



a **TNA** case study

400% increase in output

TNA Solutions (TNA) helped a newly acquired potato chip company completely redesign and optimize their manufacturing space to create room for innovation and growth. This updated space became the home of a new packaging machine that provided a clear competitive edge, allowing Mister Bee to increase chip capacity output by 400%.

Mister Bee 

potato chips

Mister Bee Potato Chips is an American brand of potato chips produced in Parkersburg, West Virginia. Founded in 1951 by Leo and Sara Klein as a small local business, the company was family owned until 2010. It is now incorporated as West Virginia Potato Chip Company, LLC, and since 2015 has been owned by Mary Anne Ketelsen and partners.

challenge

outdated machinery was limiting packaging capacity and earning potential

After acquiring Mister Bee, Mary Anne Ketelsen realized the existing frying and packaging machines were outdated, poorly maintained, and not suitable to meet the demands of the growing market. Under previous management, “[Mister Bee] had a very old Macbeth fryer and the packaging was made for rice instead of potato chips.”

As a company that receives orders for up to 3,000,000 bags; a major concern for Mary Anne and the sales manager was that offering a superior product in bulk

quantities would be essentially impossible if they continued to use the aging equipment they inherited. It was clear to Mary Anne that an upgrade would be critical if they wanted to increase the packaging rate, improve sales and enhance quality; but they couldn't buy everything all at once due to budgetary constraints to consider. They needed to partner with a manufacturer that could not only offer superior value but also a long-term strategy for upgrading machinery over time.

solution

Once Mister Bee's operations manager determined what process improvements were most critical, they were able to narrow their search to manufacturers whose focus was to provide top-tier performance. After researching several other competitors, Mary Anne looked into TNA Solutions. Mary Anne found TNA's site to be both visually pleasing and informative. What stood out the most for her was TNA's transparency.

Each solution included specifications – such as stats on product yield, processing speed, and sustainability – so that it was clear what each machine's capabilities were. The cherry on top was once she reached out for a quote, TNA offered a competitive lead time. This solidified Mister Bee's decision to move forward into a strategic partnership with TNA.

“[previous machinery] could only run 20 – 25, whereas now with my new TNA machines, I can run 100 – 115 a minute. A very big upgrade.”

– Mary Anne Ketelsen, President



Before bringing in a new solution, TNA's expert engineers worked in collaboration with Mister Bee to redesign and optimize the manufacturing space. Mary Anne noted that she was especially impressed by TNA's utilization of Microsoft's HoloLens technology to support their buildout. Once the space was mapped out, the team recommended the **TNA robag® 3ci**, a vertical form, fill and seal (VFFS) food packaging machine that features a rotary double configuration, making it capable of ultra-high performance at speeds of up to 150 bpm. This performance enhancement was further amplified by TNA's patented auto connect and unload assist technology – making it easy to change formers with minimal manpower required.

While integrating **TNA robag® 3ci** into Mister Bee's space there was a small design defect that required repair. TNA took action quickly, paying for welders to come back and make the necessary repair on behalf of Mister Bee. It was this example of TNA's commitment to ensuring a quality experience that left Mister Bee's owner, Mary Anne, blown away.



“When TNA came they said ‘hey, you will not have a problem’ and they lived up to our expectations.”

– Mary Anne Ketelsen, President

creating space for growth and innovation

Mister Bee's investment in a more modern and effective setup, increased their chip capacity output by 400%. Mary Anne, owner of Mister Bee Potato Chips, has expressed that on top of these amazing results, she also found comfort knowing that if she ever needed it, she has access to TNA team members, from engineers to service personnel, via phone at any time.

This was only the beginning for TNA and Mister Bee. Since then, Mister Bee has continued their partnership with TNA, investing in a second solution – a new fryer – two years later. As a result of TNA's outstanding service, superior machinery, and consistent results; Mister Bee works exclusively with TNA for their machinery needs Mary Anne expects her company to continue this successful partnership for many years to come as they continue to grow and innovate.

TNA solutions is a global leader in food processing and packaging solutions, committed to helping people succeed responsibly in a changing world. With over 40 years of experience, TNA's global team of experts have installed more than 14,000 systems in over 120 countries. The company creates and sustains solutions that help customers realise goals and exceed their expectations, with performance, responsibility, and a customer-centric approach at the core of the business. A collaborative, consultative approach ensures measurable results and lasting success, with solutions designed to evolve and perform over time.

As an inclusive partner, TNA supports a growth agenda that goes beyond business, emphasising its commitment to people, prosperity and the planet in harmony. TNA is a powerful advocate of social justice, and aims to support children in disadvantaged communities through education, healthcare, and social enterprise programmes, through the humanitarian initiatives undertaken by the Nadia and Alf Taylor Foundation.

