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New product depot streamlines Central Steel & Wire's material handling with the use of automated guided vehicles and a unique cantilever rack design that allows for narrower aisles

When Central Steel & Wire (CS&W), a high-quality metal products and services supplier for a wide range of customers from job shops to large OEMs, decided to move from the Chicago facility that had been its home for 80 years, it envisioned creating a state-of-the-art product depot and service center that used the industry's most efficient material handling technology. It would be a major transformation for CS&W because the company was leaving behind a labor-intensive method of material handling in favor of using automated guided vehicles (AGVs) to move its wide range of metal products.

"For the first time in the metal service center business, we brought in AGVs to replace standard material handling equipment," said Nicole Giesie, vice president of operations at Central Steel & Wire - a member of the Ryerson Family of Companies. "It allowed us to use driverless vehicles to store and pull materials to fulfill customer orders."

New Technology, New Facility

The greatest benefits from the use of AGVs, however, could only be realized by developing a new facility that incorporated racking with consistent pocket locations, evenly distributed and available throughout the location.

The presence of damaged racking arms in the existing facility would also have reduced the effectiveness of the AGVs, Giesie noted.

While AGVs require a significant investment, there is a substantial payoff in increased material handling ef-

"As a safety professional, you always want your workers to have access to leading edge safety tools that improve safety and focus. Working with **COOLSHIRT SYSTEMS** over the past two years allowed me to help design a tool **by lineman for lineman**. The **A.R.C. Hybrid Cooling System** by **COOLSHIRT SYSTEMS** allows lineman to remain more focused and less fatigued by reducing their core body temperature in extreme environments, therefore reducing the possibility of unintended accidents."

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Designed with portability in mind, measuring 6" x 6" x 20" and weighing in at less than 10 lbs dry. The unit is entirely self-contained and built to last with a 20,000 hour pump.



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©2022 COOLSHIRT SYSTEMS, 401 Westpark Court Suite 200, Peachtree City GA 30269 Office: 800-345-3176 Fax: 678-289-4325 www.coolshirt.com ficiency and accuracy, reduced labor, and decreased damage to racking, equipment and structures. "With AGVs, we were able to utilize our workforce in other value-added tasks rather than just moving metal throughout the facility," Giesie said.

Initial design discussions for the new facility began in August 2021, and included requirements relating to the use of AGVs in a 900,000-square-foot facility that would be developed in southern Chicagoland's Village of University Park.

18,000 Storage Locations Needed

The University Park facility would need 18,000 storage locations to accommodate 6,000 product SKUs that have a combined weight of 50 million pounds of carbon steel, stainless steel, aluminum and specialty metals. Space was also needed for value-added work, such as precision cutting and tube laser operations.

For storage of all that metal, CS&W looked at racking manufacturers throughout the U.S., and then selected Steel King Industries, a leading manufacturer of storage rack and material handling products. The two companies had a long-standing relationship, in that CS&W supplies steel for Steel King's products. "Based on our existing strong relationship with Steel King, its reputation for reliability and for manufacturing extremely durable racking, and its engineering expertise, we found them to have the best solution for our needs," Giesie said.

Steel King Dealer Fulfilled Project Manager Role Another factor that would work to CS&W's advantage was the involvement of Steel King dealer Container Systems, Inc of suburban Chicago.

"This was an extremely large project for Central Steel & Wire," Giesie said. "We needed a reliable partner to ensure success, and Container Systems proved to be that partner. In a project of this size, there is a lot that can go wrong, dealing with a lot of different contractors, equipment vendors, etc. Having Container Systems involved removed that burden from us, and kept the project moving forward to the point that installation was completed ahead of schedule."

The new facility uses Steel King's I-beam cantilever racking for 1,300 uprights, and guard rail products. I-beam cantilever steel storage racks allow access from both sides. This design saves horizontal space normally lost to rack structure, reduces fork truck damage, and allows for faster load and unload times.

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The Steel King I-beam cantilever racking is built for longevity, with structural steel construction and a 50,000 psi minimum yield. A heavy arm connector plate and bolted column-to-base connections adds to durability. Metal services businesses often use I-beam cantilever racking to store items such as pipe, tubing, rolls, steel bars, sheet steel, and structural members.

The cantilever racking is comprised of more than 1,000 double-sided columns, more than 30,000 arms and more than 15,000 linear feet of structural metal for guard rails. "It took 70 truckloads to deliver the racking and guard rail elements – all which came at a pace whereby installers never had to stop their work", noted Mike Scarlati of Container Systems.

"This was a huge order, and what made it work was Steel King's ability to get their product out on time, so installers always had buildable material on hand," said Scarlati.

"The racking system was able to have narrower aisles – and thus have a greater storage density – through an engineering solution designed by Steel King," said Kurt Larson, the company's regional sales manager for the central U.S. "Our engineers designed notches in rails to guide Combilift AGVvehicles, which meant that more space could be dedicated to racking rather than to aisles."

"The new racking system is allowing CS&W to operate more efficiently and with greater productivity. It also will let the company adjust racking to meet changing needs. In their former facility, the racking elements were all welded, so adjustments could not be made. With our system, they'll be able to reconfigure the racking to accommodate changing storage needs," Larson said.

Metal companies like CS&W that seek to dramatically improve the efficiency of their material handling will benefit from working with experienced partners that can tailor industry best practice solutions to their specific requirements.

