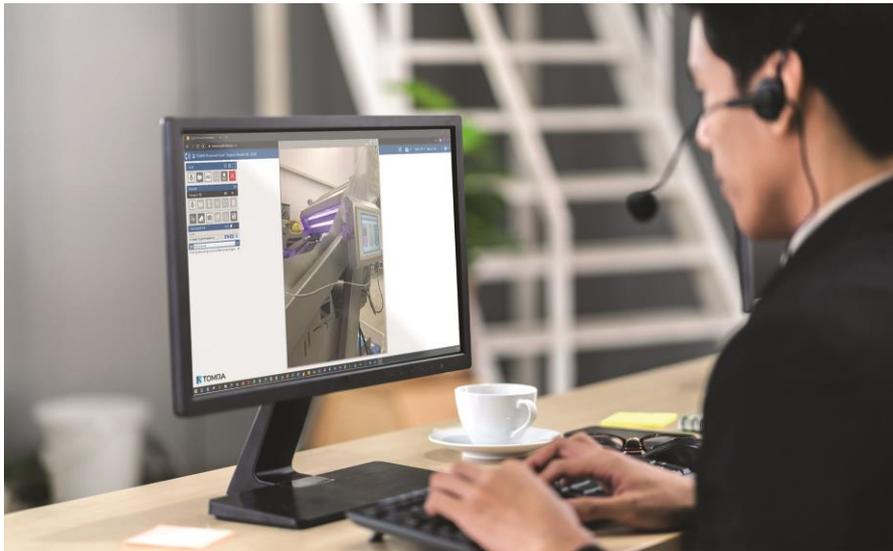


Digital assistance in production – Tomra is using augmented reality for fast online support

Rapid support when machines in the production department fail is extremely important to producers. While service technicians previously helped to determine and rectify the problem on site, Tomra is now offering a faster and simpler option for its sensor-based sorting machines and post-harvesting solutions. The new Visual Assist augmented reality tool can provide expert support via a video call on the system operator's mobile phone.



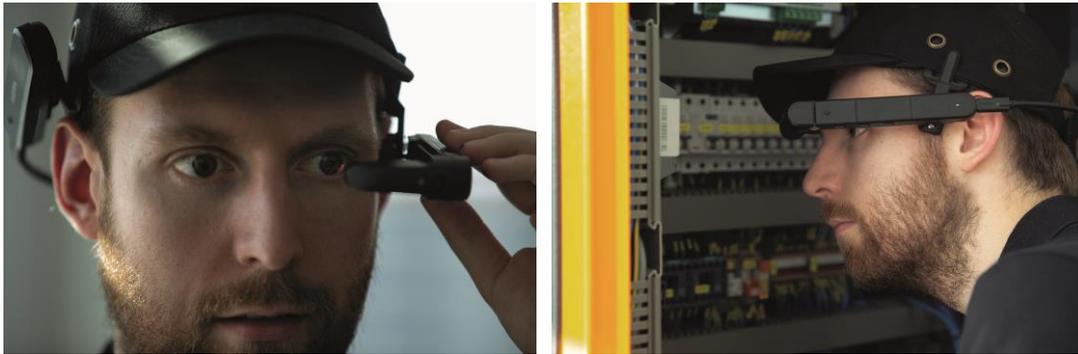
From now on, Tomra experts will be providing help with Visual Assist, the new augmented reality tool for remote machine support. (Photo: © Tomra Food)

Problem-solving through remote diagnosis

Tomra's sensor-based sorting machines and post-harvesting solutions operate on the basis of cutting-edge sorting, peeling and analysis technologies. They can be used firstly on the receiving side of the processing line. Here, these pre-sorters prevent large foreign objects such as rodents, stones, plastic or glass from making their way onto the conveyor belt. Or secondly, they can be positioned downstream, where they can carry out a multitude of tasks from weed separation to the removal of minute fragments of foreign objects as well as products with discoloured exteriors.

To ensure that the machines constantly remain available, Tomra has extended its remote service with an additional feature: the Visual Assist augmented reality tool. It enables a wider range of problems with varying degrees of complexity to be solved by means of remote diagnosis. The result is a longer operating life and better machine performance. The necessity of personal visits is additionally reduced.

Particularly during the harvesting season, when large volumes of fruit and vegetables need to be processed, "our machines' operational readiness is crucially important", reports Andreas Reddemann of Tomra Food. Especially when the user is handling perishable products, "machine downtimes can lead to a deterioration in the quality of their products", says the head of global service at Tomra Food, Aftermarket & Service.



Smart glasses enable remote diagnosis using augmented reality, during which the customer technician or the field service technician on site have their hands free. (Photos: © Tomra Food)

Good to go with mobile phone and camera

Visual Assist is easy to operate and only requires a mobile phone with a camera. When the customer requests support via a message, e-mail or telephone call, the customer service employee sends an invitation to initiate the session. Opening the app establishes a connection to the Tomra expert who is most suitable for providing help for the customer's specific problem. As soon as the connection has been established, communication takes place by means of voice and video. In this process, the service engineer can direct the customer to transmit the areas currently of relevance using the camera on his mobile phone. Documents and annotated pictures can also be shared in order to explain and clarify instructions. "This means that the customer's technician receives the support necessary to resolve the problem immediately and get the machine up and running again. If a part has to be exchanged for a repair, our experts can identify it and make sure that the right replacement part is delivered, which increases the speed of repair", states Reddeman.

Maximisation of machine availability

Visual Assist also connects the Tomra experts to the customer service employee on the ground in the event of questions concerning specific applications or technical problems. The additional support provided by the expert means that the field service technicians are able to solve a variety of problems. "Our most competent and experienced employees are able to share their knowledge much more widely than before when they still had to travel to each site", says Reddemann. "As soon as a field service technician has finished servicing a machine, for example, he can link up with our technical expert, who is familiar with the customer's application and the allocation profiles of its product. This helps the field service technician on the ground

to set the correct sorter classification for this product's specific profile." In addition, Visual Assist is a valuable instrument for carrying out training and sharing the specialist knowledge of qualified product experts with Tomra's field service.

Further information and contact

Tomra Food

Belgium

Marijke Bellemans

Marketing Communication Manager

Tel.: +32 (0)16 74 28 17

marijke.bellemans@tomra.com

www.tomra.com/food