

CASE STUDY

Dun-Bri Group deploys Autobag® PS 125™ desktop bagger to meet growing demand.

Background

Dun-Bri Group invested in its first Autobag packaging system in April 2014, stepping up from hand bagging to meet the demands of a rapidly growing business.

Dun-Bri Group, Britain's only specialist commercial vehicle lighting company, is based in Hertfordshire, England. It distributes more than 8000 lines including warning beacons, lightbars, auto-electrical products, commercial spares, vehicle lamps and more, assembling and supplying parts, kits and complete units from its 13,000ft² purpose-built warehouse.

The Challenge

"We promise our customers superb service, and at the heart of that is a commitment to fulfil 95% of all orders within 24hrs," explains Dun-Bri Group finance director James Roberts. "Making that promise is the easy bit; delivering on it requires a huge investment in stock and highly efficient warehouse management.

"When parts come into the warehouse, some of which are tiny – switches and connectors, for example - we need to get them bagged and labelled with a part number quickly ready for dispatch, so that we know precisely what we're holding in stock and can track them through the system. But the business was growing so rapidly that we struggled to keep up, so much so that at one point we were bagging just a tenth of our throughput. As a result we were less efficient, in danger of shipping the wrong goods or losing track of stock, and beginning to see increasingly high rates of customer returns.

"We were bagging by hand because it seemed the most flexible option; we have nearly a thousand lines of different sized bagged product. Bringing in enough labour to keep up with throughput, though, was unrealistic, partly because of the cost and space demands, but also because throughput varied so much.

"The problem was becoming a real issue for us when we first saw the Autobag® PS 125™ desktop system in operation, by chance, on a supplier visit."

Company Name

Dun-Bri Group - A specialist commercial vehicle lighting company.

Products Being Packaged

Warning beacons, light bars, auto-electrical products, commercial spares and more.

Equipment Used

Autobag® PS 125 OneStep™ with inline printing.

Materials Used

Custom branded bags in two sizes with tamper evident seals.



The Solution

Automated Packaging Systems sales manager Martyn Walker takes up the story: "When Dun-Bri made contact, it had two specific needs; to bag and label individual items of various sizes quickly and efficiently, and to make-up, bag and label kits containing small parts into tamper evident bags. And the new system needed to be future-proof, certainly for the foreseeable future, which meant that it had to cope with the company's planned move to barcoded identification.

"The Autobag PS 125 OneStep meets all those demands. Its inline printer applies product information, logos and barcodes directly to bags. It's a plug-and-play system that's about the size of a microwave oven, so it takes up very little space and can easily be moved if necessary. And despite the fact that it bags much, much faster than the fastest, most experienced hand-packer, it's extremely easy to use."

The Results

According to James Roberts, the decision to invest in the Autobag PS 125 was a "no brainer." Savings in labour and reductions in input costs by, for example, eliminating the need for labels, easily justify the capital investment. "And that's without taking into account headline savings to the business that come from a reduction in returns and an improvement in customer satisfaction leading to repeat business. While we still get the odd customer return, they're almost exclusively a result of customer error these days.

"In the few months we've had it, the PS 125 has bagged well over 50,000 products. It's not surprising the staff love it – it's saved them a lot of time, is very easy to use and there are no problems with reliability. We did have one break-down in the early days, but the Autobag engineer got it sorted straight away and we were up and running again very quickly."

The Future

"We started out with plain, stock bags in two sizes, white on the back, clear on the front, to see how many we used. We'll look to switch to branded bags now to make sure customers make the link between Dun-Bri, superb service and the quality kit they've got in their hands.

"And we're looking at two or three other areas where the Autobag system can help us improve efficiency, and with our expansion plans including the opening of several new depots, I have no doubt we'll see more of these systems in operation on Dun-Bri premises in the future."

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