

Elegant Design Philosophy

How simple, quality, powerful machine design helps customers improve uptime and increase production speed



Rebecca Fowler, director of mechanical engineering for Spee-Dee Packaging Machinery, Inc., shares her philosophy on mechanical design, the importance of aesthetics and what it means to OEMs when form meets function.

Q: What does good design mean to you, and what does that look like?

Fowler: A good design meets all the needs of our customers, and a good design becomes a great one when it's elegant. An elegant design needs to have three core functions: it needs to be simple, have quality, and be powerful.

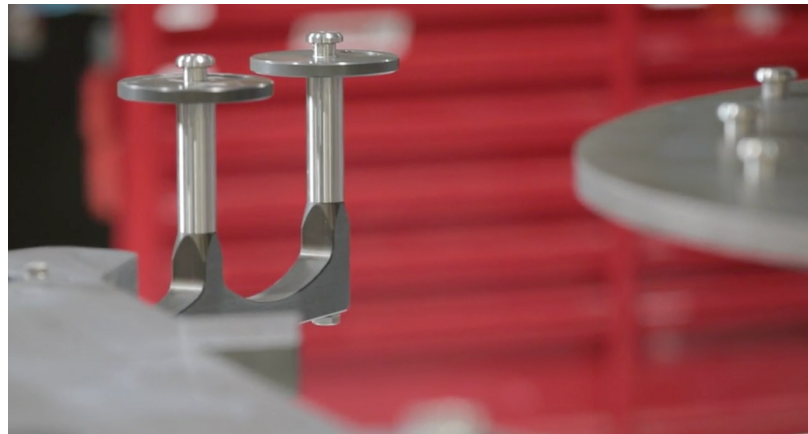


Q: Why are these qualities important for filling equipment?

Fowler: At Spee-Dee, our customers not only need a quality machine for their operations but also one that achieves a quality end product. If you don't have an elegant design, you simply can't meet those needs.

Q: What does simplicity mean to you when it comes to machine design?

Fowler: Simplicity means clean lines, minimal parts, ease of use, and intuitive operation. When the equipment is simple to use, operators can take the correct action every time without the mistakes that can occur with more complex machines. If the equipment is too complicated, it just takes more time to do the same job compared to a simple, well-designed machine.



Q: How does Spee-Dee ensure the quality of its filling machines across various industries?

Fowler: Spee-Dee ensures quality through accuracy. If the machine is quality, it will perform accurately, repeatedly every single time. Our product promises repeatability, has very little harborage areas, and is easy to service. This is evident throughout our entire process, from our small systems to our larger systems, with our quick response manufacturing (QRM) process. We bring engineering, project management, machining, assembly, service and installation into one group and give every project the dedication and priority it deserves. Every order—large or small receives the same Spee-Dee attention to detail.



Q: What does powerful mean to you and to Spee-Dee?

Fowler: Powerful means the solution is robust, reliable and can stand the test of time, which is essential for overall equipment maintenance, uptime and the life of the product.

Q: How does Spee-Dee maximize value for its customers?

Fowler: Spee-Dee minimizes downtime to maximize value. Our quick-change parts help reduce the downtime between changeovers. We know customers aren't always going to stay with the same packaging or products so we make our change parts as interchangeable as possible. With Spee-Dee, you can switch from one set of change parts to another with minimal setup. We also allow for future expandability.



To maintain ROI, we make sure there are no harborage areas to catch product and cause premature wear. We use high-quality materials—high-grade aluminum anodization, 316 stainless steel, anti-static plastic or others—to fill an accurate amount of product for the maximum number of containers.

We work with our customers hand-in-hand. As we test, we provide the true specifications of what their materials can do, not just what they'd like it to do. We let them know exactly what they can expect from the product and how it's going to flow through the machine so they can provide the best quality product and know how profitable their machine is going to be.

Q: What features of Spee-Dee's equipment ensures accuracy at install and over time?

Fowler: We always ask our customers to send the product and packaging so we can run the product through our test lab to find the true characteristics of the application. This allows us to verify how it's going to fill and ensures we meet the customer's specifications.



Q: What is Spee-Dee's top quality or attribute, equipment-wise or holistically as a company?

Fowler: One of the best qualities of Spee-Dee is that we listen to our customers. We don't offer an off-the-shelf, catalog type item, so we listen to our customers and help them select the right solution. Everyone here does their absolute best to put the customer first. It's a great family work environment. The Navins and other members of our staff are very active in PMMI, bringing change to the industry and helping to drive the standards.

Q: What does the future hold for Spee-Dee?

Fowler: We are growing and expanding into new and current markets. I believe we can really drive that quality and elegant design to raise the bar by providing an even greater ROI and value to our customers and their customers.

