

# Case Study

## Maximizing Retail Mail Order Fulfillment

How one company increased hourly fulfillment capacity by 250% overnight



This successful retail mail order fulfillment company was being held back by its packaging operation. New problems arose each time the company tried a different method, with no end in sight.

## THE PROBLEM:

This mail order company's operation suffered from low productivity, capacity issues and customer complaints. They had tried everything from craft bags to peel & stick bags and even wicketed baggers – a total of four different systems before asking Sharp Packaging for a better solution.

The L-bar sealers which this customer formerly used required operators to hand-load the bag's contents and then wait to seal the bag. A cold-seal system turned out to be expensive, slow to set up, and extremely difficult to keep running; what's more, customers complained about unpleasant odors the sealant left on soft goods. Peel & stick bags offered disappointing productivity at just 100 bags/hour.



## THE SOLUTION:

We provided a complete machine-and-bag system that incorporates thermal printing directly on the bags. Our Sharp MAX™ Proline bagger with integrated imprinter allows pre-printing of company information, reducing steps in the packaging process. Its non-proprietary parts and standard print drivers allow connection with almost any system.

### Sharp MAX

The Sharp 2.5 mil HD Mailer used in this process is a complete wrapper and shipper in one. It utilizes co-extruded, multilayer high-density mailer film that provides excellent opacity to protect materials from view or puncture. Customers print the shipping information directly on the bag. Our expertise in this area makes Sharp the leader in mail fulfillment and co-extruded mail film.

Thanks to increased production efficiency, our customer now needs fewer work stations. Ease of operation with the Sharp MAX – including easy setup and changeover – contributes to this improved efficiency.

The Sharp workstation is no larger than a hand-load station, so it also saves floor space.

The Sharp MAX™ Proline Bagger with a custom dual-stage funnel allows this manufacturer to count / accumulate product and then seal the bag in one continuous process. As the product stream continues uninterrupted, the entire line keeps running even as the bag is sealed.



Overall, the user-friendly Sharp MAX provides:

- Reliability
- Material cost savings
- Ease of operation
- More up-time
- Labor savings
- Ability to print full-color ads directly on the bag to target existing customers



Use a barcode scanner app on your smart phone to follow the link to this demonstration video.



“Thanks to increased production efficiency, our customer now needs fewer work stations.”

Video link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FHtl1y7Sjlg>

## OUTCOME:

Productivity increased dramatically, from 100 bags/hour with peel & stick bags to the current 350/hour with the Sharp bagger.

Training time has been drastically reduced, saving labor costs. Training on other systems took three to four weeks. On the Sharp system, operators complete their training in one week.

Managers have been able to shift their focus to getting products to the bagger faster, accommodating an increase in production with fewer stations. Formerly this customer maintained 24 to 25 workstations; now they maintain 13.

Overall, the customer achieves better, faster results at about two-thirds the cost of previous systems.

## ABOUT SHARP PACKAGING

Part of the Pregis family of companies, Sharp Packaging systems is a nationwide, innovative manufacturer of quality, flexible packaging solutions, including film, bags and packaging machinery systems. Opening our doors in 1984, we have steadily built a successful business and reputation on the foundation of unwavering commitment to integrity in all our business dealings. Employees, suppliers, customers and business community partners have come to associate Sharp Packaging with sterling performance and a high degree of urgency in meeting the needs of our stakeholders.

Sharp designs, develops and manufactures printed and plain flexible packaging and packaging machinery in-house at our Headquarters campus in Sussex, WI and southwest expansion facilities outside of Phoenix, AZ. Headquartered near Milwaukee, Wisconsin, Sharp Packaging serves the electronics, pharmaceutical, mail order, select produce, medical components, hobby/craft, automotive and hardware industries; among others.