

CASE STUDY

PEI Genesis added an Autobag® PS 125™ to its armoury of Automated Packaging Systems baggers.

Background

PEI Genesis added an Autobag® PS 125™ to its armoury of Automated Packaging Systems baggers in 2014, to pack and track larger, more fragile hard-to-handle products efficiently and professionally.

The global manufacturer, 'Value Add' assembling distributor and designer of connectors and power supplies already had three Autobag AB 180s and an Autobag AB 180 with a Maximizer continuous-motion conveyor in full-time operation at its European HQ in Southampton.

The Challenge

PEI Genesis Industrial Engineering Manager Steve Watson relies on Autobag systems to address two headline challenges: throughput and accuracy. "More than 1.2 million connectors pass through this 'value add' assembly facility every year, and each one needs to be bagged, labelled and tracked either as a single product or as part of a kit.

"We handle thousands of product lines and components, many of which are small and indistinguishable from each other. Getting them packed and labelled quickly and accurately means we send the right product to the customer on time, every time, and that's the key to repeat business, reputation and, ultimately, to growth."

"And we have a third challenge too: we produce a small but significant number of much larger EX zone connectors which, although they are unlike the rest of our output in scale and value, need to be packed with the same care and professionalism as every other PEI Genesis product."

The Solution

It's four Autobag AB 180s, one of which is fitted with a Maximizer continuous-motion conveyor, enable PEI Genesis to increase throughput by bagging product more quickly. Autobag sales manager Martyn Walker explains: "On average an AB 180 OneStep packs 10-times as fast as an experienced hand-packer, and the in-line printer removes the need for paper labels."

Company Name

PEI Genesis

Products Being Packaged

Connectors and power supplies

Equipment Used

Autobag® PS 125™
Autobag® AB 180™

Custom Integration

Maximizer continuous-motion conveyor

Materials Used

Autobag® pre-opened Bags-on-a-Roll

Return on Investment

"On average an AB 180 OneStep packs 10-times as fast as an experienced hand-packer, and the in-line printer removes the need for paper labels."



"PEI Genesis can re-pack a bulk shipment of stock connectors, or bag a thousand connectors that have been assembled to order, in a fraction of the time it used to take to do that by hand, sealing each unit into an individual, branded, labelled bag.

"As Steve says, though, the challenge of packing hard-to-handle high-value, low-volume items such as the PEI Genesis' larger EX zone connectors require a different solution. The Autobag PS 125 we supplied in April 2014 is ideal for two main reasons: accessibility and scale. Although it's a desktop machine it runs bags in a range of sizes and is more than capable of packing PEI's larger connector units. And because the bag is open at the front of the system and at waist height, it's possible to place items in and lift sealed bags off, rather than drop them in and have them drop into a collection bin."

The Results

"The AB 180s run 5 long days a week, and the PS 125 is doing exactly what we bought it for and more," explains Steve Watson. "We're also using it to pack kits and to overbag orders, reducing returns by improving traceability and helping customers keep track of the parts they've ordered."

"We've used ¾ million bags in the 12 months to date and are looking to upgrade to branded bags in the near future – we're working with the Automated Packaging Systems studio now on bag development."

All five systems and the Maximizer conveyor are covered by a service agreement with Automated Packaging Systems, although as Steve Watson explains: "reliability has never been an issue."

The Future

"In terms of machinery, we're on top of things at the moment," says Steve Watson, "but with the business growing rapidly we'll need to invest in another Autobag system in the foreseeable future to maintain efficiency. Which system to opt for, though, needs careful consideration. While the AB 180 bags much faster and is best for medium to long production runs, the flexibility of the plug-and-play PS 125 desktop system offers us a different way of working. By investing in a more mobile system we can move packing capacity to the end of the production line, increasing our efficiency and – because we label goods at the point of production – significantly reducing the risk of mis-identification."

"On the materials front, we're about to embark on a marketing initiative to drive customer loyalty, centred on our bags. Our new checklist bag livery will remind customers that there's a lot more on offer from PEI Genesis, all with the same high levels of product quality and customer care. We'll be monitoring the results of the initiative with interest."

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