



Automatic Stretch Wrapper Buying Guide

Real World Tips on the Future of Stretch Wrappers,
and How to Pick the Best Machine for You.

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Lantech[®]



Introduction

The goal of this Buyer's Guide is to help you understand the issues and opportunities associated with owning and operating an automatic stretch wrapper so you can make informed decisions about which machine is best for you.

It's based on our experience and the innovations and inventions we've developed during the more than four decades since we invented the first stretch wrapper.

We hope you find this information useful and we're always available to provide more details or to help you in any way we can.

Good luck!



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Is There Really a Difference?

We live or die by shipments.

It's the universal performance metric. And the last thing between a pallet of your product and the back of a truck is a stretch wrapper.

Which stretch wrapper you put there makes a difference. Because, unlike people, all stretch wrappers aren't created equal. There are differences and those differences have a major impact on your operation.

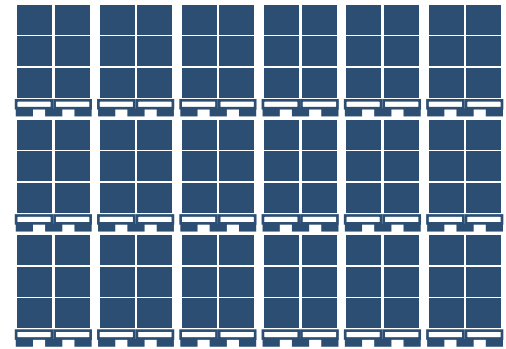
Think about this: if you had an automatic stretch wrapper averaging 60 loads per hour and operating 24/7/365, it wraps about 5,000,000 loads in its first 10 years.



**60
Loads
Per
Hour**

=

**5,000,000
Loads
in
10 years**





Is There Really a Difference?

What if that stretch wrapper delivers . . .

Less Downtime

5 fewer minutes
of unplanned
downtime per day

*At an average value of only \$500
per pallet, that 5 minutes adds up
to \$1,800,000 in shipments that
you could have made but didn't.*



\$1,800,000*

Less Film

Safe-to-ship loads
with 1/2 ounce less
stretch film per load

*That extra half ounce of stretch
film per pallet load meant you spent
\$150,000 on film that you didn't
have to.*



\$150,000

Less Damage

An average of 1/8
of one percent fewer
unsaleable products

*The value of those goods that used
to be unsaleable?*

That only amounts to \$2,700,000.

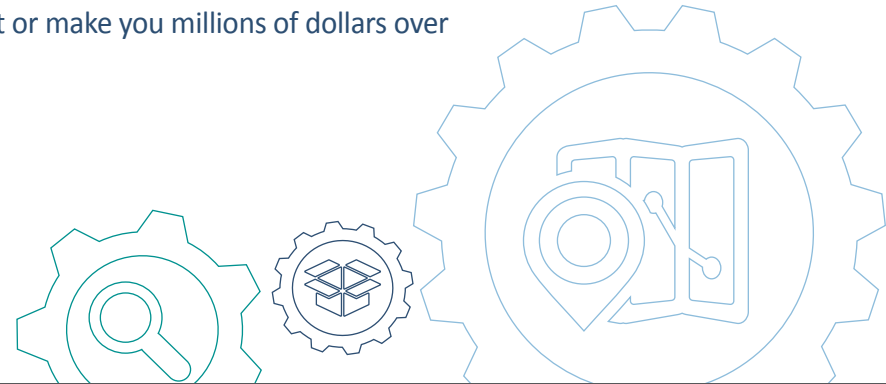
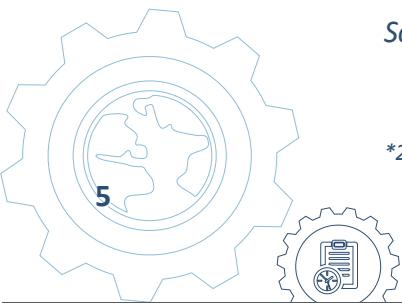


\$2,700,000

At the end of the day, your automatic stretch wrapper will either cost or make you millions of dollars over its economic life.

So choose wisely.

