



Somerset Cider Solutions:

Investing in the Future

Customer Success Story



→ Tom, Sam and their Flex-Blend 3500

Somerset Cider Solutions uses Flex Blend 3500 to improve operations, save resources and improve overall taste. Factory Manager Tom Ebdon takes us through the benefits.

Q: What made you choose the Flex Blend 3500 from Anton Paar?

A: The Flex Blend 3500 has allowed us to redesign our processing facility to create a more compact process line. This has dramatically increased the efficiency of our operations. The DAVIS software enables continuous monitoring and quality report generation, with parameters visible at a glance. And we've seen a significant process improvement with the additional CO₂ sensor immediately before the filler, which further enhances quality control during kegging.

Q: What kind of savings did the Flex Blend 3500 facilitate?

A: The savings per year were more than the system cost and so, including the additional costs of finance, the return on investment (ROI) would be about a year to 18 months. Changing the processing line also let us replace an inefficient pump, whilst switching to inline carbonation permitted the removal of the carbonation tank, reducing our CO₂ use and offering significant energy and commodities savings. More specifically, we have seen electric and diesel energy savings of more than 25 %, and reduced our CO₂ consumption by about 24 % (over 30 tons) per year.

Q: Has the Flex Blend 3500 saved you time and other resources?

A: Absolutely. Water use is down a huge 3 m³ per day, the 5-stage CIP has been reduced by nearly 1 hour, and the volume of caustic used for CIP has decreased by 10 % because of reduced system size. Furthermore, each product changeover now take around 10 minutes less.



→ Flex-Blend 3600

Q: What other benefits of the instrument made your process easier?

A: There were a number of additional benefits.

Removing the large carbonation tank has saved space and reduced the burden of cleaning by reducing the internal volume of the system.

The Flex Blend 3500 has also given us increased control of the carbonation which has allowed for the reliable production of an array of highly carbonated products, like soft drinks and ready-to-drink cocktails. This has been a major growth sector for Somerset Cider Solutions since the installation of Flex Blend 3500.

And finally, these process improvements have protected Somerset Cider's business by reducing our exposure to the rising energy costs.

Q: All of this has had a positive environmental impact then?

A: Yes, of course, as a result of the significant reduction in CO₂ use, which is ultimately less CO₂ released into the environment, coupled with the reduction in diesel and electric usage, we feel we have created a much more sustainable packaging process.

Q: And what about the product itself? Did you notice any changes?

A: Yes, we actually sampled the cider during one of the production runs in order to analyze the CO₂ content in the lab, and ensure there was good alignment between the results of the production sensors and QC analysis. We were really excited because the new process, driven by the highly efficient carbonator, had given the cider an even better 'tingle on the tongue'!