

Quality Improvement

ReThink Manufacturing · Evidence-led manufacturing improvement

Summary: Recurring product label tears were causing customer returns. The labels were tearing at the point of application, which was attributed at various times to label stock quality, applicator calibration, and operator handling.

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Approach: None of the previously considered causes had been verified through observation of the actual process. When the label path was observed in operation, the tearing was occurring consistently at the same point — suggesting a mechanical cause rather than a materials or handling cause.

A conveyor belt was making contact with the label at the point of application, causing the tear. The contact was subtle but consistent, and only observable when watching the process run.

A simple engineering modification eliminated the contact between the belt and the label path. No change to label stock, applicator settings, or operator handling was required.

Outcome: Customer returns eliminated. The modification required minimal materials and labour.