



Custom Automation Workstation

Automated Filter Quality Control



Captec delivered a highly customised compact computing platform for a leading tobacco quality control instrumentation manufacturer, overcoming environmental, space and machine interconnect constraints. Utilising in-house specialised engineering and EMC compliance testing, the solution improved reliability, reduced instrument assembly times, and future-proofed the customer's operations while significantly lowering their through-life costs.

A leading manufacturer of quality control solutions for the tobacco industry, offering systems that measure and regulate quality, length, and weight of mass-produced filters to ensure consistency and brand integrity.

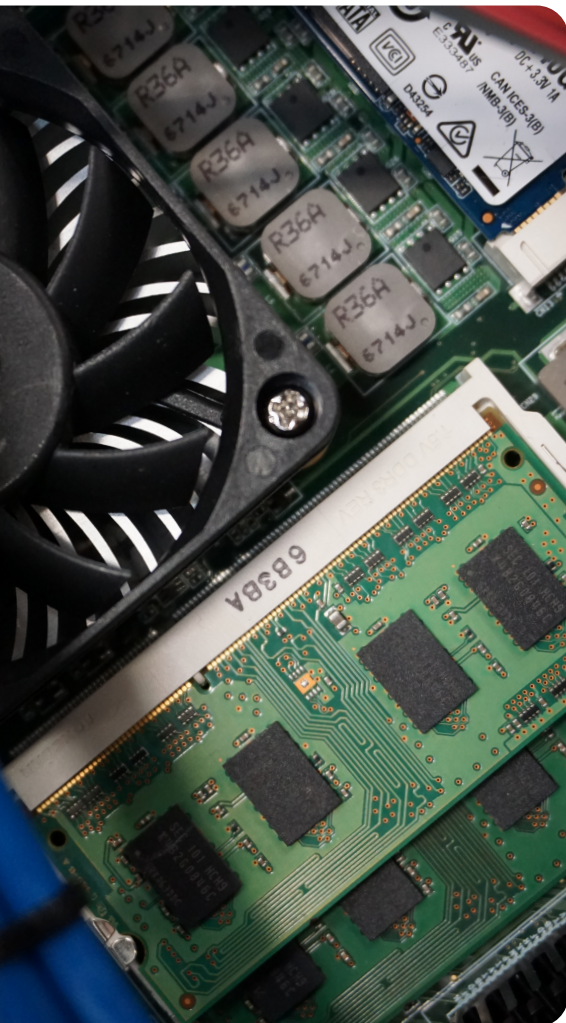
They sought to action a tech-refresh for an existing computing platform while streamlining machine interconnect and integration for improved efficiency.



The Challenge

The customer required a custom industrial computing platform to enhance an earlier model while meeting constraints on physical dimensions to meet the available space envelope. The solution needed to protect against particulate ingress common in tobacco production environments, optimise internal cabling for efficient connection/disconnect inside the machine, and provision for custom sensor connection interfaces.

Compliance with CE EMC emissions standards was essential, as was the ability to handle high data throughput from the continuous inspection processes. Additionally, the system had to be designed with future requirements in mind, to ensure machine interconnects could seamlessly adapt to hardware upgrades without needing to redesign internal wiring looms.



The Solution

Captec designed and manufactured a highly customised compact computer enclosure, utilising in-house metalwork design and engineering expertise to meet the customer's strict space envelope constraints.

Integrated fan filters and gaskets were incorporated to guard against heavy dust ingress, ensuring reliable operation in hostile environments. A custom internal wiring PCB reduced internal cabling, protecting against disconnections, and presented interfaces in the most optimised way for integration in the machine. Whilst futureproofing the external interconnect from any internal motherboard upgrades.

Captec's in-house EMC testing lab validated compliance to CE/ FCC, delivering cost-effective assurance of meeting regulatory compliance. A dual LAN card was integrated to split network traffic, boost performance, and provide redundancy. To future-proof deployments, Captec implemented clone imaging, ensuring the efficiency and consistency of software builds and mitigating the impacts of future hardware updates.

The Outcome

Captec delivered a robust, high-performance computing solution through its full end-to-end design, engineering, backed by its through-life support capabilities. By consolidating the supply chain, Captec improved quality, reliability, and product availability while also simplifying procurement for the customer. Reduced lead times and design for production efficiency, accelerated the delivery schedule, giving the customer a faster route to market.

Through-life costs were significantly lowered through design simplification and optimisation, resulting in substantial long-term savings. Designed specifically for harsh operating conditions, the platform was protected against particulate ingress that regularly compromises conventional computers causing downtime. Rigorously validated with extensive pre-shipment test cycles, ensured ready for fitment with zero DOA's. This ensured seamless deployment into the customer's environments, while reinforcing Captec's value as a reliable, trusted partner for the customer's in-house teams.



CAPTEC

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