

# Packaging Smarts

Advice for better, smarter, more cost-effective packaging decisions

By Tom McClure

## Six Reasons Why NOW is the Time to Automate

Your business is growing. To continue to expand your capacity and build the business, you may be considering automating your packaging process. Here are 6 reasons why now is the right time to do it.

**1. Money is Cheap - For Now** - Interest rates remain at near-historic lows, but the Federal Reserve keeps hinting that these low rates will not last indefinitely. So now may be the best time for you to finance your automation upgrades.

**2. Tax Breaks are Still Available** - Section 179 of the IRS Tax Code allows you to treat some or all of your machinery purchase as an expense, rather than a capital expenditure. This means that your purchase can lower your taxes this year. Your tax advisor can give you all of the details.

**3. Higher Labor Costs Are Coming** - There is tremendous pressure rising to pass an increase in the Minimum Wage. If and when this happens, it will not only affect your lowest paid workers. Your experienced associates will also be pressuring you for increases, in order to maintain their wage differential above the minimum wage.

**4. Higher Healthcare Costs are Here and Will Continue to Rise** - The Affordable Care Act - or Obamacare - is gradually rolling out. This will probably result in increases in your benefits costs. Another reason to consider the labor saving benefits of automation.

**5. Increase your Production Capacity** - Your business may be at that critical stage where you need more capacity in order to grow. Automating now will give you that capacity, while still keeping your labor costs under control.

**6. Automation is Affordable** - Automation can be affordable, and can be done in phases. Each stage of automation you commit to can save you labor costs. You can calculate payout each step of the way.

So if you're considering automation for your packaging process, now may be the best time to act.

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