

CASE STUDY

Fast Growing Nutritional Supplement Company Improves Customer Satisfaction and Saves Money with AirPouch®

Air pillows replace EPS peanuts with outstanding results.

Health Resources™ LLC, of Hueytown, Alabama, fulfills orders for their nutritional supplements by packing bottled products into boxes, and protecting them with pre-printed air pillow packing material. This packing process has evolved into a highly-efficient operation that allows each operator to pack an average of 55 to 60 shipments per hour.

Health Resources has 12 packing stations that are served by six AirPouch Express 3 Void-Fill Air Pillow Systems from Automated Packaging Systems, Inc. The Express 3 is a benchtop system producing air pillows in continuous strips that can be torn away quickly and easily for fast, clean packing operations. The clear, air pillow material is preformed with unique EZ-Tear™ perforations for fast, efficient packing.

Previous Packaging Method

Mike Ceravolo, production manager for Health Resources, set out to design a better, faster, more efficient packing system when the company outgrew its previous packing line, which consisted of traditional EPS peanuts in overhead bins. The time spent each day loading the bins, moving stored peanuts, and cleaning up the mess at each packing station was increasing at a time when Ceravolo was looking for productivity improvements to help manage the company's rapid growth. At the same time, some customers were complaining about the mess associated with the peanut packing material when the packages arrive at their homes.

Andy Bauer of Strickland Packaging Company, an authorized AirPouch distributor, had known Mike Ceravolo for awhile and offered to come in and help evaluate his growing needs. Bauer immediately recognized the value Automated Packaging's AirPouch system could bring to this packing operation. The clear air pillow material would eliminate the mess and storage problem of EPS peanuts. Customer satisfaction would improve because there is no mess when the box is opened, and the product is clearly visible inside. Additionally, the efficiency and protection offered by the air pillows surpassed those associated with peanuts and paper. And, finally, the overall cost of the Express 3 system would be less than what Health Resources was spending at the time.

Company Name

Health Resources™ LLC - A nutritional supplement company.

Products Being Packaged

Nutritional supplements

Equipment Used

AirPouch Express 3 Void-Fill Air Pillow System

Custom Integration

AirPouch Express 3 Void-Fill Air Pillow System did not require custom integration for this application.

Materials Used

AirPouch Void-Fill air pillows

Return on Investment

"We added the increased productivity of an additional three shipments per hour, per employee."



New Packaging Method

The team of Health Resources, Strickland Packaging, and Automated Packaging Systems worked together to design a highly-efficient, automated system that moves AirPouch air pillows from the machine, via an air tower, into an overhead hopper. The hopper features two openings where packers can pull lengths of air pillows out and directly into the packing area, easily tearing off as many air pillows as they need. There is no mess and no wasted product. The air pillow material comes fan-folded in easy to store, high capacity, compact boxes that include 3000 linear feet of pillows. "The amount of space this saves in our facility is amazing," states Ceravolo.

Success Story

"There are significant cost savings just in the time we save handling the AirPouch material versus EPS," says Ceravolo. "Then, when we added the increased productivity of an additional three shipments per hour, per employee, we really began to realize the benefits of the Express 3 system. We didn't even have to put a value on the increased customer satisfaction levels to see our return on investment for this system. In fact, we added custom printing to the air pillows so customers have another opportunity to see our logo and web address, while we benefit from increased brand awareness. The package has a higher quality image, which helps our business," explained Ceravolo.

The AirPouch Express 3 Void-Fill System has dimensions of 20.5" L x 8.5" W x 14" H, making it one of the most lightweight and compact packing systems on the market. The unit is quiet and its all electric design requires no compressed air. The unique AirPouch sealing process prevents air leaks, and the amount of air per pillow is adjustable for optimum packing conditions. The system can run in automatic or semi-automatic modes and offers an optional sensor to start and stop production automatically. Standard pillows come in variable lengths to meet any packing need.

Automated Packaging Systems has been designing and manufacturing original Autobag®, AirPouch® and SidePouch® systems and products for over 50 years. With more than 30,000 packaging systems in operation and a worldwide service organization, Automated Packaging Systems has the experience and support to deliver the ultimate in customer satisfaction. Automated Packaging Systems offers a complete line of baggers, void-fill and protective packaging systems, thermal transfer imprinters, counters, scales, and specialty packaging materials. Complete information is available at the company's website. Complete product information, including video clips of the AirPouch Express 3 in action, are available at **www.autobag.com**

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