

Case Study

Sharp Improved Packaging Speed and Efficiency for a Major Online Clothing Retailer

The MAX 20 bagging machine streamlined the process



Sharp Packaging bagging machines increased bagging throughput from 130 pieces to 275 pieces per hour

Background:

A specialty retailer selling leading brands of clothing, shoes and accessories for women and girls was quickly outgrowing its fulfillment capabilities because of its expanding e-commerce business. With over \$1.7 billion of online sales in 2019, they needed to increase throughput and fulfillment efficiencies dramatically.

The Challenge:

Every order was manually packed, a process that could not meet the scale of the retailer's operations. With this method the output per packer was only 80 pieces per hour, which was not sufficient to keep up with the growing demand without increasing their labor footprint significantly. Previously, the retailer had tried competitive bagging machines but ran into multiple problems with overly complicated operating systems, items getting out of sequence, and accuracy issues for automated order inserts.

The Solution:

With demand soaring the retailer needed to revisit bagging automation and trialed three brands of machines. Sharp set themselves apart by analyzing the retailer's packaging environment, process, product mix, and shipping requirements. The Sharp sales team determined the ideal machine for their operations was the MAX 20 as it helps automate the insertion of customer specific promotional materials, has a highly customizable operator interface, and is large enough to handle their product mix. To help visualize the bagging solution the retailer was invited to one of Sharp's customers to see the MAX 20 in action and speak with the operators. Returning from the live demo the retailer made the decision to move forward with Sharp's solution. "What we really like about the MAX 20 machines is their accuracy and ease of use," explains the retailer's AVP of Engineering and Facilities Services. "Sharp takes an extra step out of the process by printing shipping labels directly on the bag, so we don't have to purchase labels or add them manually. We also use a lot of customer specific coupons and Sharp developed and integrated software that displays which coupons should be inserted into each order right on the MAX 20's interface. That really streamlines the process for our operators."

Thermal Transfer Printing
Directly to Bags



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Outcome:

Over the past four years, this online retailer has built out their packaging process using five of the MAX 20 bagging machines. Sharp has assisted with the training and implementation procedures and developed creative software that customized the user interface to match their exact needs. With manual product packing they processed 80 orders per hour, but with Sharp Packaging machines their processing reached 275 orders per hour. Plus, Sharp bags accommodate 95% of their products, making fulfillment simple. "The Sharp people have been great to work with," added the AVP. "They made implementation of our systems easy and were quick to respond when we needed to scale up or make adjustments. Our packaging process has been working smoothly since we started using their machines. They're a great partner."

Act now!

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Customer Experience



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Labor/Productivity