

## PRESS RELEASE

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### ***New Automatic Top Cap Former Integrates With Robotic Pallet Cell for Retail-Ready Displays***

July 2010, Blacksburg, VA — ESS Technologies, Inc., introduces an automatic top cap forming system that allows manufacturers to fully automate the creation of retail-ready display pallets and pallets that require top caps between layers for additional stability. An integrated FANUC robot provides the picking and placement of top cap blanks into the ESS forming system that folds and glues pallet top caps. The top cap former can be co-located with the ESS Robotic Pallet Cell, which also includes a FANUC robot that palletizes cases and display trays in a pre-programmed pattern and places the formed top cap on each completed layer or as required. The top cap system is ideal for manufacturers and packagers who create point-of-purchase display pallets and pallet loads that require additional stability.



The top cap former system uses a FANUC M-20iA robot with vacuum end-of-arm-tooling (EOAT) to pick large top cap blanks and place them on the ESS top cap forming device. This device then folds and glues the sides of the top cap in place in a matter of seconds. A FANUC palletizing robot then picks the top cap and places it on the layer as required. The top cap forming system and ESS Technologies robotic palletizing system can be integrated with an automatic pallet dispenser and flow-thru pallet conveyor as well as a pallet stretch wrapper to create a completely automated palletizing system that can handle up to 30 cases per minute.

Allen Bradley ControlNet networking controls allow the pallet cell to control the timing of the top cap forming system, signaling the robot to pick the top cap blank and place it on the top cap forming device. A single HMI touchscreen controls the pallet cell and the top cap forming system, simplifying operation. Custom EOAT on the palletizing robot allows the robot to handle a variety of retail-ready display trays as well as standard RSC cases. Manual changeover is fast, typically under 10 minutes, and the system can be ordered to perform automatic “one-button” EOAT changeover. The compact footprint requires less factory floor space than traditional non-robotic solutions. And as with all ESS-designed robotic systems, the flexibility of FANUC robots allows the configuration of the system to be changed, usually with minimal additional tooling, for use in future production lines.

About ESS Technologies, Inc.

ESS Technologies, Inc., founded in 1993, specializes in complete packaging line design, manufacture, and integration. Our product expertise includes monoblock fillers/cappers, robotic case packers, automatic cartoners, robotic palletizing systems, custom designed solutions, and integrated robotics. Engineered for reliability and efficiency, ESS Technologies’ innovative solutions offer you tomorrow’s packaging technology today.

Contact Information

Kim Norris, ESS Technologies, Inc.  
3160 State Street, Blacksburg, VA 24060  
(540) 961-5716,