



Pregis Corporation

5 ways to improve your foam-in-place operation



Todd Hanna
Vice President and General Manager
FIP Systems
Pregis IntelliPack

Foam-in-place objectives

Are you constantly trying to manage your consumables (liquid foam, film) usage? Are you frustrated by unexpected foam-in-place equipment downtime? Do you get annoyed when you have to wait several days for a service technician? If so, you are not alone.

A recent independent research study of current foam-in-place users identified several desirable process attributes. They include the ability to:

- better manage costs associated with consumables.
- avoid downtime due to equipment malfunction.
- operate the unit quickly and easily, by any employee.
- know that every package going out the door has the right level of protection.
- use new, state-of-the art equipment without a capital expenditure.

As basic as those desired attributes sound, they have not been possible until recently. The traditional foam-in-place business model typically has required the purchase of the equipment, the consumables to run it and a service package to keep it operational.

Plant managers, trying to avoid another capital expenditure, are oftentimes packing 21st Century products with 20th Century technology. Most aren't even aware that new generation equipment—foam-in-place, foam-in-bag or hybrid (both features)—exists and can be seamlessly installed without a capital expenditure.

Here's what the new generation of foam-in-place equipment from Pregis IntelliPack can offer you.

1. Telemetry

Most of us are familiar with online diagnostic tools that come with later model automobiles. They are designed to monitor everything from tire pressure to the oil level and produce a report so that you always know how your car is performing.

The telemetry capability on an IntelliPack system is similar. The unit automatically collects, monitors and measures critical information, such as liquid foam and film usage, temperature, pressure and other system parameters, each time it is operated. The system performs daily diagnostic testing, based on control boundaries that have been customized for your operation. This ensures that the machine stays up and running. If a potential problem is detected, the system will automatically contact an IntelliPack service technician.

That's a significant departure from finding out your system has a problem after it shuts down your production line. The telemetry feature will allow you to:

- Increase productivity.
- Optimize equipment performance.
- Stay steps ahead of unexpected problems or costly downtime.

2. Barcoding

This “smart” feature helps operations with multiple product lines deliver consistent packaging protection. It takes the guesswork out of what bag and how much liquid foam to use. This means that your employees will always use just the right amount of liquid foam and film every time because the barcode tells the unit what to do. Not only will your product be protected, but your bottom line also will benefit.

- a. Your IntelliPack sales and service team will work with you to develop an optimal pack-out for each specific product and assign an individual bar code to it. (Bar codes can be placed anywhere you'd like—on the product, case, shipping form, etc.)
- b. The foam-in-place system will then be programmed with the bar code data and associated pack-out requirements for all of your products. (This information tells your system the exact amount of liquid foam and film required to properly package each specific product.)
- c. During the packaging process, operators simply scan the bar code label (for the specific product) using a hand wand. Operator variables are virtually eliminated, allowing you to better manage your consumable line items.
- d. The IntelliPack system automatically dispenses the precise amount of liquid foam and film needed.

3. Equipment design

With traditional foam-in-place equipment, replacing a part can take between 30 minutes to an hour. IntelliPack units, on the other hand, only need a few seconds to a few minutes. Time not spent changing parts means more productive focus elsewhere on your line.

Another frequent complaint from traditional foam-in-place equipment users is that the film rolls are difficult to load for less physically-strong employees. We also know that protecting your employees from work-related injuries is critical to your operation. This is why ergonomic SmartFilm™ deployment has been engineered into the new generation IntelliPack unit. The loading arm swings out for easy film mounting. A DC motor monitors film usage to adjust tension and shut off machine when it runs out. Additional equipment features include:

- rugged mixing module
- user-friendly bag maker and hand-held dispenser
- easy-to-replace sealing wires
- advanced software
- lightweight chemical pumps

4. Design and package labs

Pregis customers have access to our national design and packaging labs. Each lab is equipped with state-of-the-art equipment to make sure your package meets or exceed performance requirements.

Pregis will identify specific technical requirements for your application and develop a custom packaging solution based on a comprehensive needs analysis. We conduct the necessary testing, provide a detailed report of findings and recommend “next steps.” We guarantee our customers a quality product that performs consistently in the most demanding of shipping environments.

5. The IntelliPack Advantage Program

- Custom program designed for your specific needs.
- No up-front capital investment.
- Installation, training and on-going support.
- All parts and labor included in monthly rental.
- Telemetry preventative maintenance and bar coding included at no extra charge.
- Lifetime warranty on parts and equipment.
- Automatic mechanical and software upgrades ensure that our customers always have the latest state-of-the-art technology.
- Ongoing expert consultation for changes in your packaging needs.
- Flexibility for changing needs.

No obligation demo

If you would like to experience the IntelliPack foam-in-place difference, please contact us for a no-obligation demo at 866-692-2166 or visit: www.intellipack.com.