

# ATS Implements Preventative Maintenance Program and Increases Plant Output 21% YoY

## Customer Challenge

In the gypsum industry, the difference between profit and loss can sometimes be measured in grease fittings and worn parts. Essentially one long, continuous production line, wallboard manufacturing is particularly subject to machine failure. If one piece of equipment goes down, all work stops—sometimes for a day or more.

One company’s facility in Texas, was particularly plagued by such conditions. The plant was capable of significant output—but inadequate maintenance practices caused the 24/7 facility to suffer downtime as high as two to three days per week. Ranked near the bottom of the manufacturer’s operations across the U.S., the plant was considered high-risk and underperforming. Increasingly, customer orders were being sent to other company facilities due to the factory’s unreliable production record.

## ATS Solution

Seeking a solution for its maintenance concerns, corporate and plant leadership chose to implement a turnkey maintenance program from Advanced Technology Services. ATS reliability experts assessed the situation and set about making changes.

“Our analysis showed a need for structure. Preventive maintenance practices were pretty vague, if they existed at all. There was no defined schedule for thermography, vibration measurement, or lubrication. Critical spare parts were not stocked properly, and very little, if any, weekly or monthly planning being done,” stated the ATS site manager.

ATS instituted routines and best practices to alleviate many of the company’s concerns. Maintenance tasks and repairs were tied to the factory’s Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS); technicians, employed and trained by ATS, were assigned to jobs by managers according to established priorities.

“Preventive maintenance, when properly and scientifically applied, can yield huge efficiencies in a continuous production operation,” noted the ATS site manager. “Through our analysis we were able to lengthen equipment service times from once per week to once every three weeks, with no loss in performance.”

## AT A GLANCE

- Turnkey maintenance program provided by ATS
- Unplanned maintenance schedule reduced by as much as 75%
- Board line availability improved 6% YoY
- Board line utilization improved 26% YoY
- Output increased 21% in output YoY
- Scheduled run-hours increased 15% YoY

## Bottom-Line Success

Within the first year, things started to improve. By year two, production availability was accelerating and by the third year, the plant was setting new records for uptime. Soon the plant was ranked number one in OEE (Operating Equipment Effectiveness) for the company’s entire gypsum organization.

“At the end of Q3 during the third year, our plant had equaled its entire output for the previous year,” noted the company’s production manager. “There was a time when our plant shut down for maintenance eight hours out of every week. ATS has improved our reliability to the point that we now go as long as an entire month without a scheduled maintenance shutdown.”

The effectiveness of the ATS team at the facility has been evidenced by a new long-term contract extension. “We’re pleased to have made such a major impact at a facility that had huge potential for improvement,” said the ATS manager. “This plant is proof that skilled maintenance can have a transformative effect.”

### PRODUCTION OUTPUT

 **21% Increase**  
Year Over Year

### UNPLANNED MAINTENANCE

 **75% Decrease**  
Year Over Year