

Scaling an Emerging Brand:

How ZoRoCo and RBS helped Partake expand production and possibilities





Since 2007, Idaho-based ZoRoCo Packaging has been delivering contract manufacturing and co-packaging solutions that help brands scale efficiently. From sourcing and blending to packaging and fulfillment, ZoRoCo offers turnkey services with a focus on flexibility and transparency.

Recently, Reading Bakery Systems partnered with ZoRoCo to design and install an automated tunnel oven system to support the growth of Partake, an emerging allergen-/gluten-free cookie brand.

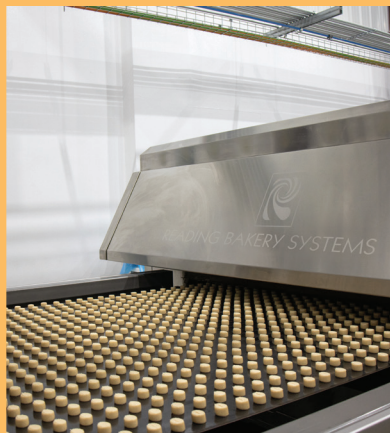
Partnerships built on trust and transparency

ZoRoCo differentiates itself through highly collaborative relationships with its customers. The company's custom-built ERP system offers an example of that approach, as it gives ZoRoCo's clients 24/7 access to their accounts. Customers can see everything from inventory and production status to waste and work order data, enabling a level of transparency that's uncommon in contract manufacturing.

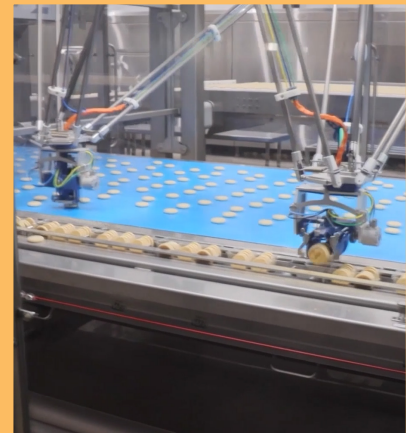
That same partnership mindset guided ZoRoCo's decision to work with Partake during its early stages. Inspired by founder Denise Woodard's mission to create safe, allergen-free cookies for her daughter and others with food allergies, ZoRoCo took a chance on the brand, supporting its growth from startup to a now nationally recognized product line.



RBSConnect control panel



Cookies entering oven



Pick and place robotics system

From batch production to scalable automation

For the first several years, ZoRoCo baked Partake products in rack ovens. As demand grew, the company began exploring how to scale production while maintaining the product quality and allergen controls that defined the brand. ZoRoCo's move to a linear, automated oven system followed several years of careful evaluation, which included layout planning in an existing facility and long-term capacity considerations.

Following a comprehensive evaluation, ZoRoCo partnered with RBS, leveraging its process expertise, validation capabilities through the Innovation Center, and strong customer support to ensure a successful scale-up. To support Partake's cookie product mix and allow room for expansions into adjacent products, RBS engineers designed an automated system featuring a Rotary Moulder, Wirecut Machine, and Emithermic Zone oven—delivering the flexibility, consistency, and throughput required to support both current products and future innovation. Trials conducted at the RBS Science & Innovation Center helped reduce risk, verify product quality and process design before installation.

Implementing the new oven system involved a challenging system layout and a major operational shift. ZoRoCo transitioned its gluten-free production into a new facility and converted its existing operation into a fully Big-9 allergen-free manufacturing environment, creating a scalable, future-ready platform for Partake and other better-for-you brands.



Driving throughput, consistency, and new opportunities

From product trials through installation and startup, RBS worked closely with ZoRoCo's team to ensure a smooth transition to the automated production line. Hands-on support and training helped ZoRoCo operators adapt to the new system quickly and take advantage of its time- and labor-saving features.

Operator controls on the Rotary Moulder and Wirecut Machine automate key forming steps while allowing recipes and process settings to be saved and repeated with precision. Both machines are also designed for easy access, simplifying cleaning and maintenance.

The same automation and ease of use extend to the Emithermic Zone oven, which combines Thermatec® radiant panels with convective heat transfer and a humidity-controlled bake zone. Recipe-driven controls help ensure consistent performance while reducing the need for constant operator oversight.

Once the RBS line was operational, ZoRoCo saw immediate and measurable results. Partake's daily throughput tripled, allowing the brand to meet growing market demand and expand its distribution.

With the additional capacity now available, ZoRoCo and Partake are exploring new product opportunities. The combined flexibility of the RBS forming equipment and oven will allow Partake to expand production into granola products, further maximizing the system's long-term value.





Positioned for growth in the better-for-you market

Today, ZoRoCo is focused on continuing to grow alongside its customers, helping existing brands scale within current capacity while preparing for future expansion. The company's leadership team remains committed to the better-for-you segment, including plant-based and allergen-friendly foods, where demand continues to rise.

According to ZoRoCo's Chief Growth Officer Sharone Story, the automated RBS system has helped put ZoRoCo in a strong position for continued success:

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In the short term, our new automated tunnel oven from Reading Bakery Systems will allow us to scale Partake up in a way that works for them and our production team. Longer term, this flexible RBS system and their hands-on support will help us help the next generation of food brands bring innovative snack products to market.

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Chief Growth Officer – Sharone Story



View RBS production
line video at ZoRoCo
Packaging.

