

All in one, yet individual

With IndividualMilk Technology, Franke Coffee Systems is enabling the automatic market to meet growing demands for alternatives to traditional dairy milk.

For years, alternatives to traditional dairy – whether they be lactose-free or plant-based milks – have become increasingly popular in the coffee industry. David Downing, Sales Director Oceania for Franke Coffee Systems, estimates that almost one-fifth of milk coffees in Australia are made with a non-dairy product.

However, short of installing a second machine in a venue, he says the automatic market has struggled to accommodate preferences for dairy alternatives.

“There is a strong demand in the

café market for non-dairy products, but it’s not an option available in many other segments. Here in Australia, we spoke to distributors and customers in the corporate, convenience, and hotel sectors, and saw there was a need for different milk options through an automatic system,” David says.

“But how to separate those milk types in an automatic system has been a challenge for many years.”

With demand for non-dairy products expected to grow, Franke set out to overcome this hurdle with its latest technological innovation, IndividualMilk Technology, unveiled in March 2021.

Rolled out in Franke’s Specialty Beverage Station (SB1200), IndividualMilk Technology uses two independent milk systems to prevent mixing, residue, or cross-contamination between different milk alternatives.

“We wanted to develop a technology that can tag along to that growing demand in the market for dairy alternatives and offer them in other segments where it hasn’t been available,” David says.

“From the moment the customer touches the screen to select the beverage to when the milks are dispensed, they’re kept completely separate, so the consumer can be very confident that just the milk or non-dairy alternative they selected is what they get.”

David calls IndividualMilk Technology a progression of the FoamMaster™ milk handling technology which Franke successfully implemented into its fully automatic A-range in 2010.

Franke is able to calibrate the settings of the SB1200’s FoamMaster™ and iQFlow™ espresso extraction technology to best cater to the customer’s milk of choice. David says this support from Franke extends beyond the initial installation.

“If a customer decides, for instance, almond milk isn’t selling and they want to switch to lactose-free, we’re there to help them calibrate it for whatever needs to be done,” he says.

“It’s important when we introduce new innovations to work with those customers to adapt to that technology and give sound guidance on how to best use it. It’s not just about selling equipment for us. We want to help our customers and evolve the market.”

Franke also intends to work with local dairy and dairy alternative suppliers to ensure IndividualMilk Technology can be optimised for different products, and that milks are available in formats and packaging suited to operators’ needs.

But Franke IndividualMilk Technology is just one way the SB1200 embraces variety and customisation. The modular station serves as a full coffee solution, including a benchtop coffee machine with optional add-ons, as well as payment solutions and cup warmers. Under-counter features include a Franke Flavor Station, CleanMaster cleaning system, and milk fridge/cooling unit.

Another optional add-on is the Franke Iced Coffee Module that chills espresso as it leaves the machine to allow the user to serve cold coffee drinks. Either hot or cold coffee can also be combined with hot or cold milk and milk foam to produce a variety of beverages.

“In a normal café environment, you have a two- or three-group espresso machine, maybe two grinders for different blends, maybe a nitro system or cold brew option, and then you have a barista. With the SB1200, this all comes in one unit,” David says.

“With both dairy and dairy alternatives, it can offer the customer not only hot beverages but authentic iced coffees. Because we reduce the



Franke IndividualMilk Technology allows an operator to serve more than one milk option from the SB1200.

temperature of the extracted coffee before it’s dispensed, you’re not getting ice melting as soon as the hot coffee touches it, which dilutes the drink.”

David says the SB1200 caters to many trends in the Australian coffee market, beyond the popularity of plant-based milks. This includes increasing appreciation of cold brew, in both the café and retail space. The SB1200 has it all, including the ability to serve cold brew and nitro beverages in addition to iced coffees.

“We’re seeing a lot of the mainstream roasters pushing nitro and cold brew, cafés are starting to offer it, and you see it in retail too, whether that’s in a bottle or a can,” David says. “But many of the markets we operate in haven’t had this type of inclusive and flexible offering before. We can now go to customers, whether that’s in a corporate environment, where staff used to have to leave the office to get their coffee, or convenience, where they’d lose business because they couldn’t offer a non-dairy or cold product.”

“There’s even areas like mining sites. A lot of the miners travel remotely and when they go home, they get their cold brews and dairy alternatives in cafés. When they go back to mining sites, there’s an expectation they get those there as well.”

Like all Franke automatics, the SB1200 is telemetry enabled and can connect to the Franke Digital Services platform. This allows the operator to access, monitor, or download usage and maintenance data. Or, information can be remotely uploaded, such as for sales, promotions, and messages to staff

or customers. David says COVID-19 has accelerated people’s need and understanding of telemetry.

“There’s a massive advantage in how we can not only download but also upload information and data remotely. There’s a lot of cost savings there for a business and advantages for roasters and distributors who want to tap into the data on the performance of the equipment and the ingredients,” David says.

“Australia is a big country, and the cost of service is quite expensive. Resolving a customer concern over telemetry, rather than having a service technician drive a couple of hours to visit a site, really pays dividends to the customer when it comes to after sales support.”

He adds while there used to be a stigma attached to automatic coffee machines, the quality of coffee from automatics has taken leaps and bounds, and pre-conceived notions of ‘traditional versus automatic’ are starting to fade.

“If you look at the traditional side of the market, in the café, you see self-adjusting grinders, hybrid systems, and automatic tampers and milk steamers. That tech is coming closer to where we play in the automatic market,” David says. “People used to shy away from automatics because they didn’t meet that standard of what we’d see in a

café, but now that’s completely changed. Thanks to iQFlow, the quality of the coffee that comes out of our system is second to none, whether that be in terms of milk texture or espresso extraction.”

Quality relies on machine hygiene too. Cleaning on the Franke SB1200 is fully automated, including spout and Flavor Station, with CleanMaster, making daily operations and maintenance a breeze with no disassembly required.

With a high consumption of milk-based coffees, dairy or otherwise, David says Australia is an important market to Franke, and it’s one primed for Franke IndividualMilk Technology.

“We’re a very mature coffee market and when it comes to the beverage itself, we lead globally in the development of roast profiles and innovations in beverage types,” David says.

“Australia also prides itself on leading in or adaption to new technology, whether that’s traditional or automatic. We see that every time we launch a new machine, system, or feature, and I think we will see that again with Franke IndividualMilk Technology.”

For more information, visit www.franke.com/content/corporate/ch/en/cs/campaigns-group-page/individualmilk-technology.html



Franke Coffee Systems is responding to a growing demand for dairy alternatives.



The SB1200 embraces customisation to provide a full-system automatic solution.