For more information, call Steel King at (800) 826-0203 or visit them online at **www.steelking.com** •

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100% Inspection Drives Hybrid Bonding to New Heights

Advanced Scanning Acoustic Microscopy equipment detects cracks, voids, and other flaws as small as 5 microns in vertically stacked, hybrid bonded packages. The high-speed metrology tool allows for 100% inspection, speeding manufacturing

Today, hybrid bonding is transforming the semiconductor industry by facilitating the production of increasingly intricate, efficient, and powerful electronic devices. This advancement is beneficial for artificial intelligence, high-performance computing, and graphics processing units.

The reason hybrid bonding is quickly gaining recognition is due to the enhanced reliability and mechanical strength of its interconnects, as well as the space savings compared to traditional bump-based interconnections. This bonding technique vertically links die-to-wafer (D2W) or wafer-to-wafer (W2W) via closely spaced copper pads, bonding the dielectric and metal bond pads simultaneously in a single bonding step.

Hybrid bonding offers several significant benefits, including allowing a higher density of interconnections with shorter pitches, and less distances between the layers. These factors improve signal integrity, reduce latency, lower power consumption, and increase data throughput. Furthermore, hybrid bonding facilitates heterogeneous integration, enabling semiconductor companies to merge multiple chiplets with diverse functions, technology nodes, and sizes into a unified package.

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1.800.321.4936 www.woosterproducts.com sales@wooster-products.com However, to successfully transition to high volume manufacturing with high yields requires advanced metrology tools that can quickly identify defects like cracks and voids within the bonded layers.

"The concept behind three-dimensional advanced packaging is to stack multiple dies or wafers vertically to achieve better performance with lower power requirements, smaller size and lower cost," says Hari Polu, President of PVA TePla OKOS, a Virginia-based manufacturer of SAM and industrial ultrasonic non-destructive (NDT) systems. The company serves the semiconductor, electronics, aerospace, metal/alloy/composite manufacturing, and end-user markets.

"However, as three-dimensional packages become increasingly complex, so do the challenges in identifying defects within vertically stacked, multiple layers. Now, the focus is shifting to methods of non-destructive testing like Scanning Acoustic Microscopy," adds Polu.

According to Polu, Scanning Acoustic Microscopy (SAM) is a non-invasive and non-destructive ultra-



sonic testing method that is quickly becoming the preferred technique for testing and failure analysis involving stacked dies or wafers.

SAM utilizes ultrasound waves to non-destructively examine internal structures, interfaces and surfaces of opaque substrates. The resulting acoustic signatures can be constructed into 3-dimensional images that are analyzed to detect and characterize device flaws such as cracks, delamination, inclusions and voids in bonding interfaces, as well as to evaluate soldering and other interface connections.

SAM is already the industry standard for 100% inspection of semiconductor components to identify defects such as voids, cracks, and delamination within microelectronic devices.

Now the technology has been adapted to facilitate 100% inspection of hybrid bonded packages.

"Innovations in the design of wafer chucks, array transducers, and AI-based analysis of inspection data are converging to provide a more robust SAM solution for fabs involved in hybrid bonding," says Polu.

Solving the Hybrid Bonding Inspection Challenge With hybrid bonding, various steps must be reliably performed to ensure quality, with any failures resulting in unacceptable defects. The stakes are higher than ever considering that even one bad wafer, die, or interconnection could cause the entire package to be discarded down the line. Sub 10-micron defect detection is the new normal.

The process begins by manufacturing the wafers or dies in a semiconductor fab before the chips are bonded together. Typically, the key process steps include the preparation and creation of the pre-bonding layers, the bonding process itself, the post-bond anneal, and the associated inspection and metrology at each of the steps.

"With conventional SAM techniques, wafers were held horizontally in a chuck and processed in a water medium, and this occasionally could lead to water ingress, trapping water, which could cause significant issues in the next step of assembly. By re-designing the chuck in a vertical orientation, we can use gravity to eliminate any concern over water

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ingress, along with other water management technologies," says Polu.

Scanning acoustic microscopy works by directing focused sound from a transducer at a small point on a target object. The sound hitting the object is either scattered, absorbed, reflected, or transmitted. By detecting the direction of scattered pulses as well as the "time of flight," the presence of a boundary or object can be determined as well as its distance. To produce an image, samples are scanned point by point and line by line. Scanning modes range from single layer views to tray scans and cross-sections. Multi-layer scans can include up to 50 independent layers. Depth-specific information can be extracted and applied to create two- and three-dimensional images. The images are then analyzed to detect and characterize flaws such as cracks, delamination, and voids.

According to Polu, advancements in Al-based analy-





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sis of the data collected from SAM inspection of wafer-to-wafer hybrid bonding will further automate quality assurance and increase fab production.

"When fabs take advantage of the higher level of failure detection and analysis, the production yield and overall reliability of high-performance chips improve significantly," says Polu. "Every fab will eventually move towards this level of failure analysis because of the level of detection and precision required for hybrid bonding."

Hybrid bonding represents a significant advancement in chip packaging technology, offering numerous benefits that enhance performance, efficiency, and scalability of semiconductor devices.

Scanning Acoustic Microscopy stands ready to deliver 100% non-destructive inspection of vertically stacked and bonded dieto-wafer (D2W) or wafer-to-wafer (W2W) packages at extremely high speeds to help facilitate the adoption of this technology.

For more information, contact PVA TePla OKOS at info@okos.com or visit www.okos.com. PVA TePla OKOS is a wholly owned subsidiary of PVA TePla AG, Germany

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