**24/7 Full Capacity Model*



This Buyer's Guide will help you understand why:

- *Some stretch wrappers have less downtime than others*
- *They can wrap a load with less stretch film*
- *They create pallet loads that have a higher probability of reaching their destinations in saleable condition –*
- *How these outcomes have significant financial impact over the economic life of the machines.*

These results aren't accidents. They're the result of conscious, deliberate design choices that focus on eliminating waste while ensuring your product loads reach their destinations at the lowest cost.

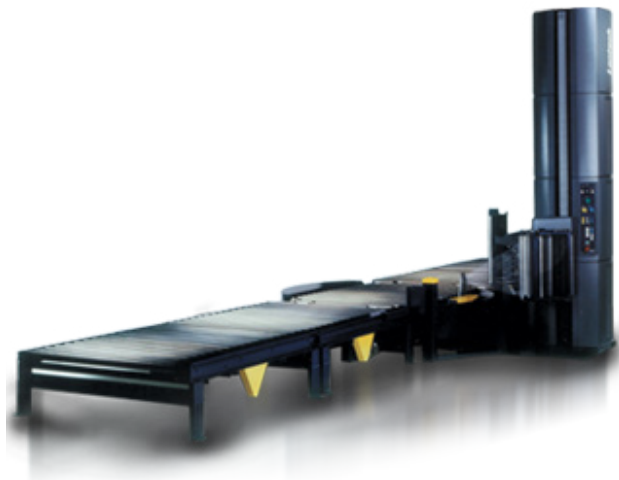




What Kind of Automatic Stretch Wrapper Is *Right* for You?

Turntable Automatics

On a turntable stretch wrapper, the load rotates on a turntable, while the film delivery system moves up and down, dispensing the stretch film. A turntable is typical for low to medium volume users wrapping no more than 70 loads per hour. Turntable stretch wrappers are best for stable loads. They are compact machines and have small footprints. They are used in “stand alone” situations where they are loaded and emptied by forklifts or used as part of production system where they are fed by automatic palletizers.



[Click here for more information on Turntable Automatics.](#)

Lantech Model:
Q Automatic or QL Automatic

Typical Price Ranges:
\$40,000 to \$80,000



What Kind of Automatic Stretch Wrapper Is *Right* for You?

Straddle Automatics

With a straddle stretch wrapper, the load remains still while the film delivery system rotates around the pallet, moving up and down to distribute the film. This is useful for light and unstable loads that might fall apart while the pallet is rotating and for heavy loads that weigh more than 5,000 pounds. Because the loads don't rotate, straddle wrappers can operate at higher speeds than turntable automatics and achieve maximum throughput speeds up to 100 pallet loads per hour. They also operate in "stand alone" mode or are fed by palletizers.



[Click here for more information on Straddle Automatics.](#)

Lantech Model:
S Automatic or SL Automatic

Typical Price Ranges:
\$39,000 to \$150,000

What Kind of Automatic Stretch Wrapper Is *Right* for You?

Ring Straddle Automatics

The ring straddle automatic is similar to the straddle wrapper, as the load remains still while the film delivery system rotates around the pallet. The ring is perfect for users needing ultra-high volumes at the fastest speed. With the ring straddle automatic, a user can wrap up to 180 loads per hour. Ring straddles are typically fed by palletizers.



[Click here for more information on Ring Straddle Automatics.](#)

Lantech Model:
RL Automatic

Typical Price Ranges:
\$182,000 to \$300,000



What Kind of Automatic Stretch Wrapper Is *Right* for You?

Horizontal Automatics

A horizontal automatic is a large ring and film delivery system turned on their sides. It's used for heavy, over-sized or odd shaped loads that require high wrap force or when the top and underside of the load must be wrapped in addition to its sides (six-sided wrap). Printed materials, bundles, motors and long products such as windows and doors are commonly wrapped on a horizontal automatic. Horizontal automatic can do six-side wrapping by themselves or they're often teamed with a turntable or straddle automatic stretch wrapper when high throughput is needed. Ring sizes range from 40 inches to 90 inches in diameter.



[Click here for more information on Horizontal Automatics.](#)

Lantech Model:
Lan-ringer

Typical Price Ranges:
\$75,000 to \$200,000



Technology Choices

In the world of automatic stretch wrapping technology, there are two basic choices – the old one and the new one.

