

ATS Helps Hand Tool Maker Get a Grip on Maintenance/Parts Costs, Saving \$540K in First Year

Customer Challenge

DIY projects aren't always about bathroom faucets and backyard decks. One major U.S. hand tool manufacturer, instead of working with a specialist, had been doing its own factory maintenance. It was a daunting task—the company's production equipment, spread across multiple buildings on its factory campus, was aging and increasingly in need of upkeep.

The biggest challenge for this manufacturer was downtime. Maintenance jobs were primarily reactive and internal technicians were finding it difficult to keep up with repairs. Moreover, no overall strategy was in place, either to improve equipment effectiveness or to minimize the high cost of repair part inventories. As a result, production was suffering and expenses were mounting. Worker safety was becoming an issue as well.

ATS Solution

ATS was retained to overhaul the manufacturer's maintenance and parts management efforts. Using its comprehensive maintenance solution approach, ATS began addressing every aspect of the company's programs, from organizational alignment and people development to documentation and safety.

According to ATS Area Business Manager, it was important to integrate activities to maximize ROI. "We know from experience that a better parts program improves maintenance effectiveness. When they work hand in hand, downtime can be reduced significantly—and costs drop as well," he said.

ATS developed a strategic plan for critical spare parts. Six Sigma specialists implemented cost and performance controls for both machine maintenance and parts inventories. Using advanced data analytics, ATS professionals looked at core causes of downtime events, with the goal of transitioning the tool maker to a preventive maintenance footing.

Bottom-Line Success

In just its first year onsite, ATS has saved the manufacturer \$540,299. Direct savings from both Six Sigma and non-Six Sigma efforts have

AT A GLANCE

- Multi-plant facility with aging manufacturing equipment
- High downtime rates due to reactive in-house maintenance strategy
- ATS retained to analyze and execute comprehensive parts and maintenance program
- Data-driven approach produces \$540,299 in year one direct savings
- Six Sigma effort also produces zero LWD and zero recordable incident safety record in first year

positively impacted both parts and maintenance. The number of maintenance technicians required has dropped as well, with further improvements expected.

Worker safety, a high priority for the program, has been exceptional. Zero worker days have been lost since ATS began work, with much of the credit given to better machine maintenance. "Safety is a huge part of ATS culture. Our safety team does site visits, we provide mentoring, and we generate weekly updates on our safety inspections," noted ATS Area Business Manager.

The manufacturer has rewarded ATS' success by asking it to expand into quality control. Equipment calibration services, handled in-house in the past, are just one of the new services for which ATS is submitting proposals. "We don't have a one-size-fits-all approach," said ATS Area Business Manager. "Every time we enter a new relationship, we carefully build a customized solution. Time and again it has worked—and this customer is no exception."

