

OPTIMIZING SUPPLY CHAIN EFFICIENCY AND CABLE INSTALLATION ON SEMI-TRAILERS

A leading semi-trailer manufacturer partners with LAPP Tannehill to implement a Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) and Quick Pick Scanner program, transitioning to flexible SGX cable to lower assembly failure rates, streamline shop-floor supply, and stabilize procurement costs.



OVERVIEW

Headquartered in the Midwest, a premier North American manufacturer of specialized grain and dry bulk semi-trailers produces custom aluminum equipment for the agricultural, construction, and energy industries. Across their product line, high-performance electrical cabling plays a critical role in powering automated tarp systems and heavy-duty trailer equipment.

To support rapid organizational growth and keep pace with evolving manufacturing demands, the manufacturer required a strategic distribution partner capable of scaling alongside them. Recognizing LAPP Tannehill's deep industry expertise, the company established a partnership in 2014 that continues to thrive today.

CHALLENGES

As market volatility increased, the Midwest OEM faced growing complexities within their wire and cable management workflows. To optimize their long-term pricing strategy and streamline operations, they sought to consolidate their distribution options and secure a reliable "single-source distributor."

Operationally, they encountered three distinct hurdles:

■ Material Limitations:

Standard SGT cable's rigid jacket made it difficult to route through tight, curved trailer channels.

■ Compounding Failure Rates:

Sticking with the rigid SGT cable risked slowing down production and increasing installation failure rates due to handling difficulties.

■ Market Volatility:

Fluctuations in copper and raw material costs made long-term forecasting and price budgeting exceptionally difficult.

SOLUTIONS

To resolve the manufacturer's procurement and production pain points, LAPP Tannehill introduced a comprehensive Vendor Managed Inventory (VMI) strategy centered around the Quick Pick Scanner program.

Quick Pick Scanner & VMI Advantage

Instead of carrying massive on-site inventory, the manufacturer uses the Quick Pick Scanner program to track stock directly on the production floor, automatically triggering replenishment with LAPP Tannehill.

Strategic Warehousing & Space Optimization

To keep the customer's operations running at peak efficiency, Tannehill manages a rolling stock of SGX automotive cable out of a strategically located regional warehouse to ensure continuous supply.

Impact: Shifting the bulk inventory footprint to a regional distribution center freed up a substantial amount of physical space on the manufacturer's plant floor, letting them reallocate that square footage to active manufacturing.

Material Upgrade: From SGT to SGX

LAPP Tannehill recommended upgrading to competitively priced, flexible SGX cable. Its pliable construction allows easy routing through complex frames, slashing installation time and eliminating stiff-cable failures.

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If they had continued to use the stiffer SGT cable or partnered with a distributor unable to manage volatile market shifts, they would have faced higher failure rates on the line and an increasingly difficult installation process for their assembly teams.”

– Betty Kirklin, District Sales Manager, LAPP Tannehill

Traditional Procurement Model

LAPP Tannehill VMI & Scanner Model



Inventory Footprint

Heavy on-site storage; crowds the production floor.

Minimal floor footprint; rolling stock held in Savage, MN.

Tracking & Ordering

Manual counts, prone to unexpected stockouts or over-ordering.

Quick Pick Scanner: Instant digital tracking and seamless automated replenishment.

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