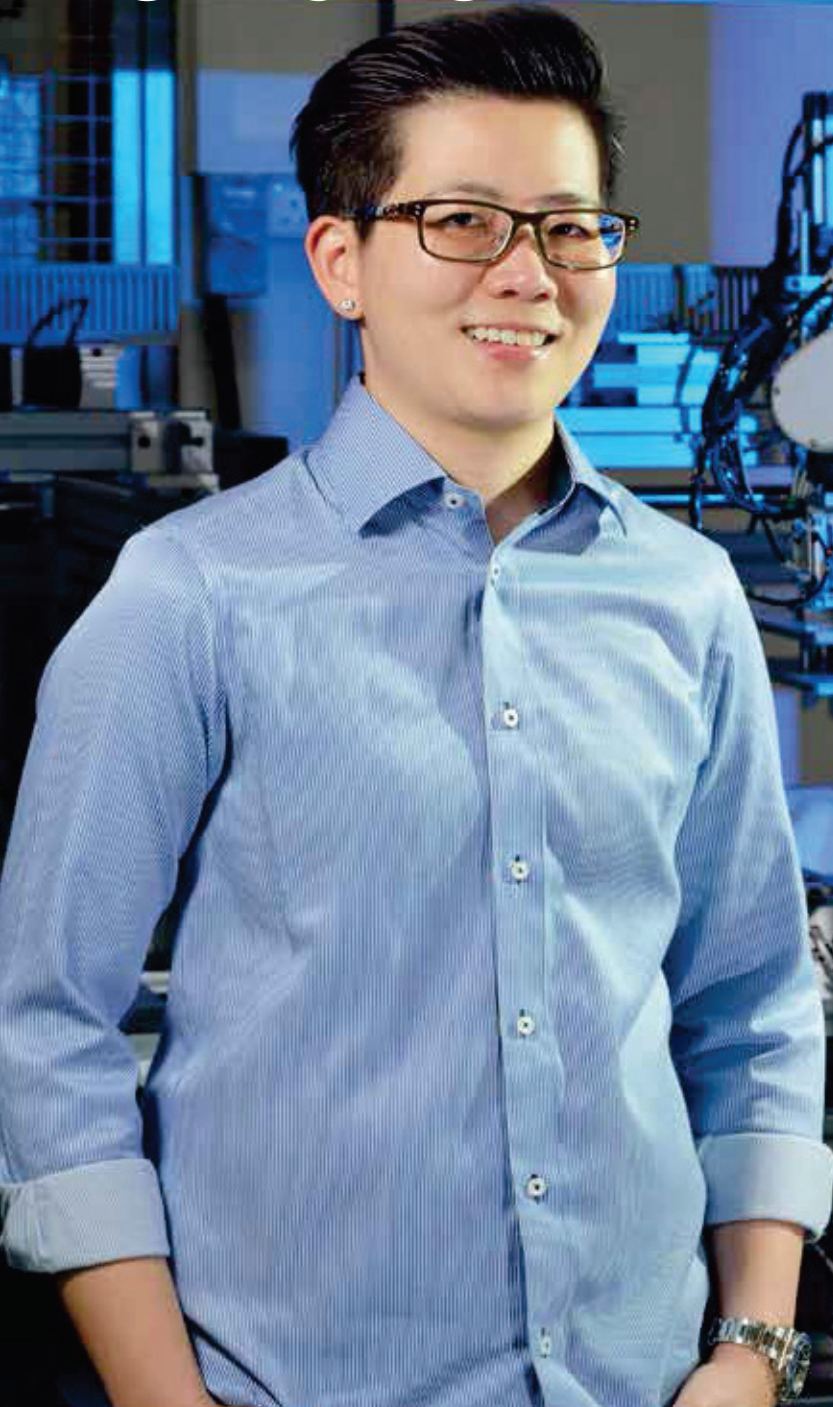


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FAGERDALA:
A SMART
PACKAGE FOR
SUCCESS

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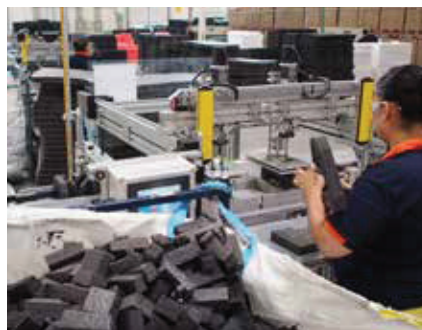


A SMART PACKAGE FOR SUCCESS

Total protective packaging solutions provider Fagerdala uses robotics automation to increase productivity, profits and market opportunities

Fagerdala believes robots aren't just for corporate goliaths. "They can be a powerful tool for growing small businesses – even those with their roots in old-line industries, such as manufacturing," says Ms Diane Yeo, the company's Executive Director of Corporate and Legal Affairs.

Set up in 1983, the Singapore headquartered total protective packaging solutions firm designs, manufactures and utilises custom-built automation to fabricate cushion packaging for equipment sensitive to shock and vibration. However, with business expansion and increasing



competition, Fagerdala continues to face persistent manpower and productivity challenges globally.

