

Cutting edge solution in Particle Size and Shape analysis

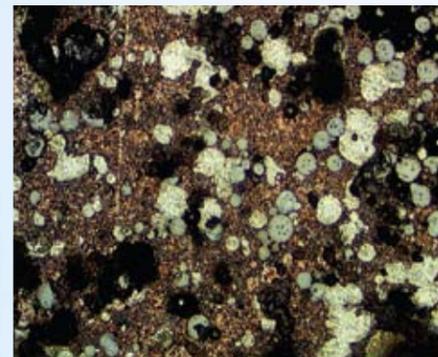
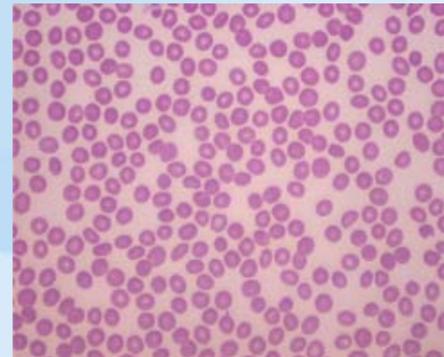
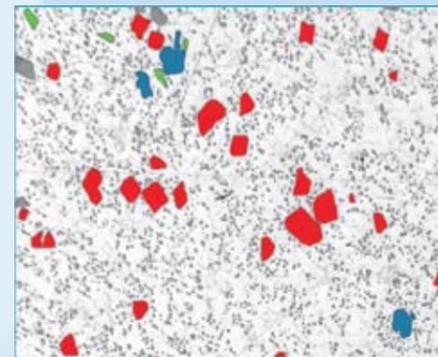
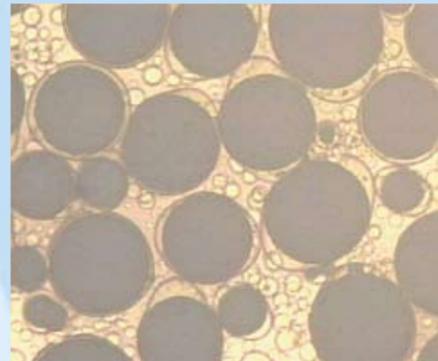
PSA300



PSA300

Automated image analysis to measure particle size and shape.

The HORIBA PSA300 is a state of the art turnkey image analysis system for particle size and shape characterization. The seamless integration of Clemex-designed image analysis software with automated microscopy creates a powerful, but easy to use workstation for use in a wide range of applications from pharmaceutical research to materials science. Automated image analysis is rapidly replacing manual microscopy in laboratories wanting unparalleled accuracy and resolution in size and shape coupled with the statistical confidence from inspecting thousands more particles than otherwise possible.



Why Image Analysis?

Accuracy:

Microscopy is the preferred technique for particle size analysis since it is the most direct measurement possible.

When searching for the “real particle size distribution”, only one technique provides the most accurate results – image analysis.

Statistical certainty:

The challenge with manual microscopy is inspecting enough particles to assure statistical validity to reported distribution values. Automated image analysis quickly inspects thousands (or hundreds of thousands) of particles, ensuring confidence not only at the mean, but also at the tails of the distribution (d10 and d90).

Particle shape information:

Particle shape is extremely valuable information since morphology affects many critical performance characteristics including powder flow and compaction. Image analysis is the only technique that directly reports particle shape distribution

using a multitude of parameters such as roundness, aspect ratio, convexity, and many others.

Images:

A single picture of a particle next to a size scale has settled many an argument over the presence of large particles in a sample. The PSA300 can store an image of every particle inspected, providing intuitive confirmation of the kind of particles in a sample.

Finding outlier populations:

All techniques that inspect particles one at a time are inherently higher resolution than ensemble methods. Since image analysis is a high resolution counting technique, it can effectively detect outlier populations (both larger and smaller than the main population). For active pharmaceutical ingredients this is a critical advantage for finding small amounts of large particles that could negatively impact dose uniformity.

