

The Canmaker

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Expertise that Spans the Globe



Setting Industry Standards for Dispensing & Curing

Nordson is the recognized leader for developing advanced coating, dispensing and curing systems in the metal packaging industry. Our proven technologies have become “best practices”, used worldwide by manufacturers to produce better products at a lower cost. We strive for ongoing innovation and back all of our technologies with service and support from facilities in over 30 countries. Nordson is your global partner, providing you with the experience and expertise to meet your production challenges.



 **Nordson**

Anticipate customers' needs to stay ahead in canmaking

The need to innovate and pre-empt market demands is the key to growth in the canmaking industry, says Amir Novini

“A well-known saying among American real estate agents is, “Location, location, location!” In other words, the agents emphasise the importance of the location of their properties. To that I say that the key to success in industry is, “Innovation, innovation, innovation!” Innovation and creativity are essential ingredients for the survival of our species, and affect our well being, including the success or failure of our companies and businesses.

The forces that drive innovation are need and anticipated need. Meeting existing and known needs can create some great opportunities and exciting solutions, but it is the anticipated need that can truly bring out the best of our human capabilities.

But how to meet anticipated needs and an eventual market creation where the need was fuzzy or non-existent? There are numerous companies and individuals who face that challenge every day. IBM, Microsoft, and Apple are major examples of companies with substantial innovations and market creation. They seem to better anticipate what will be needed by the consumers and provide it to the market either before anyone else does – or better than everybody else. The 17th century essayist Jonathan Swift said, “Vision is the art of seeing things invisible to others.” Being able to anticipate needs and find solutions to those problems is the challenge that creative and innovative people face. Their reward is success in the marketplace.

To put this concept in perspective, let me share a personal story. Many years ago in the late 1980s while designing and installing vision inspection systems for the canmaking industry, I noticed problems in colour printing and verification on flat sheets and cans of all types. Given the day's technology – slow processor speeds and software, old style cameras and lights – it was hard to provide robust and cost-effective solutions.

The group that was most vocal about colour problems was the flat-sheet manufacturers who were losing millions of dollars per plant each year due to customer complaints and returns for colour and decoration problems. The two-piece groups



Amir Novini is chief executive at US inspection equipment manufacturer Applied Vision

were mostly concerned about mixed-label/rogue-can than colour. They failed to see the anticipated customer need and instead focused on the mixed label issues.

When our previous company changed hands one last time, a few of my most capable colleagues and I decided that after 17 years we'd had enough of working for others. We started Applied Vision Corporation and identified colour vision inspection as a main development path.

But it took nearly 20 years for the vision of global use of colour inspection technology to achieve worldwide acceptance from the container industry. Fortunately, this long-term innovation initiative was backed and paid for by some of our other product offerings and solutions for container manufacturing.

The colour technology, on the other hand, slowly began to gain acceptance in various forms in canmaking plants. Our DecoMaster blanket inspection has had such an impact on the industry and the demand is so high that it is sometimes unbelievable. Just three years ago nearly everyone was saying, “This colour technology was tried before and it never worked.” Go tell that to the plant managers who have become so accustomed to this technology that they won't run their decorators without them. We anticipated our customers' needs, and through innovative solutions we offer them cost savings and successful products. It is a win-win for all of us.

In conclusion, the force that drives true innovation and successful outcome is vision, or the ability to know what will be needed. Add knowledge, experience, perseverance against all odds, timing, and patience – lots of patience!

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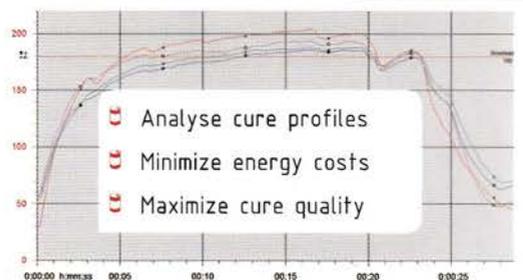


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