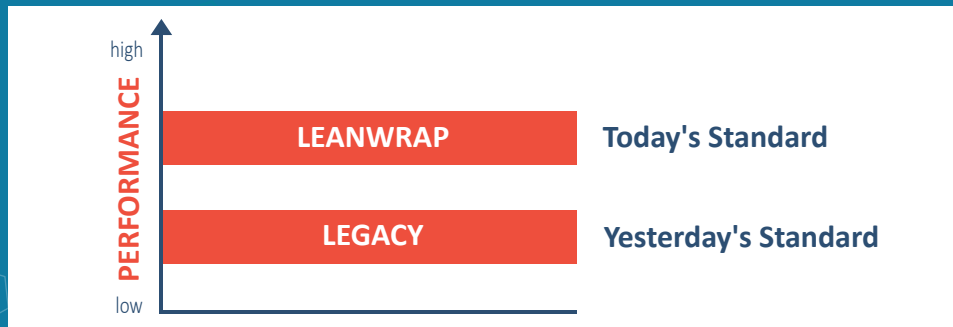
1. “Legacy” Technology –

it’s on our **Q Series** turntable and S Series straddle automatics.

It has the traditional film delivery systems and controls that most of us are used to.

2. LeanWrap® Technology –

it’s our newest stretch wrapping technology on our **L Series – QL Automatic, SL Automatic and RL Automatic** stretch wrappers. It has a new film delivery system called **Metered Film Delivery®** and a new control system called **Load Guardian™** designed to handle today’s challenges and product loads. These machines are based on our LeanWrap Philosophy.



LeanWrap is how we think. It guides us on how we design and what we do to create effectively stretch wrapped loads. We’ve developed a LeanWrap family of features to help our customers wrap their products loads better and at lower cost and with dramatically reduced risk of being damaged during shipment.

LeanWrap features include Metered Film Delivery®, Load Guardian™, Load Seeking Clamp® 4.0 and Pallet Grip®. Learn more about each of these features in the Top Productivity Enhancing Features section.



Top Productivity Enhancing Features

LeanWrap® Exclusives

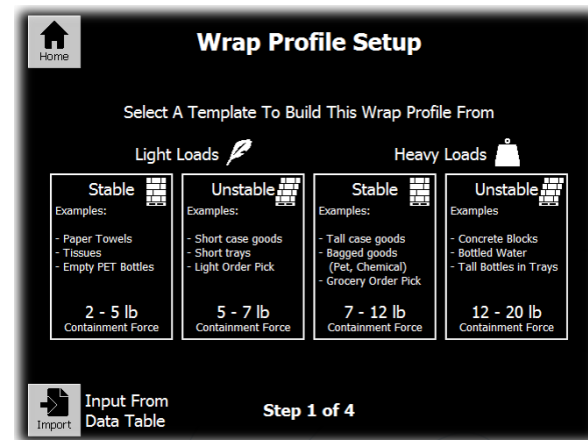
Metered Film Delivery®



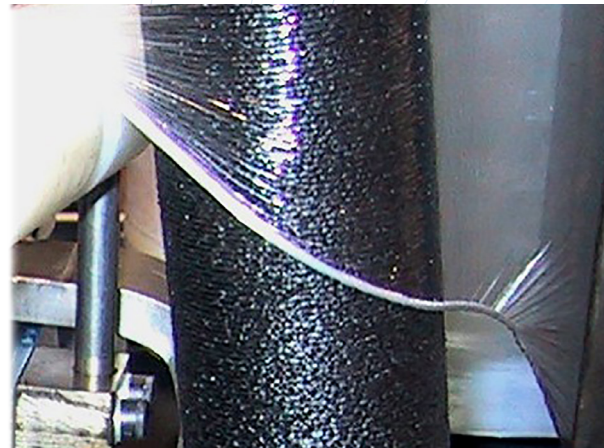
Load Seeking Clamp 4.0®



Load Guardian™



Pallet Grip®





Top Productivity Enhancing Features

Metered Film Delivery®

Metered Film Delivery is an exclusive LeanWrap feature designed to wrap today's challenging loads effectively. It addresses addressing the primary causes of film breaks to eliminate waste, downtime and reduce shipping damage. Metered Film Delivery is only available on L Series machines and cannot be retrofitted to legacy stretch wrappers.



