

How PakTech is helping DESTIHL achieve its growth goals

CASE STUDY



Since opening its original gastrobrewpub™ in 2007, DESTIHL® has been one of the most innovative, successful, and acclaimed breweries in the country. DESTIHL has launched creative new products, won numerous awards, and grown far faster than industry trends.

To support its growth, DESTIHL partnered with PakTech, which has helped automate some of the brewery's manual processes and increase its production capacity.

Here is a recap of DESTIHL's innovation and growth, along with the critical role that PakTech played in supporting this growth.



DESTIHL Helps Launch the Canned Sour Beer Industry

Founded in 2007 in Normal, Illinois, DESTIHL quickly became popular as a brewpub and a chef-driven restaurant. After receiving many awards and accolades for its Saint Dekkera® barrel-aged sour beers, DESTIHL started up its first production brewery in 2013 in nearby Bloomington, Illinois.

Once the brewery became operational, DESTIHL still had to wait 12-18 months for its barrel-aged sours to age. To satiate demand during this time, DESTIHL developed and launched its Wild Sour Series, a new line of quick/kettle sour beers. In 2014, brewery management decided to package the Wild Sour Series in 4-packs of 12-ounce cans, becoming one of the first breweries in the U.S. to package sour beer in cans, which proved to be a game changer for both DESTIHL and the entire sour beer industry.



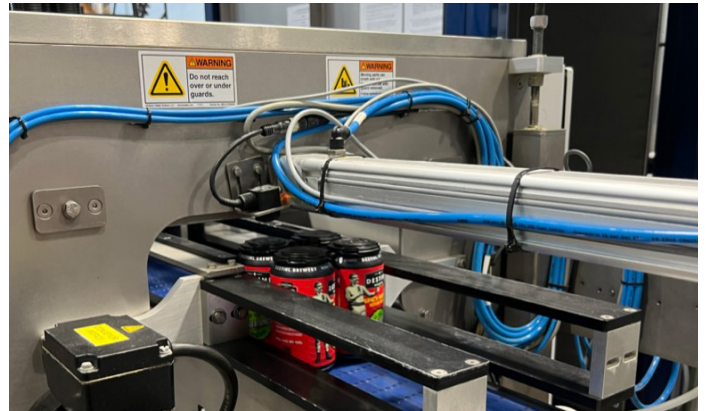
When DESTIHL began canning its beer in 2014, the company also started using PakTech handles given their ease of use for both manual and automated applications and their wide acceptance and popularity in the rapidly growing canned craft beer industry. These factors were key since during those early years in production, DESTIHL was applying PakTech handles to cans by hand.



DESTIHL team manually applying handles

Due to the popularity of the Wild Sour Series and rising demand for all of DESTIHL's products, by the end of 2015, DESTIHL had outgrown its original brewery. So, in 2016, the company broke ground on a \$15.5 million, 47,000-square-foot production brewery in Normal, Illinois, which opened in 2017.

As part of this new, larger facility, DESTIHL installed a new canning line and invested in a PakTech CCA120 to fully automate the handle application process.



Over the next six years, DESTIHL launched several innovative new products—including its DeadHead® IPA Series—and won countless awards, most notably for its DeadHead TourBus® Hazy IPA which won Gold at GABF® in 2021 and in several international competitions since then.

During this time, as DESTIHL grew to an entirely new level, the brewery continued to rely on the CCA120. Founder and CEO Matt Potts said, "The CCA120 proved to be very reliable, never requiring any tech service from PakTech in over six years of operation, as DESTIHL performed its own preventative maintenance and upkeep with ease."



Embarking on a Major Capacity Expansion

In 2023, with continued rapid growth of its own brands and its burgeoning new contracting brewing business division - CANOPOLIS™, DESTIHL embarked on a major expansion to more than double its production capacity and canning line speed.



In considering solutions to increase its canning line speed, DESTIHL was looking for the following criteria:

- High-speed quadpak and 6-pak application
- Capabilities for 12 ounces, 16 ounces, and 19.2 ounces
- Sleek can capability
- Continuous motion for smooth, on-demand application; integrated backpressure control and star wheels to meter cans
- Remote assistance connectivity, which is now standard with most equipment
- In-line bypass/passthrough mode
- Heavy-duty stainless steel frame
- Sizeable and reliable auto-handle queue magazine to minimize reload frequency
- Great, user-friendly Allen-Bradley operating interface and controls

In addition to those criteria, most important to DESTIHL was the line speed and surge speed capacity, ease of installation & operation, and overall system reliability.

After looking into and considering multiple handle brands and applicator machines that could meet their line-speed needs, DESTIHL ultimately decided to stick with PakTech's handles and to upgrade to PakTech's CCA440 plus.

“To be diligent, we looked into competing handle brands and applicator machines to achieve our desired line speed of 250 cpm, only to come back around to the reliability of PakTech’s handles and its faster CCA440 plus to replace our CCA120.”

Matt Potts, Founder/CEO, DESTIHL



“The PakTech CCA440 plus was the closest thing to plug and play that DESTIHL has ever installed . . . and it has been handling DESTIHL’s new faster canning line speed reliably and effortlessly since the day it was placed into service.”

Matt Potts, Founder/CEO, DESTIHL

The main reasons for choosing PakTech’s CCA440 plus were ease of installation, low and easy maintenance, heavy-duty but not overly complicated engineering & design, effortless nonstop operation, speed and reliability.

Implementing the CCA440 plus

Once the DESTIHL team chose the CCA440 plus, the PakTech team sprang into action. This included individuals from PakTech’s finance, shipping, and applicator teams. Matt Potts recounted, “The order and upgrade process between PakTech and DESTIHL was incredibly fast, taking just over two weeks from quote to full operation.”

Lessons Learned

In reflecting on DESTIHL’s incredible journey, its recent capacity expansion, and its anticipated future growth, Potts shared the following lessons and observations:

- When you find an equipment or packaging vendor that is reliable and that consistently meets and exceeds your needs and expectations, stick with them.
- PakTech makes some of the best, most reliable, most durable, easiest-to-operate equipment in the market. They have been a great partner with us since 2014.
- If you are in need of packaging equipment, make sure to tour packaging operations of various sizes, speeds and equipment configurations. Make sure to watch their packaging equipment perform in the field—and then choose PakTech for your handle applicator needs.

Additional Information

To learn more, visit:

- DESTIHL. destihl.com
- PakTech. paktech-opi.com
- CANOPOLIS. canopolis.co