

# CASE STUDY

## The world's leading supplier of professional entertainment connectors, Neutrik®, relies on Autobag AB 180s.

### Background

Headquartered in Lichtenstein and operating internationally, Neutrik® is the leading supplier of professional entertainment connector products such as audio, video, fiber optic and industrial connectors and interconnect systems. Its UK manufacturing facility on the Isle of Wight in southern England produces, assembles, packs and ships more than 12 million connectors each year to Europe for onward distribution.

In the UK Neutrik uses six Autobag® AB 180 bag packaging systems to pack finished and pre-assembly connectors, and it deploys almost as many Autobag AB 180 baggers elsewhere in Europe.

### The Challenge

Neutrik director Chris Arnold explains, "We dispatch about one quarter of a million connectors from 50+ product lines every week, in a bulk dispatch on Thursdays. Many of the parts look very similar. Ensuring there are no mix-ups, and that every finished connector or pre-assembly kit is complete and correctly identified, is critical. Our reputation is built on the quality of our products and service."

### The Solution

"Some 50,000 of the quarter of a million connectors that leave here each week do so in Autobag bags, clearly identified, branded and ready to be tracked.

"The Autobag AB 180 is very flexible. For example, we've added a bar code scanner to the system. All of our production orders carry a bar code which, when scanned, automatically sets up the machine to print the correct traceability data, quality marks, instructions and branding on the bag. It's faster and more efficient, and most importantly, virtually eliminates the potential for human error. That's crucial when the team is handling so many similar-looking products.

"Our in-house engineer manages system servicing and maintenance with support from the Autobag team, and we train our operators internally too. The systems are very easy to use. Some operators seem naturally more speedy and efficient, so we select those guys, particularly for packing pre-assembly kits.

"We use the AB 180s in semi-automatic mode, filling the bags by hand and using the automatic open, close, seal and separate functions. We tend to pack between 400 and 1,000 of each product line at a time, so the team is switching product lines and bags on a regular basis. Our kits contain up to nine items; we pick and place all kit components into the pre-opened bags by hand because the components have a tendency to interlock."

#### Company Name

Neutrik®

#### Products Being Packaged

Professional entertainment connector products

#### Equipment Used

Autobag® AB 180

#### Materials Used

Autobag® Bags-on-a-Roll



## The Results

Neutrik has complete cost transparency across its business. Its records show that the AB 180 packs 1000 single connector packs in 114 minutes; 6.84 seconds per item, including set-up.

## The Future

"I can't tell you about how we packed before we had an Autobag system, because there was no 'before-Autobag'. We've been in business here in the UK for 30 years, and when we opened our doors we packed with two Autobag HS100s sent over by our operation in Liechtenstein. They'd done hundreds of thousands of packs before they came to us, and they did many more thousands after that. In fact, the HS100's proved so reliable that we've only recently retired the last one, after well over twenty years of service."

"We buy branded bags from Automated Packaging Systems every year. For a few years now we've bought a new AB 180 system each year too. That reflects the growth in our business, but it also says something about the reliability and efficiency of the Autobag AB 180 bag packaging system."

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