

The Contract

With a payback at 14 months in labor reduction alone, the client entered into an agreement with CapStone to install two AutoViri Sleeveers as the first step in a larger plan to be implemented as a phased effort. With a firm business model and pricing already in hand, CapStone delivered a Statement of Work and Contract. This contract itemized a project plan for the manufacture, delivery and installation of the AutoViri Sleeveers, as well as to provide training and ongoing support.

The Manufacturing

From issuance of a PO to delivery of the AutoViri Sleeveers to the client's facility, the entire process took only 3 months. Starting from a base model, CapStone developed specific needs requirements of the client Sleeveers and work area. A base model Sleever consists of a fully operational system, including a robotic six-axis arm, safety cage (with a safety door for full access to the unit), a linear actuator, a 10-foot bed of powered conveyor roller through the system, a tethered teach pendant and two independent and integrated sleeve queues.

The client's requirements also included the capability to sleeve both full and half MM trays with tray recognition "on the fly," as well as a redesigned powered roller conveyor for presentment to the unit.

The Implementation and Training

The first of two AutoViri Sleeveers arrived as scheduled, and was placed into the prepared area on the same day. Capstone's project managers and technicians had already installed the additional powered roller, as part of the overall Statement of Work. This was done to optimize delivery and load level trays from the existing conveyor. After initial setup and operator training, the first AutoViri Sleever was placed into full production after three days. The second AutoViri Sleever was also placed into full production three days later. During this phase, CapStone continued training operators and maintenance engineers to fully run and maintain the system. Operating manuals, spare parts inventory and hands-on training were all provided.

Results

The AutoViri Sleeveers delivered on promised value by reducing manual labor by more than 50% in the Sleeving process, 14-16 sustained trays per minute, over 99% available uptime and over 98% successfully sleeved trays on a test run of over 250,000 trays. On time, on budget and with sustainable savings, AutoViri and Capstone provided a real solution for long-term success.

The Ongoing Support

Capstone provides multiple service and support options, ranging from full service on-site to simple phone support when needed. In this case, in addition to the initial warranty period, the client has on-call support provided 24/7 for the life of the business case (5 years). Parts support is also provided in all cases beyond the initial complimentary service parts provided.

The Future Needs

The AutoViri Sleeveers replaced a bottlenecked, highly manual process with a level loading automated one. As a result, it became clearer to the client there were additional bottlenecks both up- and downstream of the Sleeving Process. The future needs and requirements of the client remain the same, and Capstone will continue to address them in the workflow operations. Capstone has already cast a long-term vision for the client to step closer to a completely automated facility in a phased approach, with each phase representing stand-alone value and return on investment.

The Next Solutions

Capstone has already re-engaged with the client to implement intelligent conveyance to ensure uninterrupted tray flow into the AutoViri Sleeveers. With fully optimized tray flow into the Sleeveers, the following phase will implement AutoViri Palletizing, including intelligent tray sortation. All tray-based workflow has the ability to read IMB or 24-digit tray tags to create a complete digital audit trail that benefits all mailers, including internal productivity and QC tracking to USPS regulation requirements.