

A leading national food company has installed Fastenal's FAST 5000 industrial vending machines in many of their plants to provide greater process efficiency and control of their MRO and PPE supplies.

INITIAL CHALLENGES

With their production facilities often running 24/7, they needed a more reliable and secure way to manage the supply disbursement process. Each plant had a different system in place. Some had product available on a free-issue basis, and others had a storeroom attendant handing out supplies. There were drawbacks to each procedure. Having open access to product led to over-use and mismanagement of supplies. Issuing through the storeroom provided better control, but having the attendants involved in every transaction wasn't efficient use of their time. They also had to man the storeroom all three shifts or risk losing control.

FASTENAL'S VENDING SOLUTION

With the installation of the FAST 5000s, they now have a secure, fully automated way to distribute their high-use MRO and PPE supplies at the point of work, around the clock. High-use items such as gloves, batteries, grinding wheels and critical production supplies are now stored and dispensed via Fastenal's vending machines. Employees are required to use their ID numbers to retrieve supplies from the machines. If the request is authorized, the item is dispensed and the details of the transaction are recorded – who, what and when. Because the system is web-based, detailed usage information can be viewed in real time on a smart phone or PC. In addition, reports can be automatically generated and distributed to selected recipients. The local Fastenal stores monitor machine inventory online and travel to the facilities on a regular basis (daily, if needed) to make sure the machines are always filled with needed supplies, with no labor or paperwork required by plant personnel.

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL LEVEL

With full usage visibility down to the employee level, there is no longer a question of who is using what items, resulting in more conscientious usage and reduced consumption. Different locations are using the technology to achieve their goals.

- For example, one facility is using the reporting to document that fresh utensils are dispensed by each employee at the start of each shift, in compliance with quality control and sanitation standards.
- With temporary staff making up a large percentage of the work force, another facility was concerned that supplies were not being used with integrity. They now have a more secure, traceable system in place.
- Yet another facility was experiencing stock outages too frequently on a few mission-critical parts. By placing these parts in their vending machines, they are always available and are never the cause of a costly machine shutdown.



IN THE CUSTOMER'S WORDS...

"It's cost-effective. Employees have access to needed supplies 24/7, and we're saving thousands of dollars by avoiding rush delivery charges."
- Storeroom Manager

"With so many employees, we wanted the confidence that our supplies were being utilized properly. [Before the FAST 5000] managing PPE was a full-time job."
- Maintenance Supervisor

"I would like to get to the point of having as much product in the vending machines as possible, eliminating the need for anyone to enter the storeroom."
- Storeroom Manager

"The visibility into product usage means nobody takes more than they need. I love it – we now have confidence that product is available when we need it. The machine is great, and I'll continue to recommend it."
- Plant Manager

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRACK AND CONTROL?



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