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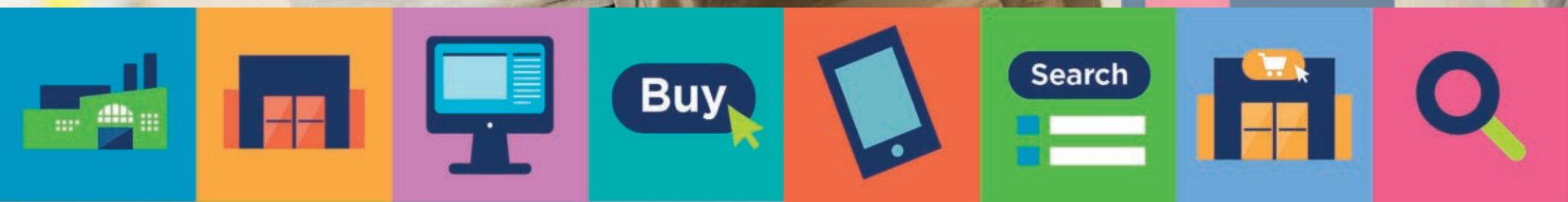
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PRIMING YOUR PRODUCT FOR ONLINE RETAIL



All in the mix

When Pablo & Rusty's Coffee Roasters began its small roastery supplied its two cafés. The fast growth of its wholesale business and ecommerce meant an equipment upgrade was a must. **Kim Berry** writes.

PABLO & Rusty's Coffee Roasters launched in 2003, it had a small roastery to supply its two cafes.

Demand grew so quickly it soon moved to a larger facility and turned to building a wholesale business as well as direct-to-consumer sales.

Since then, the company has completed the rigorous assessment process to achieve B Corporation certification as a carbon neutral business.

Pablo & Rusty CEO Abdullah Ramay says the Australian preference for coffee with milk drives how they select, roast, and blend its beans.

"It's preferable to use multiple origins of coffee to give a more balanced taste and something that can cut through the milk. Each roasting cycle is adjusted to suit the beans' profiles and only after roasting are the beans blended," Ramay says.

Traditionally, Pablo & Rusty's blending process used a circular tray blender with spokes, or arms, extending from a central hub to agitate the beans.

However, with a capacity of 250 kilograms and typical cycles of 10-15 minutes, output was limited. More critically, the action of the arms pushing through stationary beans caused breakage.

"The blending tray was becoming a bottleneck," Ramay says, "but most important to us was reducing breakage and improving quality."

That led the company to install a rotary batch mixer, which tumbles instead of agitates the beans.

Supplied by Munson Machinery, the model 700-TS-75-MS Rotary Batch Mixer is equipped with a horizontally oriented mixing vessel that

rotates on external trunnion rings at both ends, obviating internal shafts and bearings.

As it rotates, internal mixing flights called baffles and lifters, create a four-way tumble-turn-cut-fold mixing action that eliminates or minimises breakage of the beans, while achieving batch uniformity in three to five minutes.

"Gentle handling and less bean breakage were the prime reasons for the mixer.

"The second was its 850-kilogram capacity, which meant it could blend four times more in a batch.

"Because the mixer has a quicker cycle, it will also keep up with our growth.

"We wanted to make sure that we can scale up, and with this piece of equipment we can double and even triple our capacity," Ramay said.

"We can also scale down, which was needed when COVID-19 arrived."

In the last three years, the coffee roaster has doubled its revenue.

MIXING PROCESS

In operation, the beans rest for three to four minutes on a cooling tray after roasting.

They then pass through a destoner and magnet and into a silo, or holder.

The silo's release is connected to the blender's stationary inlet. When it's opened, the beans flow into the vessel by gravity.

A typical mixing cycle lasts about five minutes, with a timer used to control the process.

At the end of the blending cycle, the internal lifters direct the material through the discharge opening which, like the inlet, is stationary.

The vessel then rotates until



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all the beans are discharged, and it is then cleaned with compressed air.

Pablo & Rusty's typically runs four to 10 mixing cycles a day over an eight-hour shift. Most batches are between 300 to 600 kilograms.

Roasting is done "in threes" to suit the company's three coffee blends – Porter Street, Pioneer, and Trailblazer. Typically, each is a blend of beans from three origins.

For quality control, Pablo & Rusty measures and records a variety of data during each roast. With load cells built into the new mixer, the company can track how much moisture the roasting process removes.

"We had a fairly good idea before but knowing the exact

moisture loss is an added benefit," Ramay says.

The mixer is also dust-tight, unlike the tray blender.

The mixer also fits Pablo & Rusty's drive for sustainability by running for about 75 per cent less time per cycle. It only requires a 7.5 kW motor, which is powered by its rooftop solar system, and more than triples the batch capacity of the previous mixer.

For Pablo & Rusty it has delivered outcomes that meet its business needs while providing flexibility and opportunity for growth. 🌱

TOP: The Munson Machinery rotary batch mixer increased output and met sustainability goals.

ABOVE: Pablo & Rusty's three signature blends.