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**Rennco, a division of Pro Mach**

**Delivering the Optimum  
Packaging Line Solution  
For Both Today and  
Tomorrow**

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Installing an original equipment manufacturer's (OEMs) packaging line solution should not be treated as the end of a project. Rather, the installation of a new machine should be looked at as a milestone along a journey toward highest overall productivity and lowest overall cost of ownership over the extended life of that machine.

Achieving high productivity and low cost is a process that begins with thoroughly considered equipment specifications and continues through training, on-going service, and upgrades as new mechanical and electronic solutions become available. The objective of this white paper is to outline this lifecycle approach and examine ways that both the OEM's and customer's resources can be aligned to deliver today's and tomorrow's packaging line solutions.

### **The specification process**

At the beginning of the specification process, customers typically provide the OEM with the following:

- Desired operating speed
- Labor content
- Product matrix — the range of products to be processed
- Desired changeover times
- Uptime
- Duty cycles i.e. number of shifts and intervals between major maintenance
- Control system compatibility
- Mechanical and electrical integration with up- and down-stream equipment
- Return on Investment

The OEM then identifies one of its core machines to serve as the foundation for the customer's custom order. At this point — the very beginning — the lifecycle viewpoint kicks in.

The lifecycle focused OEM will work with the customer to understand the environment in which the machine or system will be located. Engineers must fully understand the mechanics of how maintenance personnel and operators will interact with the machine. This is not solely for ergonomic — ease of use — design considerations, but for safety as well. Top OEMs will use modeling technology to ensure optimum safety and lowest possible risk of lost-time injuries. Rennco, for example, uses the SISTEMA software utility, which was developed in Europe, to model control components and control software for safety considerations. SISTEMA analysis helps organizations meet control system safety guidelines as described under ISO 13849-1.

Furthermore, OEMs in the top tier will run calculations on mean time between failure, not only on components manufactured in house but also on those delivered to the company by its suppliers. Once again the idea is to take the long view of operation, engineering a machine to ensure it will perform to expectations for years.

To summarize, OEMs with a lifecycle perspective review the basic specifications as provided by the customer and then go deeper, looking at the machine's environment. This analysis even extends to envisioning potential packaging line changes as described by the customer and then building in the widest possible flexibility for future modifications.

### **Training and ongoing maintenance**

Top OEMs emphasize training both before and after delivery. Everyone learns in slightly different ways and it is the OEM's responsibility to provide

trainers with professional level training skills. Simply putting a technical expert in front of a group of operators and maintenance personnel isn't enough. OEMs that are committed to training have their trainers certified to Packaging Machinery Manufacturers Institute standards. Certified trainers know how to address the issue of different learning styles. The advantage of having skilled trainers is that operators and maintenance people are given the best possible start toward achieving high productivity, fast change over, and low downtime.

Furthermore, when tier one OEMs service technicians go into a customer's facility to fix a specific problem or perform preventative maintenance, the service technician must make a point of examining the current environment and the status of the machine in that environment. For example, the support technician will gauge the need for training — either refresher or first time for new operators. He or she will determine whether safety components are in place and in working order. The reason for this extra care is that over time, both machines and people tend to move out of alignment for optimum productivity from the machine. One of an OEM's highest mandates should be to work with the customer to assure the conditions for machine performance are brought back to where they were when the machine was initially past its break-in period.

## **On-going upgrades**

Another important aspect of the OEMs maintaining a long-term engagement with the machine and customer is the opportunity of exploring mechanical and electrical upgrades. These upgrades are more than maintenance, but are actually a means for bringing the machine up to the level of current technology. For example, if the machine is built with a lifecycle approach, the OEM should be able to replace, when it makes sense, last generation with next generation PLCs, drives, human machine interface devices, and/or communications protocols. Since the price/performance ratio of electronics grows, this will give the machine a whole new set of capabilities. Furthermore, there may be mechanical upgrades that offer similar benefits. With the right mechanical and electrical foundation to build upon, the machine can be 5, 10, even 20 years old and still be close to state-of-the-art.

The parent company of Rennco, Pro Mach, [www.ProMachinc.com](http://www.ProMachinc.com), believes so strongly in the imperative to continue ensuring optimum operating conditions from OEM systems that it has formalized a lifecycle engagement program called ProCustomer, [www.ProCustomer.com](http://www.ProCustomer.com). Within Pro Mach, business units have benchmarked lifecycle criteria and are engaged in continuous improvement. Operations personnel are invited to visit the ProCustomer site to read about current lifecycle thinking.

For more information on working with Rennco to achieve ProCustomer aims, call 1-800-409-5225 and visit [www.rennco.com](http://www.rennco.com).

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