Repair or replace?

John Moriarty* from Emhart Glass explains your options.

When a company or individual purchases a new item of considerable value, the long term obligations of maintenance and repair become the only guarantee of investment protection and optimal performance.

A century and a half ago, an owner was required to perform most repairs on all types of properties. Individuals knew how to fix things and made the time, or had no alternatives. People and companies selected investments with an eye to quality and with the expectation that - if treated with skill and care - that they would be able to improve and extend the life of those investments almost indefinitely. Now there is less time, higher labour costs and specialised technology, which can distract from a company’s core business (e.g. the production of glass containers). Times and technologies change, but one decision is eternal - to repair or replace.

Influencing factors

Decisions are made with criteria that can be complicated and situation specific.

Financial concerns analysed include cash flow, financing costs and ROI, while availability of repair expertise to ensure project success is another weighty factor. A major goal for today’s container maker is uniformity in their equipment base to keep inventory costs down and skill levels high, something impossible in a mix and match manufacturing environment.

Critical choices

In many cases, repair or rebuild may prove to be the most economical choice. But how should one decide who is best equipped to do the work? Plant managers and maintenance supervisors weigh many factors when deciding whether to repair equipment in-house, or outsource the job to a specialised service operation. The trend toward outsourcing continues, since the risk to a large capital equipment investment is too great for many companies to be solely responsible for repairs.

But some companies still choose to rely on the skills and experience of their personnel, and for them the question becomes one of quality parts sourcing. In the world of manufacturing, expected life span and purchase cost of an item dictates whether repair or replacement is the best choice.

Emhart Glass has a long and successful history on both counts by offering glassmakers a single source for quality service, replacement parts and machine updates. The greatest challenge to a glass industry supplier remains offering the customer both quality and value.

Quality is value

Today’s business climate requires streamlined inventory and costs. Just-in-time practices have changed manufacturing methods in key production areas, and customer demands for point of use provisions make it critical that machinery performs at optimum capacity. A process industry such as glass container production is particularly vulnerable when product flow is interrupted.

As the one of the world’s largest independent supplier of IS equipment and machinery repair, Emhart Glass enjoys a proven record of meeting customer needs. With nearly 100 years of close work with customers and experience developing product lines, the company is well placed to offer a variety of solutions to suit specific customer needs. Machines are rebuilt or refurbished to original Emhart Glass specifications using only original Emhart Glass parts. This ensures the integrity of both product and the process while offering customers the ability to integrate the latest, most efficient technology upgrades. Using the total machine concept, the interdependence of motion and tolerances is never overlooked.

Repair or replace?

Emhart Glass offers a number of options. Machines can be rebuilt at various facilities worldwide to ensure the continued healthy flow of the glass industry. When an on-site repair is justified or preferred, Emhart also offers an IS section exchange programme and similar exchange programmes for other machine areas that allow a rebuild to be completed at least partly on-site. It also offers technical upgrades to keep companies competitive within the industry.

Mechanism exchange, if the situation warrants, may prove the better option in a given situation. When returned to the customer, mechanisms will be thoroughly tested to our repair specification; with all original Emhart Glass parts. This guarantees that when the equipment is returned, it matches the precise tolerances required for accurate and repeatable operation. Going a step further, if it is necessary to rebuild on-site using a customer’s existing resources, Emhart Glass may recommend one of several mechanism rebuild kits. Through exploded views, which are included in all Emhart Glass equipment manuals as shown in (Figure 1), technicians can precisely identify the parts in need of replacement. Customers receive kits packaged ready for quick repair, with minimum downtime.

Creative custom repair solutions will always remain part of Emhart Glass’ business plan. The company and its employees are committed to providing the glass container industry with the highest quality service, by way paying particular attention to the needs of individual customers.

ISO certified manufacturing facilities in the Americas, Europe and Asia have a proven track record of quality products and customer service methods. This approach offers a number of solutions to create a customised package that meets specific customer needs:

- Protect your original investment
- Keep pace with new technology
- Reduce unplanned down time
- Maintain OEM specifications
- Receive a full repair warranty
- Minimise capital expenditures
- Highest ROI realisation
- Repairs conducted by technical experts
- ISO certified facilities

In the end and in a common phrase understood by anyone who has ever made an investment of any size, you get what you pay for.

With more than a century of operational expertise behind it, Emhart Glass is well positioned to help customers extend the value and receive the highest possible ROI.

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