

ATS Maintenance Turns Aging Packaging Equipment into Consistent Top Producer for Hardware Manufacturer

Customer Challenge

A Midwestern manufacturer of hardware geared for the renovation and remodeling markets was facing a renovation challenge of its own at their packaging facility: how to maintain high productivity from the various conveyors, tape machines, dumpers, packers, and other production machines in the facility's 11 packaging lines.

"We're committed to expansion and upgrades—in fact we recently added 50,000 square feet to our plant. But like most factories, we still have to make the most of the equipment we have," observed the plant's production supervisor. "Maintaining our output without large capital outlays is important."

With some of the clamshell, blister pack, and bagger equipment passing the 25-year mark, the plant needed to upgrade its maintenance program. It sought a cost-effective way to turn reactive maintenance into something that could reduce unexpected downtime.

ATS Solution

Following a recommendation, the manufacturer contracted Advanced Technology Services to provide ongoing onsite maintenance. A fulltime ATS maintenance technician was assigned to the facility. "Our ATS technician started with a full assessment—not just maintenance records but also machine analyses and even safety standards," the production supervisor said. "His goal was to move us to preventive and, eventually, predictive maintenance."

Before ATS, equipment downtime had caused the facility to incur a large amount of production overtime. ATS' priority was to repair, rebuild, and/or service critical equipment to create an environment of continuous improvement.

"ATS has touched every aspect of machine maintenance. When repairs are done, we receive a full status report. Preventive maintenance is now done on a weekly or monthly basis," stated the production supervisor. "Our ATS tech has also overhauled our parts crib—we've entrusted him with nearly \$200,000 in parts purchases over the past 12 months. Where parts are obsolete, ATS finds suitable replacements."

Bottom-Line Success

After 18 months, ATS maintenance has achieved dramatic results. The facility has reached its productivity goals consistently for over a year; moreover, overtime costs dropped by almost \$400,000 in the first calendar year. "ATS helped us find even more savings this year," the production supervisor noted.

As evidence of the confidence he places in ATS' program, the production supervisor stated his technician recently helped improve one of the facility's packaging cells. "By recommending a way to reconfigure the conveyors in the largest clamshell line, ATS improved our manning ratios," he said.

AT A GLANCE

- Hardware packaging facility
- Aging production equipment
- Challenges with productivity, excessive overtime
- ATS maintenance and storeroom management program implemented
- Production goals consistently achieved
- Over \$400,000 overtime savings in first full year

He also noted that ATS is currently installing ATS eFactory 3, the facility's first Computerized Maintenance Management System (CMMS), to track equipment service and parts procurement as well as to further sharpen its proactive maintenance practices.

"[Our ATS technician] quickly earned credibility and the trust of our operators and supervisors," said the manufacturer's vice president and general manager. "He always acts on behalf of the best interest of our company. If it wasn't for the ATS uniform, you would never know he wasn't a plant employee. The relationship we have with ATS is exactly how I hoped it would be."

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—Vice President & General Manager,
Leading Hardware Manufacturer

To learn how ATS can impact your bottom line visit
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