

BACKGROUND

WMATA is the transit provider for the National Capital Region (DC, MD, VA), providing safe, clean and reliable service to both residents and visitors. They operate the second largest heavy rail transit system, sixth largest bus network and fifth largest paratransit service in the United States. WMATA operates 13 bus garages, 7 rail facilities, and 2 paratransit locations to maintain over 1,600 buses, 86 stations, and 1,100 rail cars.

INITIAL CHALLENGES

Managing multiple storerooms and inventory for over 500 technicians comes with inherent challenges. WMATA was experiencing a 15% stock out rate and long lead times on items like duct tape, fasteners, Loctite and other MRO consumables. Technicians would walk from their stations to the storeroom to pull shop supplies multiple times per day. They would ask for an item from an inventory specialist, and it would get picked, disbursed, and allocated to a work order. Sometimes a technician would request the same item multiple times per day (from different inventory specialists). Meanwhile, excess consumption, hoarding, and shrinkage created stock outs and inflated inventories throughout the storerooms. Each inventory specialist spent at least an hour per day receiving, putting away, picking, and disbursing inexpensive shop supplies, and each purchaser spent at least two hours per day sourcing and placing purchase orders for shop supplies, taking both groups away from more strategic activities. As a short-term fix, WMATA issued credit cards to all of the supervisors. As a long-term strategy, WMATA went to the market to identify the best way to manage their inventory needs without disrupting union labor.

THE FASTENAL SOLUTION

Gerald Verno, WMATA's materials manager for all storerooms, put together a three-month trial program for the top three vendors offering vendor managed inventory and vending technology. Fastenal was awarded the program because of our high level of service and the unobtrusive nature of our vending solution. "Fastenal outworked the competition," said Verno. "I chose their vending program because it is all hands-off until we need inventory." With the help of store room supervisors and Fastenal, Gerald selected a standard set of consumables used by all garages as a starting point. Each garage started with the template machine with lockers for 30 days. At that point, the supervisor could adjust products and add vending units as necessary. Most of the vending units are dispense only, but many lockers have been added to check out and return lap tops and other diagnostic tools.

BUSINESS RESULTS

Shop supplies controlled via vending are now traceable to each technician and are not billed until they are consumed. Technicians have self-serve access to gloves, tape, or razor blades near their work stations, when they need it. Because Fastenal proactively monitors and replenishes the machines, WMATA has eliminated stock outs for vended items, and inventory specialists and purchasing are no longer burdened with handling or chasing down these shop supplies. The machines' controls and reporting have dramatically reduced consumption for various materials, including leather gloves and batteries.



PRODUCTS IN WMATA VENDING MACHINES

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| <i>Lubricants</i> | <i>Penetrants</i> |
| <i>Markers</i> | <i>Can Liners</i> |
| <i>Brooms</i> | <i>Cable Ties</i> |
| <i>Electrical Tapes</i> | <i>Clamps</i> |
| <i>Jobber Drills</i> | <i>Pipe Tape</i> |
| <i>Fiber Discs</i> | <i>Surface Conditioning Discs</i> |
| <i>Bristle Brushes & Discs</i> | <i>Safety Glasses</i> |
| <i>Safety Goggles</i> | <i>Bandanas</i> |
| <i>Face Shields</i> | <i>Ear Plugs</i> |
| <i>Disposable Respirators</i> | <i>Coated & Dipped Gloves</i> |
| <i>Cotton & String Knit Gloves</i> | <i>Cut Resistant Gloves</i> |
| <i>Disposable Gloves</i> | <i>Leather Palm Gloves</i> |
| <i>High Visibility Garments</i> | <i>Rain Jackets & Suits</i> |
| <i>Bloodborne Pathogen Kit</i> | <i>Batteries</i> |

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