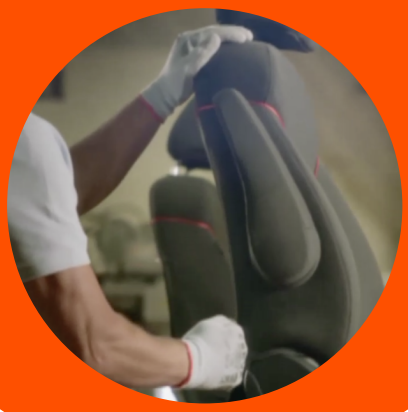
YKK
Little Parts. Big Difference.



AUTO SEAT MANUFACTURER REDUCES LABOR AND INVENTORY THROUGH AUTOMATION

The Customer

Automotive seat manufacturer

The Challenge

To reduce inventory, labor, and improve versatility

The Approach

Due to the nature of the Tier 1 automotive manufacturing landscape, auto seat styles change rapidly between models and manufacturers. This created a situation in which inventory grew and automation became increasingly complex. Targeting labor-intensive and redundant processes, YKK developed a combination of automated solutions that not only addressed these points but also allowed for the versatility that is essential to manufacturing.

The Solution

We divided the process into two facets. First, we implemented the SEW200 machine, which streamlined the redundant sewing operation from two processes to one. The SEW200, which is mounted on an ergonomic, height-adjustable stand, sews YKK's CONCEAL® zipper chain to panels continuously in a one-step process. The operator simply guides panels through the machine, while the SEW200 detects splices, orients the chain, feeds the materials, and outputs a joined component. Second, we implemented the PAL1M machine, which marks zippers according to contoured sewing, sliding, cutting, and bundling YKK's 5CF chain automatically at a tremendous pace.

The Results

Inventory was reduced, versatility was achieved, and labor was decreased, all while improving quality and productivity. Warehousing space previously tied to a plethora of SKUs was freed. Production and market demand were able to be accommodated due to the design and programmable nature of the equipment. Labor was decreased such that one operator could produce double to triple the output possible with previous methods, between 4,000-5,000 units per 9 hr shift.

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