

Case Study

manufacturing

RICOH
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AMETEK Electronic Systems Protection (ESP & SurgeX)

How Ricoh Managed Services helped AMETEK ESP improve call center response, advance technical support and streamline warranty product fulfillment



“You might not immediately think of Ricoh as a company that can improve operations, but they have individuals to implement operations solutions who are specialists in their field.”

– Dave Perrotta, Vice President,
Business Manager, ESP,
SurgeX & Powervar

ESP

SURGEX

AMETEK
ELECTRONIC SYSTEMS PROTECTION

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

AMETEK Electronic Systems Protection (ESP), based in the Research Triangle Park in North Carolina, provides a complete line of power quality hardware, software, and 30-plus years of managed services. Since 1985, ESP has been a leader in safeguarding mission-critical electronic equipment. In contrast to most players in the market who just focus on power protection devices, ESP goes beyond that by partnering with customers on an ongoing basis. To further strengthen this process, ESP has maintained an ever-growing library of analytics to help enhance their actionable business intelligence capabilities — improving insights into power issues and giving them a strong competitive edge.

CHALLENGE

- Increasing response times in customer call center
- Insufficient staffing for technical support call volumes
- Manufacturing disruption to fulfill warranty requests
- Need to improve service in line with budget and business needs

Business was at risk as AMETEK ESP’s resolution times at its level one customer service desk had noticeably increased. Their goal was for customers to get a live voice immediately or a return call within one to two hours, however response time had grown to eight to 12 hours — and sometimes as much as 24 hours. The issue came to a head as AMETEK ESP increasingly heard negative feedback on its service response times at trade shows. The company realized it either had to add more people and provide training — or seek outside help.

AMETEK ESP was also receiving approximately 13 calls on an average per day for technical support and escalation. The company faced the fact that it would need to add more technical staff to keep up, which would increase costs.

In addition, AMETEK ESP had a lifetime, no-questions-asked warranty program — with a turnaround time of 24 hours. Widely popular from a customer standpoint, the program put a burden on the customer service team that processed approximately 300 requests per month. It also disrupted manufacturing lines that had to stop scheduled production to produce the requested item. We proposed a program where we would process approximately 80 warranty requests a month initially and ramp up to full production mode over time.

Overall, AMETEK ESP needed a solution to improve its customer, technical and warranty service programs that aligned with budget constraints and business needs.

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RESULTS

- Response to customer service calls within minutes
- 50% resource savings by outsourcing technical service
- One monthly report to attribute warranty costs
- Business growth and scalability without increased cost

With Ricoh managing and answering calls in the customer service center, the response time has been reduced from up to 24 hours to a matter of minutes with a 100 percent first call answer rate. Customer feedback at a trade show 45 days after implementation of the reorganized customer service center showed a dramatic improvement in customer service satisfaction.

“We wanted our users to have the absolute best support possible, and for that, we turned to Ricoh.”

With Ricoh providing managed services for customer calls, technical support and warranty product replacement, AMETEK ESP can reallocate its resources to higher value work. In fact, by outsourcing technical service, the company has saved 50 percent on monthly resource costs.

Also, the manufacturing lines don't have to be interrupted to produce quick-turn replacement products. One monthly report will replace up to 300 separate warranty transactions, making it much faster and easier to attribute warranty costs. Overall, AMETEK ESP is equipped to pursue business growth without increasing its head count or costs.

HOW WE DID IT

- RICOH Service Advantage staff assumed responsibility for level one customer call center
- Expanded call center to handle level two technical support
- Proposed a distributed depot to offload warranty request fulfillment
- Leveraged intelligent lockers to house bulk stock of replacement products

To address declining customer service response times, we assumed responsibility for AMETEK ESP's support center, answering calls under the ESP and SurgeX brands. Our RICOH Service Advantage staff performs triage on each situation and routes the issue to an appropriate person at the company using their existing ticketing system — resulting in a 40 percent reduction in overall technical response time to customer inquiries.

Ricoh also proposed leveraging the center to provide level two technical support. With this solution, the company could change the way it provided technical support — adding a direct interface to its equipment to instantly extract data from the device needing service, accurately diagnose the issue and help the customer solve its electrical problem.

Next, we proposed a distributed depot concept at our existing Georgia facility to offload warranty request fulfillment and put management of the program in Ricoh's hands. We would process inbound calls for warranty replacement products through the AMETEK ESP call center and use cloud-connected intelligent lockers to house product produced in bulk. As replacement requests come in, RICOH Service Advantage personnel pick, pack and ship items as a managed service for AMETEK ESP under a fixed fee arrangement and provide a monthly report of all warranty transactions to streamline tracking.