and food container sheet coatings and over any printed based materials.

The In-Line systems are also said to shorten set-up and changeover times, streamline new coating and film trials, reduce product spoilage and coating consumption and help reduce the amount of time required in the measurement and analysis process. The system can also generate an electronic or printed coating QA record for any production runs.

The SpecMetrix ACS line of systems for beverage cans enables the operator to better assess spray gun and roller performance issues, and to speed up the can film weight measurement process. The unit measures inside spray, rim coat and overvarnish weights optically, and the automated ACS system can incorporate an integral colour-dot recognition system to identify issues and match the issue with individual spray guns.

Sensory Analytics, 4413-C West Market Street, Greensboro NC 27407, USA. Tel: 1 336 315 6090. Fax: 1 336 315 6030. Website: www.specmetrix.com

Stand-alone inspection units offer flexibility

Applied Vision expects to have the first factory-finished units of its Cyclops stand-alone inspection system available in early 2012.

The company introduced the development earlier this year, designed as a front-end inspection system, with particular focus in the food can end manufacturing sector.

The system incorporates a single camera and processor in each unit, as an alternative to a single processor operating multiple inspection stations. This set-up offers a range of benefits, says Brian Baird, a member of the company's product engineering team:

"Each camera has its own processor, meaning the CPU is focused exclusively on one task, opposed to tracking eight separate tasks. And, should there be a problem, you only lose one lane while production continues. Likewise, if a camera malfunctions, you don't have to stop and restart the whole system for the benefit of a single lane."

Installation is also made more straightforward and less expensive, says Baird: "Cyclops can stand on its own; the camera and CPU are integrated. There is no control cabinet, and no tens or hundreds of metres of cabling. Our customers are no longer faced with having to hire contractors to prepare the site for what used to be a major installation effort. Also, simpler installation allows our service engineers to spend less time on site, which drives down installation charges and costly downtime."

The system also offers greater versatility, adds Baird: "It can be installed almost anywhere, because it stands on its own. Suppose you decide, 'I want to save money with redundancy here, and more here, and more here. But if 'here, here and here' are thousands of feet apart, you can't do that with a single system. That's where units running independently and parallel to each other makes sense."

Applied Vision, 2020 Vision Lane, Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44223, USA. Tel: 1 330 926 2222. Fax: 1 330 926 2250. Website: www.appliedvision.com

Series of end inspection gauges launched by SLAC

Chinese company SLAC Precision Equipment has introduced the On-line Ends Vision System, for inspecting the shell surface of ends for defects.

Problems such as edge curl defects, missing compound, compound splashes, oil stains and scratches are all detected in real-time by the system, which operates at up to 2,500 shells a minute.

The system is supplied with the sensor, light sources, camera, processor and rejection station, ejecting defective ends as determined by the parameters pre-set by the operator.

Also launched by the company is the Score Residual Measuring Device, designed to measure the score profile to an accuracy of within two microns. Using a laser, the system measures the top and bottom of the score of both food and beverage can ends, to determine the full score profile including angle and depth. Measurement takes approximately one minute, says SLAC.

The company's Light Leakage Inspection System inspects ends for leaks, and ejects any faulty ends from the line. Operating at speeds of up to 750 ends a minute on each lane, the system detects leaks down to one micron in size, and can produce a report of the quantity of defective and accepted ends.

SLAC Precision Equipment, 621 Shixu Road, Xukou Town, Wuzhong District, Suzhou City, Jiangsu Province 215156, China. Tel: 86 512 6624 8533. Fax: 86 512 6624 8543.
Website: www.slac.com.cn

Detect leaks in aerosol cans at line speed

Italian company Martinenghi has developed an on-line leak tester for monobloc aerosol cans.

Called the LX12, the system is based on the company's LC200 system for collapsible aluminium tubes, and can operate at up to 250 cans a minute on fully-shaped aluminium monobloc aerosol cans.

The system injects high-pressure, micro-filtered air inside each can, and measures the variation in pressure to determine the characteristics of the can. Any anomalies detected indicate a defective can, which will be automatically rejected from the production line by the system.

The handling and testing processes of the LX12 are controlled to avoid any possible deformation or crushing of the cans, and the use of a double-tightening process prevents the application of pressure causing permanent elongation of the cans.

The LX12 also offers fast size changeovers, with a complete change of diameter and length possible in less than ten minutes.

The system was first installed by Euro Asia Packaging in China, and a further ten units have since been installed worldwide.

Martinenghi, Via Cassanese Nord 35, Albignano d'Adda, Milan 20060, Italy. Tel: 39 029 583 292. Fax: 39 029 583 8393. Website: www.martinenghi.com