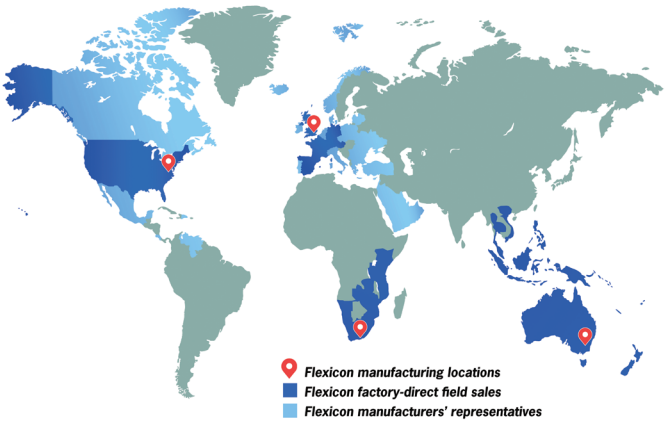
Flexicon Weigh Batch System Cost-Effective for Lenox China



USA
FLEXICON CORPORATION
Tel: +1 610 814 2400
E-mail: sales@flexicon.com
Web: www.flexicon.com

UK
FLEXICON (EUROPE) LTD
Tel: +44 1227 374710
E-mail: sales@flexicon.co.uk
Web: www.flexicon.co.uk

AUSTRALIA
FLEXICON CORPORATION
(AUSTRALIA) PTY LTD
Tel: +61 7 3879 4180
E-mail: sales@flexicon.com.au
Web: www.flexicon.com.au

SOUTH AFRICA
FLEXICON AFRICA (PTY) LTD
Tel: +27 41 453 1871
E-mail: sales@flexicon.co.za
Web: www.flexicon.co.za

SPAIN
FLEXICON EUROPE SPAIN
Tel: +34 930 020 509
E-mail: ventas@flexicon.es
Web: www.flexicon.es

FRANCE
FLEXICON EUROPE SAS
Tel: +33 7 61 36 56 12
E-mail: ventes@flexicon.fr
Web: www.flexicon.fr

GERMANY
FLEXICON EUROPE GmbH
Tel: +49 173 900 78 76
E-mail: vertrieb@flexiconeurope.de
Web: www.flexicondeutschland.de

SINGAPORE
FLEXICON SINGAPORE PTE LTD
Tel: +65 6778 9225
E-mail: sales@flexicon.com.sg
Web: www.flexicon.com.sg

INDONESIA
FLEXICON SINGAPORE PTE LTD
Tel: +62 81 1103 2400
E-mail: sales@flexicon.co.id
Web: www.flexicon.co.id

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KINSTON, NC — Lenox China is well known as a maker of fine china which is sold through company stores and other retail outlets. The company has been in business for more than a century.

Three Flexicon units convey proprietary forms of feldspar, a raw material used in the manufacturing of china.

Prior to installation of the Flexicon conveyors, the feldspar was dumped by hand from 50-pound bags into a hopper sitting atop a scale.

When the desired amount of material was collected, the full hopper would be removed and replaced with an empty hopper.

Now 2,000 pound bulk bags of feldspar are lifted using an electric hoist and positioned above three hoppers feeding three Flexicon flexible screw conveyors.

The Flexicon units transfer the material upwards, almost vertically, and discharge it into a large 6-foot diameter weigh hopper.

Each Flexicon unit conveys a different raw material. Load cells supporting the weigh hopper signal the system to shut off the conveyors when the proper amount of raw material is in the hopper.

An automatic valve on the bottom of the weigh hopper opens, emptying its contents into a chute which transfers the material to a high-shear mixer, where the dry ingredients are mixed with water to produce a thick slurry.

The three Flexicon units combined move more than 2,000 pounds of material per day.

Eliminates manual lifting, increasing weighing accuracy

“The Flexicon system eliminates manual lifting and provides for more precise weighing of raw ingredients than was previously possible,” says Bill Beach, senior mechanical engineer, Lenox China.

“Picking up 50-pound bags by hand was labor intensive and not economical. The Flexicon system enables us to automate our process without increasing our cost. The equipment has proved to be the least costly of all the alternatives that could perform the functions we are looking for.”

“Another reason we decided on Flexicon was their test facility where they ran tests with our material to confirm that the unit could do the job before we bought it. This gave us the confidence to go ahead with them.”

Saves labor

“Switching from 50 to 2,000-pound bags has resulted in a lot less handling of raw materials. It also allows us to buy in bulk, reducing our materials costs.

“The flexible screw conveyors give us better control when feeding raw materials into the hopper than dribbling the feldspar from 50-pound bags. The enclosed tube keeps the operation free of dust, so dust control systems do not become clogged.”

Reliable performance

“The Flexicon conveyors feature a simple design, and are not complicated to take apart for routine maintenance.”

“The units are reliable mechanically, and require minimal maintenance, and service from Flexicon has been excellent.”

Flexicon®

USA
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Tel: +1 610 814 2400
E-mail: sales@flexicon.com
Web: www.flexicon.com