve and case packing all in one machine frame, it even saves factory floor space.

Recent trends in case forming, packing and sealing machinery deliver speed and efficiency throughout the entire process. Packagers need machines that operate easily, which eliminates the need for a lot of specialized training. Reliability is also a big factor because machine downtime impacts the speed of the entire process. Machinery that handles product gently and can accommodate less than perfect packages also keeps the process moving and eliminates wasted product or packaging materials.

Primarily, case packing machinery is trending toward integration. Packagers want a machine that plays well with others. After all, a successful heist, like a successful line, is rarely a one-man job. Recently, we ran a web exclusive article about Bob's Red Mill's optimized, integrated system that keeps product moving into bags and into cases for codes and palletizing. Read more about that line at [foodandbeveragepackaging.com/integratedpackaging](http://foodandbeveragepackaging.com/integratedpackaging). Anyone looking to pull off the greatest packaging line ever can look to these latest machine innovations to keep out running the competition. **F&B**

◀◀ The OYSTAR A+F SetLine Wrap-around Packer offers all-in-one packing solution.