

Manz Releases SpeedPicker 1.1

- Automation system specifically developed for the production of solar cells now further improved
- SpeedPicker already used more than 300 times
- Rapid handling with the lowest breakage rates on the market

Hamburg/Reutlingen, September 5, 2011. The high-tech engineering firm Manz AG is presenting the new generation of its SpeedPicker automation system at the EU PVSEC in Hamburg. The system was developed for the specific demands of crystalline solar cell manufacturing, and the first generation of the system has already been sold over 300 times. The SpeedPicker 1.1 is even more impressive thanks to a throughput rate of 5,000 wafers per hour and, when it comes to breakage rates, is one of the best in the world when compared to competitors' products: "With only 0.05 percent breakage per machine, our system operates more accurately than all others," says Antonio Schmidt, Head of Sales, cSi Solar at Manz.

Between the company's founding in 1987 and the introduction of the SpeedPicker 1.0 in 2010, Manz had already sold more than 1,000 automation systems with delta robot kinematics. Such systems are needed for loading and unloading process machines within a production line. However, the technology had reached its limits in terms of size, speed, and costs and, as a result, has now been superseded by the reengineered SpeedPicker. The new system is not only highly accurate, but also close to half the size of other systems on the market – it requires a maximum of only seven square meters of space, depending on its configuration. And on the customer side, Manz was able to cut the acquisition and after-sales costs by half. Dieter Manz, founder and CEO of the company, said: "In addition, we succeeded in making the new generation of the system more intuitive, and therefore easier to operate. The system's attractive price is also an important argument for all manufacturers who are now forced to make their production lines more economical as a result of the ongoing decline in prices seen in the market. And efficient automation is usually the first step toward doing so."

The SpeedPicker 1.1 works with one or two carbon arms which rotate at the highest possible speed and which are mounted and pivot on a linear axis, therefore guaranteeing absolute precision. A newly developed Bernoulli gripper and a special image processing system ensure that the wafers are perfectly aligned and together offer 100 percent breakage control when loading and unloading process machines. The system can be configured in a wide variety of ways such as with five or eight lanes, one or two arms, or as a box or cassette system – which is important when it comes to integrating it into existing production lines.

About Manz

Manz AG, headquartered in Reutlingen, Germany, is one of the world's leading high-tech engineering firms. Founded in 1987, in recent years the company has grown from an automation specialist into a supplier of integrated production lines for crystalline solar cells and thin-film solar modules as well as lines for manufacturing flat panel displays. One of its newest areas of business is the development and manufacture of production systems for lithium-ion batteries. The company, led by founder Dieter Manz, has been listed on the stock exchange in Germany since 2006, and currently operates production facilities in Germany, China, Taiwan, Slovakia, and Hungary. At the end of the second quarter 2011, Manz AG had approximately 1,900 employees, 800 of which work in Asia. With its slogan, "Passion for Efficiency," Manz's engineers are making a promise to offer its customers – all companies active in important future markets – increasingly efficient production equipment.

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