

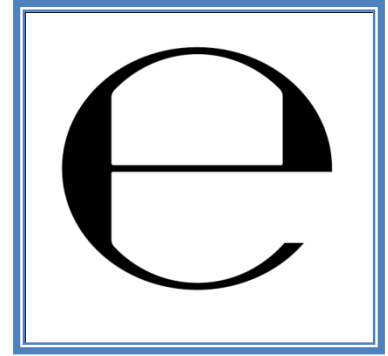
E-marking: What's in it for me?

By Vincent van der Wel

"In order to facilitate the free movement of goods, the states in the European common market (EU and EEA) have agreed on common rules for prepackages within the range 5g to 10kg (or 5ml to 10L)"

Source:

http://www.sp.se/en/index/services/e_marking/sidor/default.aspx



This ominous little e-sign has been visible on almost every consumer package out there for quite some time now. But what does it actually mean and even more pertinently, why should anybody outside of the EU even give it any notice at all? Read on to see how companies can maximize on their ROI just by following a simple protocol.

The European Union developed E-marking as a tool for the elimination of barriers to trade inside the European economic space. The space includes countries of the Union and the EFTA (European Free trade Association, such as Switzerland, Iceland, and Norway).

By the very nature of country barrier elimination, goods control has moved from the custom authorities to the packers and manufacturers'. This of course, requires a generally accepted and approved weighing – and quality control methodology, accredited by the respective authorities for weights and measures.

Each batch of packages, independent of its content, must have a protocol containing:

- a. time and date of the production run
- b. product code and machine identification
- c. official weight of the packages
- d. average weight of the packages
- e. standard deviation of the fillings of number of packages under the T0 and Tabs limits. The last quantity has to be $\leq 2\%$ of the entire production run.

For packers and manufactures this means:

- f. e-marking has no effect on the behaviour of their filling/checking equipment
- g. data storage of weighing results is required throughout the entire product life-cycle
- h. goods can freely cross inter-European borders
- i. as an advantage the packages are filled on average instead of on minimum weight; this means less overfilling therefore more profit.

Because the maximum weight for e-marking is 10kg, all industries supply their goods in small packages which in turn have an effect on logistics handling.

While there are no real benefits in terms of production time savings, the savings are none the less significant when it comes to reducing overfilling which essentially means that product is giving away for free.

This is where the **e-mark for non EU** packers and manufactures becomes an attractive tool. In real terms it all has to do with the efficient and accurate filling and dosing of packages. The food industry in particular has proven to save thousands of Euros after the e-marking protocol was implemented, offering a compelling ROI on production lines.

An added advantage of using PENKO filling controllers is that the e-mark protocol can automatically be administered by the controller. First of all it saves the check weigher between €20.000 and €40.000 and secondly the protocol is created during filling which means that no additional check is necessary. This is a huge time saver.

Other benefits for non-EU manufacturers:

The e-mark protocol:

- a. offers an excellent filling machine performance indicator
- b. opens opportunity of EU approval and market expansion into Europe.
- c. Being well prepared for the future "Q-marking" which will be adopted by the World Trade Organisation – this means they are ready for change.