Size analysis of non-spherical particles:

All light scattering techniques, optical

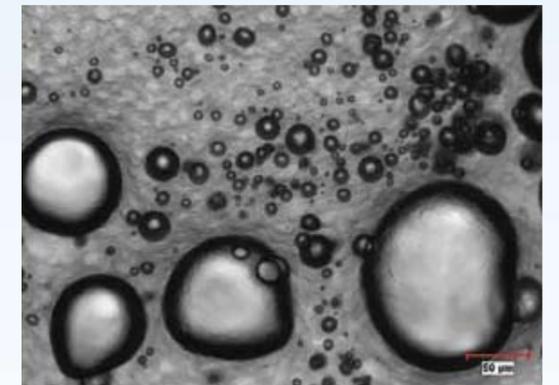
counters, and electric sensing zone counters are based on equivalent spherical diameter models. Microscopy/image analysis is the only technique that provides accurate size and shape distribution information for particles of any shape. Several industry-leading pharmaceutical companies now regularly switch to image analysis for particles beyond a defined aspect ratio.

Support method development and validation:

Even when laser diffraction will be the release test for an API, image analysis can play a critical role in both method development and validation. Since microscopy/image analysis is the referee technique in particle size analysis, image analysis could be used as an accuracy test during method validation. The FDA guidance document for method validation states, “Several methods of determining accuracy are available....Comparison of the results of the proposed analytical procedure with those of a second well-characterized procedure, the accuracy of which is stated and/or defined.”

