

Insider Info

Industrial Laundry Solutions
with Brennan Pollnow



A Laundry's Most Impactful Machine

When it comes to taking the leap into automation, investing in one piece of equipment can significantly impact business through saved labor hours and catapulted productivity. In this column, I'll provide some insight into the most impactful pieces of automation equipment measured in terms of productivity, versatility, quality, and return on investment (ROI). Remember, if you're considering automation, look to your equipment distributor to help you assess — in hard numbers — what one piece of equipment can do for you.

The most labor-intensive area of a laundry is on the finishing side because it involves folding. The good news is that there are machinery options out there that can significantly reduce those labor hours, while upping production, quality and efficiency. This will also help your laundry grow during a time when labor is scarce. Even better? While you might think investing in automation will break the bank, it won't. Most folding systems pay for themselves in two years or less.

Auto-Sort Towel/Blanket Folder

Let's start with an auto-sort towel/blanket folder. This is an extremely impactful piece of equipment because it automatically sorts, folds and stacks up to 800 pieces per hour with only one operator. An auto-sort folder makes it possible for laundries to cut labor hours by 87 percent over hand folding, which equates to a savings of more than 8 labor hours per day.

At the same time, laundries enhance quality through consistency of folds and stacks, which simplifies prepping goods for transportation and storage. At the end of the day, every laundry - large or small - should strive to heighten efficiency, maximize productivity, enhance quality and reduce labor. In doing so, they'll cut processing costs and boost profits.

Ouch! That sounds expensive, right? What if I told you most auto-sort folders have an ROI of less than 2 years? Remember there are always two costs when you buy: The cost of the machine (automation) and the cost of ownership with or without that machine. The cost of the machine may seem like a lot, but what's its operational impact? Compare your finance payment to operational cost savings. Many times, the difference in labor costs will make up for your financed equipment payment each month!

FT-Maxi Auto-Sort Folder



1
Operator

800
Pieces
per Hour

680
PPOH

(1 lb/item at
85% efficiency)

Excellent
Quality

up to 800
pieces/hour

All-in-One Ironing System

The other piece of equipment to highlight - again on the finishing side - is an all-in-one ironing system that automatically irons, folds, stacks and accumulates. There are models on the market offering the versatility of processing everything from fitted and flat sheets, to duvets and table linens.

An all-in-one machine is great because it eliminates almost all hands-on flatwork folding and stacking. Using a basic flatwork ironer, operators must feed, catch and perform the cross folds. With a higher production all-in-one machine, operators feed sheets, but the primary folding, cross folding and stacking are all automatically performed for boosted quality and production. An all-in-one machine will process (iron, fold and stack) up to 210+ sheets per hour using two operators or 180-260 sheets per hour with a single operator.

Additionally, to further boost quality and production, some, like GI's Compact+ 5-in-One, offer optional spreader/feeders. While an all-in-one is an investment, it's well worth it. It eliminates hand feeding, folding and stacking for an ROI of just 2 years.

Compact+ All-in-One



1
Operator

180-260
Wash Pounds
per Hour

200
PPOH

(1 lb/sheet at
85% efficiency)

24" Compact+
w/Stacker

3+
sheets/minute

180+
sheets/hour

32" Compact+
w/Stacker

4+
sheets/minute

240+
sheets/hour

The Big Picture

The leading reason for an auto-sort folder or an all-in-one machine is to decrease labor costs and quadruple production. But laundries also enhance quality while positioning themselves for more opportunity and profit. The icing on the cake? A 2-year ROI and a machine that will last and perform for years to come.



Brennan Pollnow, North American business manager for Girbau Industrial, assists commercial and industrial laundries with laundry room design and workflow, proper equipment mix and sizing, as well as automation and efficiency recommendations. He interfaces closely with local distributors and customers to ensure seamless communication, installation and startup. Please contact him with any questions at bpollnow@cgilaundry.com or call 800-256-1073.