

## Initial BTB have chosen the Galaxy feeder for its compact and ergonomic qualities.

*The choice of a feeder like all the production equipment in a laundry, not only has to take into account the nature of the textiles to be treated but also the place in which the equipment is to be installed.*



Marseille - This industrial unit is based in the heart of Marseille, France's second city. The buildings, which were bought by the Initial BTB group in 1988, belonged to BTMF. BTMF was a long established private group with a presence in every niche of the market and an enterprise which had a need to be rationalized. This is what the Initial BTB group did by refocusing this unit's workload towards concentrating on linen from health establishments: hospitals, clinics and nursing homes.



**The operator inserts the street into the clamps without having to find the corners.**

The unit managed by Benoit Martin is an organisation like all other establishments within the Initial Services Textiles group and the quality approach adopted in June 2001 permitted the company to obtain two certifications: the first in December 2003 in accordance with the Initial BTB Group's own referential "AFAQ – Commitment to Service" and the second, in accordance with the ISO 9001 regulations, year 2000 version, attained in 2004. This course

of action has brought an improvement in precision and quality; the principles for improvement and management continue since quality constitutes a competitive advantage in a region where there are still few service providers which are officially approved.

The Marseille unit nowadays handles 23 tons of laundry, comprised of 50% flat linen, 20% clothing and 30% towelling and small pieces. The unit's specialisation in the health sector has enabled all the production equipment to be assembled in a single building freeing the space with a view to reconstruct new premises adapted to a modern production line.

If this industrial unit belongs to the Health division (8 units distributed over the whole of the national territory thus assuring national coverage), there is another unit appertaining to the industrial division located at Berre l'Etang which deals mainly with work clothing for the industrial sector.

Since concentrating on the health sector the Marseille unit has experienced a steady growth. The geographical zone covered is from Nice to Nimes and Northwards as far as Orange and Gap. With more than 200 clients, Initial Services Textiles Marseille has an annual turnover of 11 million euros, of which around 35% is from public health sector establishments and 65% from private establishments. The unit is located in a PACA (Provence-Alps-Côte d'Azur) region where there is significant development potential for residential medical-social establishments.

### **Modernising the production lines**

Groupe Initial BTB has always maintained a dynamic investment policy with regard to either to modernising equipment or increasing production capacity. In this particular case, the company decided to replace an Easy Feed 3 station feeder with this new more efficient feeder on all the plans.

This investment policy will apply equally in the coming months to restructuring the present buildings with the objective of adapting the existing space to the equipment and not the reverse.

### **The acquisition of a Galaxy feeder**

The amount of flat linen to be treated being both significant and constantly on the increase, it is therefore important to modernise the production lines. The new Galaxy feeder by Jean Michel has been chosen, mainly because the enterprise has already used a Météore feeder with great satisfaction.



A suction system allows the sheet to be placed on the feeder table and to remove the cotton fluff by vacuum.

Since the equipment is to be changed, the unit together with the enterprise's technical services department has made its choice depending on the laundry to be treated.

*"We have an old feeder, it is therefore replacement equipment, explains Jacques Brunet. The decision on the choice of equipment used is essentially down to the available space the reason we are unable to purchase a lateral feeder. Everyone chooses their installations according to the configuration of the building*

*and the type of laundry to be treated. At Pouzages the choice had to be different. In this case a lateral feeder achieves better productivity but it is a longer piece of equipment and as such, doesn't fit in the production line as it is currently laid out".*

The Galaxy 4 station feeder which has been installed in front of the flatwork ironer and an Orion folder, which is both compact and achieves an excellent productivity output (300 pieces per hour per work station at full speed)

*"We turnaround 250 pieces of large flat laundry per work station and 270 to 280 in medium flat per work station. The old equipment was a three station model with inferior production. Taking into account the increased volume treated we wanted a feeder of the same standard as the Météore. The laundry is transported in slings and unloaded onto a conveyor belt on a level with the operators. In the future we will completely change the disposition of these machines in order to exploit the full height of the building and install an unloading device".*



The shortage of space in terms of length and height has led to the choice of the Galaxy feeder.

### **The need for thorough maintenance**

Installed in June 2004, the feeder works alongside 3 other flatwork ironer systems: 3 lines to treat the

large flat laundry and 1 line for the small flat pieces.

*“The Galaxy offers improved ergonomics and each work station can be individually adapted to the operator. It suffices to introduce the article to two clamps without having to find the sheet corners. The article is then carried towards a server which spreads the sheet over a suction line which deposits the article on the feeder table. If there is a suction failure the linen falls in a place which requires regular cleaning despite the presence of a system which vacuums up the fluff. We clean the machine twice a day, in the morning and the afternoon since at 1000 pieces per hour, plenty of cotton fluff escapes the system despite there being a collection bag fitted to the vacuum extraction”.*

The laundry from the four pressing lines is then transported by conveyor belt towards an automatic packaging machine. The system has been installed by the industrial unit's maintenance department, with a workforce of seven. The on site maintenance team carry out modifications to the production lines and assure the equipment receives both preventative and curative maintenance.

The evolution of the use of textiles also brings about important changes from the point of view of production since the use of fitted sheets has modified the treatment and presentation of the articles.

The unit as such now deals with 60% classic sheets and 40% fitted sheets, for which the presentation is different.

Patrice LEFRANCOIS



Each work station can be individually adapted for the operator.

### Some figures

Turnover 11 million euros.  
Production 23 tons per day of which 50% is large flat laundry, 30% small pieces and towelling, 20% clothing, 10,000 pieces of work clothing per day.

154 employees

3 batch washers (12 x 50kg, 10 x 50kg and 8 x 50kg)

4 flatwork ironers of which one is equipped with a Galaxy 4 station feeder and an Orion folder.