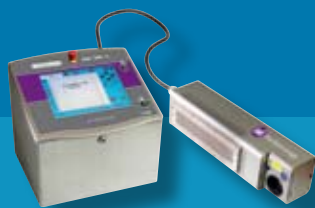


# Schering Plough Farma “No doubt about it”



CO<sub>2</sub> laser coders

Traceability of pharmaceutical products ■ ■ ■



“The Markem-Imaje solution meets every one of our requirements. Their team provided full technical support and all the assistance we needed, exceeding our every expectation.”

**João Santa Barbara, Manager,  
Engineering and Maintenance**

**Name:** Schering Plough Farma, Lda, subsidiary of Schering Plough

**Location:** Cacém, near Lisbon (Portugal)

**Start-up date:** 1975

**Business:** production and packaging of creams, ointments, shampoos, lotions and tablets for human and animal healths

**Annual production:** approximately 13 million units per year

## Increasingly strict requirements ■ ■ ■

Schering Plough Farma, the sole Portuguese plant owned by the American pharmaceutical giant Schering Plough, produces and packages ointments, creams, lotions, tablets and other products for the Portuguese and international markets. Engineering and maintenance manager João Santa Barbara explains: “We export 70% of our production to 27 countries, including Russia, our biggest client. Packaging takes up seven lines, each of which uses different coding equipment. We use three printing techniques: embossing for the aluminum tubes (at closing) and the cardboard packs — at a speed of 60 units/minute —, hot marking for labels and inkjet for vials.”

Coding is required to comply with traceability standards, which are very strict for the pharmaceutical sector. Traceability coding is applied to aluminum tubes, cardboard packs, plastic vials, labels and blister packs, and states the lot number, the production and/or expiry date. In all, the message is composed of three lines maximum, each with 25 characters ... and the

characters are in the Cyrillic alphabet for Russia. In 2008, it became indispensable to update and change the marking and coding equipment. The equipment used in the past did not print Datamatrix codes, an upcoming IFAH\* requirement which Schering Plough is preparing for now. Furthermore, Schering Plough wanted to be able to mark its tubes and their cases on the fly and when stopped. They also wanted a flexible solution with five identical coders for use on any one of the seven packing lines.

\* International Federation for Animal Health



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the team to trust' ■ ■ ■

## The ideal solution ■ ■ ■

Schering Plough hesitated among several technologies before deciding on laser, and choosing the clean, complete and powerful laser marking solution provided by Markem-Imaje. João Santa Barbara points out: "It was the best quality/price ratio option, and the only one which met all of our demands. Everyone is happy with the five 7031 coders installed in June 2008, including the operators, who save time during adjustments. We have already improved productivity by 15% !" Credit for such savings and improvement also goes to

**Markem-Imaje builds on its pharmaceutical industry expertise, providing the Portuguese site of the American giant Schering Plough with a complete marking and coding solution and flawless technical support.**

the permanent technical support Markem-Imaje provides during installation. With a 100%-customer dedicated mindset, the team solved every problem as it came up, providing for seamless transition and start-up. Due to in-depth experience

with the pre-requisites of the pharmaceutical industry, Markem-Imaje proposed a software solution that met the need for secure data entry from the five coders, using a single Control Center. The software integrates Pharma Center and is compatible with the 21 CFR Part 11\*\* standard, imperative in the pharmaceutical sector.

"Above all, Markem-Imaje worked with us during every phase of qualification (DQ/IQ/OQ), obligatory procedures which validate the equipment in the context in which it is used," adds João Santa Barbara.



**Data is perfectly secured, using Pharma Center. Schering-Plough uses 7031 laser coders to print 3 lines of text on tubes and packs.**

Schering Plough is highly satisfied with the choice, and now plans to test the laser and software solution on other products in its range, such as vials and labels, and spread the use of Datamatrix codification to other human health products.

\*\* Manages access controls, event traceability and electronic signature.

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