

A major player in the paper industry with manufacturing facilities throughout the U.S. is utilizing Fastenal vending machines as a more efficient way to distribute supplies to their employees.

INITIAL CHALLENGES

Working in sprawling facilities, employees were wasting time traveling to locate and obtain supplies. Often these items were stored in an inconveniently located store room or disbursed in cabinets with little organization or accountability. Meanwhile, team leaders and production supervisors were taking too much time away from their core duties to manage inventory of indirect supplies.

FASTENAL'S VENDING SOLUTION

With the installation of Fastenal's FAST 5000 vending machines, they were able to increase productivity by bringing repetitive supplies such as batteries, tape measures, drill bits, abrasives, gloves and safety glasses closer to the point of use. Maintenance and production employees no longer waste time traveling and waiting to obtain supplies – product is immediately available on a self-serve basis via point-of-use locations. Other employees are no longer spending their time placing orders, generating purchase orders, receiving in product and handing out supplies. The local Fastenal store monitors inventory online and travels to the plants as often as necessary to make sure the machines are always filled – with no paperwork or labor required by plant personnel.

Although product is easily accessible, usage is strictly controlled and tracked. Employees are required to use their ID's to access the machines. If a worker's vending selection is authorized, the item is vended and the transaction detail is recorded – who, what and when. Because the system is web-based, managers can view detailed usage activity in real time on their PCs or smart phones. In addition, reports are automatically generated and sent to specified personnel via email.

IMPACT ON THE LOCAL LEVEL

The system's combination of convenience, visibility and control has driven wide-ranging benefits for the company's locations. With staff cut-backs, one facility had been forced to make product available on a free-issue basis. They simply didn't have the personnel to monitor and track who was taking items, and there was no other solution available. After installing the FAST 5000s, they were able to re-establish control over usage, and consumption was cut dramatically (e.g., usage of tape measures went from 4–6 dozen per month to just 6 individual tape measures per month).

Another facility had a storeroom, but it was located at one end of the facility, causing production downtime for personnel traveling across the plant. During night shifts, the storeroom is not staffed, so team leaders were responsible for retrieving product from the store room (taking *two* employees away from production with each transaction). In addition, product was not always disbursed and/or recorded accurately, which led to trust and accountability issues. The machines have eliminated these issues by making product immediately available, 24/7, while providing accurate usage reporting down to the individual employee level.



IN THE CUSTOMER'S WORDS...

"Vending has reduced consumption. Employees used to take a 24-pack of batteries at a time, use two, and misplace the rest. Now they just dispense the two that they need."

- Warehouse Supervisor

"The machines are simple to use, with accurate dispensing. It's perpetual inventory. The local Fastenal store refills it, so we never run out of product."

- Maintenance Planner

"The machine has simplified things. ... I don't have problems running out of needed product. It's available when it's needed. Bottom line: I have achieved my objective."

- Stores Coordinator

"Based on the success of our first installation, we have plans to add machines to another production zone."

- Warehouse Supervisor

WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRACK AND CONTROL?



To learn more, contact your local Fastenal store or visit fastenal.com. To schedule a FREE on-site demo, call 877-265-8247.