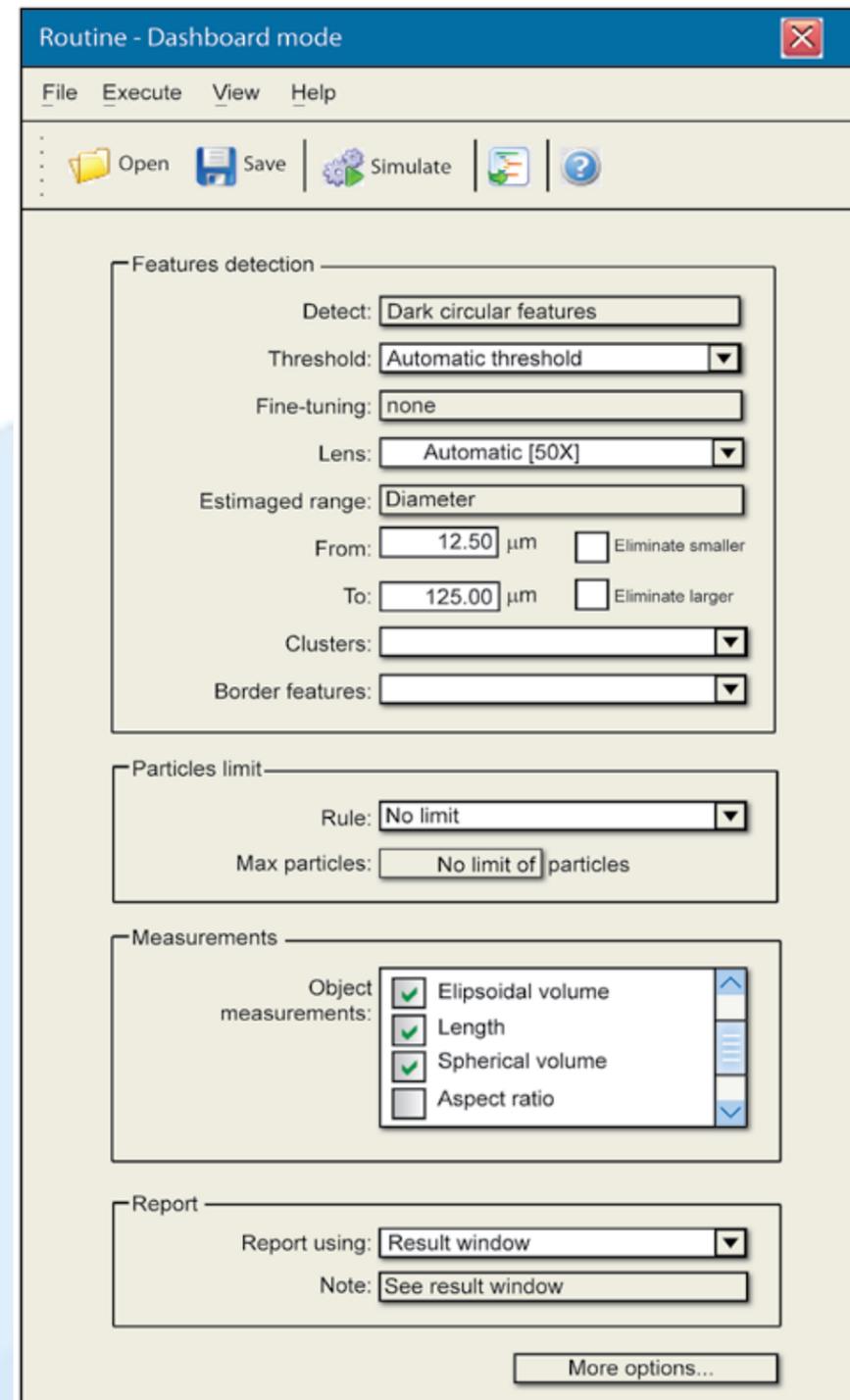
Principle of Operation

Due to advances in both hardware and software, image analysis is now one of the easier techniques for particle characterization. It's as simple as preparing the sample, loading the sample onto a slide, putting the slide in the PSA300, clicking the run button and then viewing the measurement result.



Unique Software Features

The image analysis software created by Clemex comes from a group of scientists working in the field of image analysis for many years. The software has now been customized for particle size and shape applications for use with the PSA300. This is a radically different approach than the software designed by particle sizing companies who recently learned to apply image analysis to this application. Because of the difference in development path the PSA300 software contains many powerful software features that are standard image analysis tools, but are unique in the field of particle characterization. The new Dashboard Routine mode provides an easy to use GUI that facilitates optimizing advanced software features into application specific analysis routines.

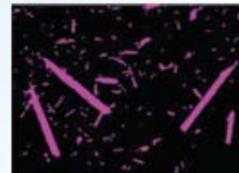
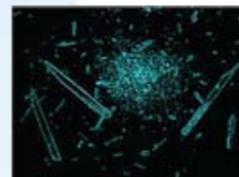


Some of the unique features found in the PSA300 software include:

Thresholding:

All image analysis programs offer some kind of threshold function to separate the particles from the background. The PSA300 software provides the flexibility to achieve this goal regardless of sample difficulty. Features unique to the PSA300 software include Auto Gray Threshold and Contrast Thresholding.

Auto Gray Threshold automatically detects phases in a grayscale image. With Auto-thresholding, you no longer need to manually set intensity intervals because the software chooses the optimum conditions.



The top image is before thresholding. The center image shows the effect of conventional thresholding and the bottom images shows the effect of using contrast threshold.

Simple automation:

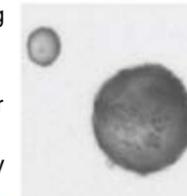
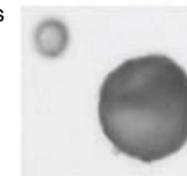
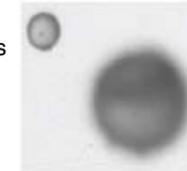
The PSA300 Dashboard organizes all of these advanced software features into an easy to use single screen. The operator simply chooses the desired operations and calculated results using the single window shown to the left.

The Contrast Threshold function is extremely useful when measuring particles where the particle/background contrast is weak.