"Because manufacturing is largely manpower intensive, competition for labour is fierce in every country, and

managing a global workforce with local differences and cross-cultural nuances is challenging," says Ms Yeo. "Searching for the right people who are willing to take on manual, time-consuming and repetitive, mundane tasks was proving to be difficult as workers these days prefer jobs that provide opportunities for skills development."

The company invested in robotic to address its manpower challenges. "Using SPRING Singapore's Capability Development Grant (CDG) in 2014, we collaborated with Nanyang Polytechnic to create a robotics system to automate and condense assembly processes,

improve workflow, reduce our reliance on manpower and boost productivity.”

The CDG allows businesses to claim up to 70% of qualifying costs for initiatives to improve capabilities.

Increasing efficiency

The robotics system uses smart visual recognition to identify and assemble parts and materials, consolidating three workstations into a single assembly line. This has helped Fagerdala shorten its production time by 75%.

The company has also achieved manpower savings. “Previously, we needed seven people to man three workstations, but now we only require one systems operator,” says Ms Yeo.

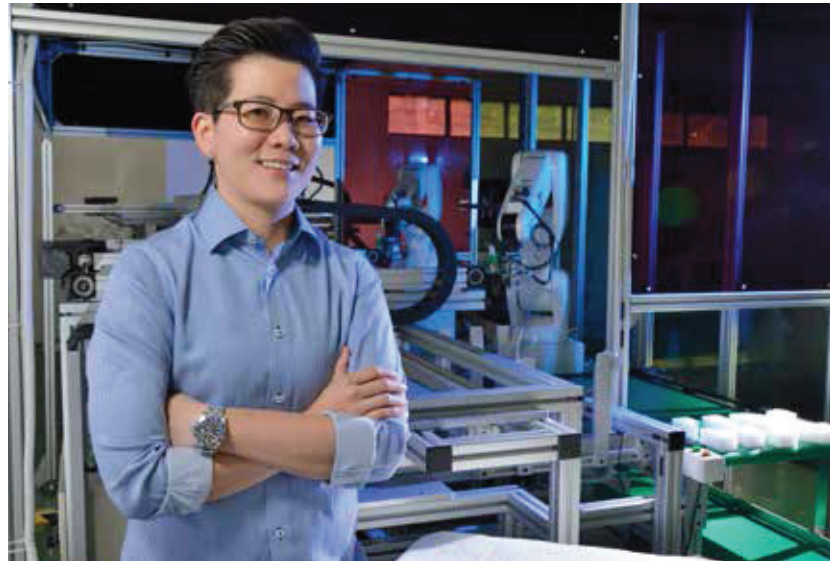
Ms Yeo calls this the “power of the worker-machine pairing”. “Robotic automation is only as good as its operators,” she says. “That’s why we plan to equip our staff with technician-level skills and knowledge, so that they’ll be able to effectively handle, service, maintain and troubleshoot the robotics system.”

Boosting production capacity

Today, Fagerdala services some of the biggest names in the information technology, biomedical, telecommunications and automotive industries in six countries, including China, Mexico and North America, across its 15 facilities and two design centres.

The robotics system will play a strong part in the company’s success overseas. “Since implementing the system, we have seen a fourfold increase in our production output, enabling us to take large-scale orders, generate higher profits and strengthen our overseas presence,” says Ms Yeo.

“As the robotics system also helps us reduce costs, material loss and wastage, we’ve been able to price our products more competitively and



“ Since implementing the robotics system, we have seen a fourfold increase in our production output, enabling us to take large-scale orders, generate higher profits and strengthen our overseas presence. ”

Ms Diane Yeo

Executive Director of Corporate and Legal Affairs, Fagerdala

gain a leg-up over our competitors,” she adds.

By 2018, Fagerdala aims to have two more robotics system installed in its overseas factories to ensure the same product consistency, quality and output in all countries in which it operates.

Solution for growth and success

The company’s success as a result of implementing the robotics system has given it more confidence to expand its business offerings.

“We’re working on diversifying our product portfolio to appeal to a wider range of customers,” says Ms Yeo. “For instance, as packaging is important in the promotion of a product, we plan to add aesthetic packaging and increase our material diversity to our suite of solutions.”

The company also plans to incorporate predictive analytics into its robotics system. “Predictive analytics will

allow us to gauge where the next demand for our products will occur, so that we can proactively deliver them at the point of need,” Ms Yeo says.

“It will also enable us to collect data from our machines across different factories and countries and, for instance, generate machine failure data analysis, which we can use to reduce disruptions and potential losses.”

Overall, she believes that the robotics system is one of the company’s biggest assets. “It enables us to increase output, produce high-quality error-free products, reduce risks and generate savings – all of which put the company on a path to future growth.” ■

keytakeaways

- Robotics automation can be used as a tool to improve productivity and profits.
- Visit <http://www.spring.gov.sg/CDG> to find out how SPRING can help you in your automation efforts.