

## Disposable gloves never again in short supply

Automated testing system from AFA ensures a reliable supply of hygienic gloves worldwide

**When the COVID-19 pandemic broke out, protective equipment was in short supply. Nursing staff didn't have enough face masks, protective goggles, full-body protective suits, or hygienic disposable rubber gloves. To overcome at least the shortage of gloves, AFA Technologies offers packaging machines and automated systems for quality control. The Malaysian company relies on pneumatic valve technology from Festo for its machines.**

Before the outbreak of the global COVID crisis in spring 2020, the production of hygienic disposable gloves was limited to the traditional rubber-producing countries in Southeast Asia. The sudden increase in demand led many countries affected by the pandemic to set up their own glove production. This presented an opportunity for AFA Technologies to export machinery and equipment to Europe and North America as well. However, Malaysia is still the leader in the world rubber glove market with a market share of 65%.

### World market leader

"We currently have a market share of 85% in packaging machines and test systems for disposable gloves", explains Chester Tan, Chief Executive Officer of AFA Technologies, and proudly points out that the company has already sold more than 300 leakage test machines of the type LTM. Tan attributes this success not only to the rapid increase in demand created by the pandemic, but also to AFA's technological leadership.

AFA has been developing leakage testing machines for protective gloves since 2009. Previously, it was common practice to test the gloves manually. Now only the mounting of the gloves on the test mandrels is done manually, the actual testing process is automated. The testing system achieves an output of 4,800 to 5,200 pieces per hour with only three operators. The output speed and, most importantly, the consistency in quality control compared to three operators testing the gloves manually have been increased significantly.

### High-precision valve technology

The machines test the rubber and nitrile gloves by using air pressure to detect any holes but do not destroy the gloves in the process. The LTM 120 machines have 120 test mandrels made of medical Teflon with built-in LED lighting. The mandrel can be used for various standard glove sizes from XS to XL and from 5.5 to 9.0. The testing machine uses high-precision digital pressure sensors with a pressure accuracy of up to 0.001 psi.

09. December 2021

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Each of the 120 test mandrels is controlled by a pneumatic valve type VUVG from Festo. The valve from the Core Range is significantly smaller and more robust than comparable valves on the market, is available from stock worldwide and attractively priced. "We are glad that the experts from Festo, especially Dhruv Subbiah, at that time country manager of Festo Malaysia, as well as sales engineer Aaron Ang, advised us on the right use of Festo valve technology," adds Tan.

### **Worldwide availability**

The support from Festo does not stop at sales advice, but also includes extensive simulations and calculations, as well as test products for proof of concept to determine which products might be suitable for the machines. "What is also practical for us now that we are experiencing a flourishing export of our machines is that Festo is quickly available in over 180 countries worldwide," says Tan.

### **Additional quote:**

"It has been a great pleasure to work with AFA because of their passion for technology, and their vision to expand their scope from the glove industry to end-to-end material handling and packaging solutions. We have enjoyed the partnership as their solution provider for automation solutions, and are looking forward to our future journey together."

Dhruv Subbiah, today Head of Industry Segment Management, Electronics and Light Assembly, Southeast Asia and Pacific.

### **Press Images**



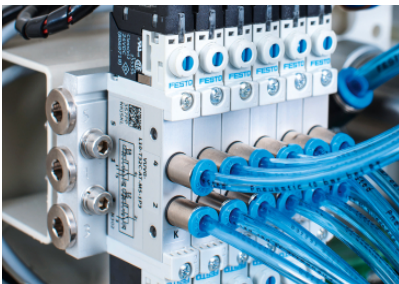
#### **AFA - LTM 120 test system**

Extremely productive: the LTM 120 test system from AFA Technologies for hygienic gloves.



#### **AFA - test disposable gloves**

Quality assured: 120 test mandrels test disposable gloves made of natural rubber and nitrile.



#### **Festo VUVG valves**

Compact and available from stock worldwide: 120 Festo VUVG valves per machine control the test mandrels.



#### **Management of AFA Technologies, Malaysia**

The Management of AFA Technologies in Malaysia: Christopher Tan (Chief Business Development Officer) on the left and Chester Tan (Chief Executive Officer)

### **About Festo**

Festo is a global player and an independent family-owned company with headquarters in Esslingen am Neckar, Germany. Festo has set standards in industrial automation technology and technical education ever since its establishment, thereby making a contribution to sustainable development of the environment, the economy and society. The company supplies pneumatic and electrical automation technology to 300,000 customers of factory and process automation in over 35 industries. Digitalization, AI and the LifeTech sector with medical technology and laboratory automation are becoming increasingly important. The products and services are available in 176 countries. With about 20,600 employees in over 250 branch offices in around 60 countries worldwide, Festo achieved a turnover of around €3.45 billion in 2024. More than 8% of this turnover is invested in research and development. In this learning company, 1.5 % of turnover is invested in basic and further training. Festo Didactic SE is a leading provider of technical education and training and offers its customers worldwide comprehensive digital and physical learning solutions in the industrial environment.