Blaaholm punching and embossing machine is the major artery in Vestfrost Solutions production

Countless production stops and reparations. High downtown. High manual handling. Trouble with start-up after downtime were amongst the many challenges on a worn-out punching and embossing machine in Vestfrost's production. The machine had 30 years of service life and a new machine had to replace it, tells Jens Gadgaard, PTA Engineer at Vestfrost.

The search for a trustworthy supplier with an understanding of the production at Vestfrost began. It is the main artery in the production, the machine feeds 3 production lines. And a supplier who could offer instant support was needed.

“We went into dialog with Blaaholm and found out pretty quickly that we dealt with a supplier who could accomplish the task. I knew of Blaaholm from former projects and felt very secure” Jens tells.

Fact box

Jens Gadgaard
PTA Engineer
Vestfrost Solutions

Vestfrost Solutions is a global developer and manufacturer of innovative and efficient refrigerators and freezers for the professional market.

A/S Vestfrost was established in 1963 in Esbjerg with one vision in mind: To create the world’s best refrigerators and freezers.

In 2010 A/S Vestfrost acquired a local manufacturer in Csongrád, Hungary. The result is a fully owned international subsidiary, Vestfrost Zrt., which produces refrigerators for merchandise and wine sectors.

The recent years Vestfrost developed to Vestfrost Solutions. All activities are based on serving specific business needs within four distinctive segments: Biomedical, Vaccine, Merchandise and Wine.

High reliability and phasing out manual labor with new Blaaholm machine.

A Blaaholm punching and embossing machine has just been installed and tested at Vestfrost. The machine processes a front and a back plate for freezers. “The machine performs really well. Better than expected” Jens tells. It has;

- 99% uptime
- Accuracy at +/- 0.5 mm
- Noise level under 75 dB
- 360 subjects in 8 hours, the requirement specifications were 300 subjects.

The machine can handle 2 widths of subjects simultaneously. This means Vestfrost’s model 546 has been moved from manual labor to automatic. The production time has been optimized to 80 seconds against the former 20 minutes at the same process and a significantly better ergonomics for the employees.

“The flexibility is far better on the new machine. Now we can change the positions on the punchings and we have way more accurate punchings than earlier. The safety on the machine has also been considerably improved” elaborates Jens.

The payback time is under 3 years.

Vestfrost obtains several cost savings. The many hours of reparations are gone. The hours spend on manual labor are gone. The time spend by the operators while having downtime and trouble with reboots are gone. A win-win situation seen with a financial view as well.
The business case looks particularly attractive and with an estimated payback time in less than 3 years, the project must be considered a success.

**Sublime project management and cooperation.**

Jens Gadgaard has been very satisfied with the cooperation with the project team from Blaaholm.

“Blaaholm’s project team has given sublime project management and the cooperation has been amazing. They have an extremely good understanding of our production. They listen to our know-how and brings an innovative approach to the project. The project has run exactly after the plan and the timeframe has been kept completely, so I am very satisfied. Our operators are also pleased. The daily operation has gotten way easier,” Jens elaborates.

The project was managed by Blaaholm’s Project Manager Steffan Lundgren Thomsen. Steffan acknowledges good cooperation with Vestfrost and elaborates; “Jens Gadgaard has truly brought competent employees with great know-how into the project, for example, Production Manager, Quality Manager and a blacksmith with high seniority. It has created great value in several of the project phases with a lot of people around the table to discuss possible solutions. I have had great support from our purchasers, constructors and technicians as well to make sure we stayed within the timeframe – regardless of being in the middle of the summer vacation”

“We are very proud of the fact that Vestfrost has chosen us to be their supplier and the main artery of their production is a machine from Blaaholm. We hope to expand our cooperation with Vestfrost around optimization more of their production” tells Torben Blaaholm, CEO.