Multilayer Grab:

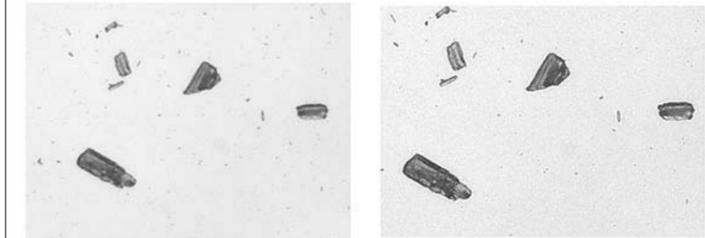
This is a unique function that is useful for samples with a wide range of particle sizes. Depth of field limitations make it difficult to have both small and large particles in focus at the same time. By adjusting the height (z-axis), focusing on different portions of the image, and combining these views, a sharp image can be generated despite the fact that various portions of the image are within different focal planes. The past alternative of using multiple objectives and then combining the data not only takes more time, but introduces error in the combination. It's easy to see why the Multilayer Grab is innovating image analysis.

The images above show the same field with the small particle in focus, the large particle in focus and the combined view with all particles in focus using the unique Multilayer Grab.



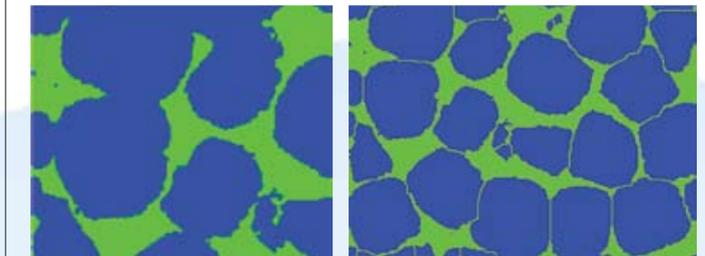
Delineation:

The camera detects intermediate gray levels wherever there is a transition from light to dark or dark to light at the edge of the particle. The Delineation function removes intermediate gray levels to increase contrast by changing the gray value of pixels in the transition zone by assigning them either the maximum or minimum value in the kernel depending on which is closest to their original value. The images below show the original image (left) and the resultant image (right) after the delineation function has been applied.



Bridge Removal

This feature separates juxtaposed or slightly superimposed particles. Two particles touching each other may be measured as one large particle without bridge removal. With Bridge Removal, those particles are accurately separated and measured. The images below show an image before (left) and after (right) applying the bridge removal function. The Bridge Removal function can be adjusted to optimize particle separation depending on surface roughness and the number of pixels touching each other.



Specifications:

Measuring range:	Recommended range is 0.5 to 1000 microns in size (2000 microns size with 1.25X optional objective)
Size Parameters:	Main length (longest particle dimension), circular diameter (equivalent diameter based on particle area), feret average (caliper measurements circumscribing particle), string length (curved fiber type particle length) and any user defined parameter.
Shape Parameters:	Aspect ratio (particle length/particle width), particle Sphericity (area/perimeter ratio), particle Roundness (area/circle area ratio), particle Roughness (edge smoothness), string aspect ratio (fiber type particle aspect ratio), and any user defined shape parameters.
Volume Parameters:	Spherical volume (volume based on spherical particle, closest to laser diffraction results), cylindrical volume (volume of rod type particles), tetragonal volume (volume of crystal shaped particles) and any user defined volume parameters.
Hardware Package:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enclosed automated microscope 2.5X, 5X, 10X, 20X and 50X objectives. • Computer - controlled motorized nosepiece, condenser and focus @ 0.05 mm/Step • CLEMEX controller for motorized stage with 215 x 75 mm travel @ 0.5 mm/step • High-resolution 2.1 Megapixel, USB 2.0 CCD mono camera (color camera upon request) • Three 4-slide holders • NIST-traceable calibration slide • Ultra-high performance computer with state of the art Intel processor • Two 20" LCD UXGA (1600 x 1200 pixels) color monitors and dual monitor stand
Software Package:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • User and data management module (21 CFR PART 11 compliant), report generator and measurement templates. • CLEMEX R'KIVE™ Explorer for file archiving • Microscope automation software
Physical	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The instrument operates and meets all specifications on a power source of 100-115 Volts/60 Hz. • The instrument operates under conditions of 5° C to 40° C. • The instrument weighs approximately 70 lbs. (excluding the computer) and has dimensions of 27" x 20" x 12" (without powder disperser).

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