

A CASE STUDY IN THE BENEFITS OF AUTOMATED PACKAGING

AUTOBAG SPRINT DOUBLES KIT PRODUCTION



The Autobag Sprint system has helped Estes Industries Inc., to increase throughput by 100%, in the packaging of kits of parts for its model rockets.

The two Sprint systems at Estes are operated on a 9 hour shift, 6 days a week, producing on average more than 54,000 kits per week. They have replaced the previous packing method where 8 employees were hand bagging and sealing kits of rocket parts, at a rate of 600 finished kits per hour. Since the installation of the Sprint systems, Estes Industries has maintained labour requirements, using 4 operators per machine, but has dramatically increased throughput to 1200 kits per hour.

“We purchased the Sprint bagging systems to provide a solution to the labour shortages we face in this area,” explains Harry Nachtigall, Industrial Engineer, of Estes Industries. *“Our products are sold worldwide and we must adhere to strict production schedules to ensure we meet growing volume requirements.”*

Each bagged kit typically comprises 12 parts. The majority of the kits are packaged in clear polyethylene bags, however Estes also produces rocket kits in attractively printed bags with hanging slots for hobby and model outlets. The bags used for these kits vary in size from 75mm x 100mm to 150mm x 450mm.

One of the key benefits of the Sprint system for Estes Industries is the ease of setup and flexibility of the system, enabling fast and easy changeover between bag sizes and rocket kit components. *“The Sprint systems have proved extremely flexible and cost effective, enabling us to make significant improvements in production throughput while minimising labour requirements,”* says Harry Nachtigall. *“Furthermore, the reliability of the systems has proved to be particularly outstanding.”*

He continues, *“Since the Sprint systems were installed, we have received excellent support from APS, including a thorough operator training programme during commissioning that has enabled us to run the machines virtually unaided since they started running.”*



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