

Which laser coder best suits your beverage packaging?

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Applying best-before dates in the drinks industry make applying best-before dates a challenge. This is because while some technologies can print at high speed, the codes are not permanent and may lead to counterfeiting and non-compliance. One technology that beverage producers are increasingly turning to is laser technology.





Laser coders work by changing the surface of the packaging material, either by ablation, etching or foaming. This makes

laser marks indelible – no rubbing, smudging, fading or faking. By not using inks, you also eliminate the cost of consumables and significantly reduce operating expenses.

What to consider

Items that are effectively marked by lasers include glass, PET bottles, cans, labels, cases, and pouches. The material you're marking will be your first consideration, followed by the coder's wattage, which is determined by line speed, substrate, and code size. Another consideration is the environment in which the equipment operates – typically humid, sugar-infused for beverage production.







CO2 laser technology

A variety of wavelengths and lenses are available from CO2 lasers, and these can be tailored for your specific application. Factors to consider include the laser's depth of penetration into the bottle, where on the bottle the code will be placed, and how the substrate allows for contrast with the code.

The SmartLase C350S 30W CO2 laser coder from Markem-Imaje, locally available from Pyrotec PackMark, is designed for high-speed PET beverage production and provides crisp codes, even in wet environments. SmartLase C150S is the 10W CO2 option for medium-speed lines.

For intermittent and continuous lines, the SmartLase C350 30W CO2 laser coder addresses diverse medium- and high-speed applications requiring complex codes. For low speeds, the SmartLase C150 10W version is a lower-cost solution.

Apart from occasional filter replacement, no consumables are required when selecting SmartLase coders from Pyrotec PackMark. Another benefit is that the crisp, permanent codes ensure reliable traceability that minimises rework and recall costs.

For assistance selecting the perfect coder for your beverage coding requirements, visit www.pyrotec.co.za.

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