

Midwest Paper Machine goes from Worst to First!

Case Study

Client	Location	Solution
Leading producer of coated fine paper	Midwest	ABB Full Service®



“The story of the mill is that we had the right people with the right direction working together, and ABB has been a key part of that story.”

Managing Director of Operations

Business Challenge

A leading producer of coated fine paper felt the downward pull on the pulp and paper industry: 2005 saw the shutdown of part of the mill and 2006 resulted in limited improvements. The following year the only remaining Paper Machine (PM5) in operation was ranked number 35 out of 35 machines within the company globally.

It was imperative significant operational improvements were needed to survive.

“It became clear we couldn’t do the easy stuff anymore,” the Managing Director said. “We had to behave differently as a team.”

Solution

A new partnership was created between the paper company and ABB Full Service®, a collaborative arrangement where ABB assumes responsibility for the customer’s maintenance operations and commits to maintain and improve the production equipment performance and reliability for the entire facility. As with all ABB Full Service agreements, ABB contractually commits to results, including productivity improvement and maintenance cost reduction.

The first step was to establish better routines, which drove a more team-oriented culture with reward and recognition programs that reinforced right behaviors.

The paper company took ownership of improving quality while ABB focused on how machines were running, thus keeping the production on time.

In addition, ABB implemented Planning and Scheduling programs and initiated the 5S methodology, a process that drives a more organized and efficient work environment, on site.

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SERVICES



“The parts of the plant that have undergone 5S are impressive,” the Managing Director said. “The storeroom looks twice as good.”

But a key catalyst in changing the culture happened in early 2008, when both operations and ABB took a new maintenance approach to a machine that was constantly breaking down and typically took over five hours to get operating again. Instead of allowing an uninspired behavior, the management team gave operations and maintenance a two-and-a-half hour window to get the machine running again. This meant that maintenance had to be ready to go as soon as the machine was safely shut down. The change of focus on the task worked and the machine was up again in two hours and 29 minutes.

“Everyone on the team felt good about this because it was something that hadn’t been done before,” the Managing Director said. “We’ve now convinced people they can do things they’ve never done. And we see the real change in the intensity in how things get done because no one wants to be last.”

By undergoing a robust change management process, Overall Machine Efficiency (OME or yield x uptime) has reached new records.

“The real strength is the team. Everyone’s taking part, supporting each other and working together,” the Managing Director said. “We’ve spent less money and still performed better.”

The real testament to the changes is that in just one year, PM5 jumped from being ranked as the worst paper machine within the paper company globally to No.1. Additionally, PM5 was the first machine to ever earn more than 100% on the internal ranking system, which requires the last four months’ OME to be higher than the machine’s best three months. For the ranking in 2007, OME was 57.7%. Twelve months later, PM5 boasted 74.9% OME, for a 30% improvement.

The decreased downtime and repairs have led to an increase in safety: the paper company celebrated one year without any Lost Time Incidents (LTI), while ABB reached their two-year marker of no LTI’s in 2008.

Paper plant improvements as a result of ABB Full Service

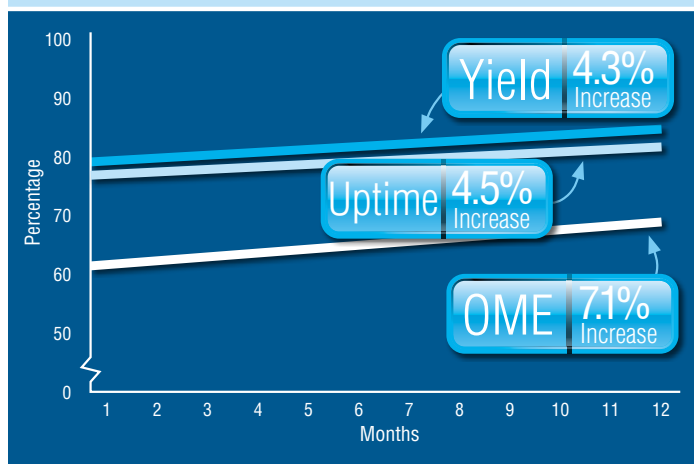


ABB Ltd.
10300 Henri-Bourassa Blvd. West
Saint-Laurent QC H4S 1N6
Canada
Customer Service Center
Phone: 1 800 665 8222
Fax: 514 332 8357

ABB México, S.A. de C.V.
En la Ciudad de México
Paseo de las Américas No. 31
Lomas Verdes 3ra. Sección
Código Postal 53125
Naucalpan, Estado de Méxicó
México
Teléfono: +52 55 3601 9539

ABB Inc.
579 Executive Campus Drive
Westerville, Ohio 43082
USA
Phone: 877 234 6756
Fax: 614 818 6557
Reliability.services@us.abb.com