Q: *What's the difference between legacy film delivery systems and metered film delivery?*

A: Legacy film delivery systems are too slow to prevent film breaks and load twisting associated with today's fragile loads and higher rotations speeds. Metered Film Delivery has new algorithms that provide precision and responds faster to overcome the problems of conventional delivery systems.

Q: *What other advantages does Metered Film Delivery provide?*

A: 1. It Delivers Double the Wrap Force per Revolution of Film

- a. Get more containment force using the same amount of film.
- b. Use less film and get the same amount of containment force.
- c. Combination of more containment force and less film.

2. Reduces Film Breaks

- a. Reduced film breaks stop bad things from happening to containment force, the quality of the wrapped load and uptime.
- b. Reduces operator adjustments and frustration.

3. No Crushing or Twisting of the Load

- a. Wrap loads that were difficult to wrap, e.g. paper towels
- b. Wrap loads that couldn't be wrapped before, e.g. some order picked
- c. Wrap loads with more wrap force.

4. Wrap to the Core of the Film Roll

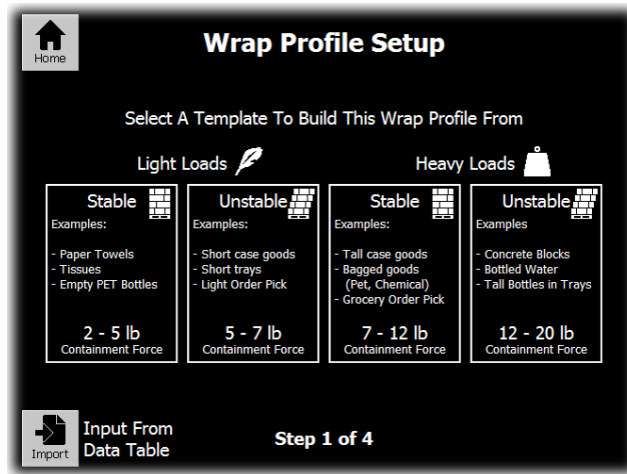
Metered Film Delivery is exclusive on the L Series Automatics.





Top Productivity Enhancing Features

Load Guardian™



Q: What is Load Guardian?

A: Load Guardian is an intelligent wrap setup system that eliminates the skill and knowledge required by operators to set up a stretch wrapper to get the right containment force. Operators no longer have to make 12 interactive adjustments (rotation speed, wrap force, overlap etc.) to the machine. Instead, the screen on the control panel prompts operators to enter data about the load's shape, how well the load fits the pallet, the load's stability and weight, then the machine chooses the settings to wrap the load.

We developed Load Guardian to make it easier for customers to wrap loads and to help reduce product damage from ineffective stretch wrapping. Experience has shown most automatic stretch wrappers

are not set up correctly to wrap with the right amount of containment force, increasing the risk of damage and possibly causing high costs.

Q: What are other Load Guardian Advantages?

A: 1. Automatic Containment Force Monitoring

- Monitors every load to ensure containment force is applied correctly.
- Film layers are automatically adjusted based on the wrap force to maintain the correct containment force for the load being wrapped.

2. Visual Management of Wrap Quality

- Creates an overview screen for every wrap profile that shows:
 - Exactly how many film layers are being applied.
 - The amount of wrap force.
 - The load's required and projected containment force.
- Shows the outcomes of the changes to the wrap profile with without test wrapping.

Load Guardian makes it easy to take control of the wrapping process and the quality of the stretch wrapped load. It's only available on L Series machines.



Top Productivity Enhancing Features

Load Seeking Clamp 4.0®

Film Clamps play a key role in effectively stretch wrapping loads. Clamps should guard against film pull-outs or tear-outs to reduce film breaks and downtime. Film breaks are a major cause of stretch wrapper downtime. In fact, 25% of all film break are at the clamp. Clamps should also eliminate or reduce leading and trailing film tails and prevent tenting to stop the loss of containment force at the base of the load.



Q: *How Does the Load Seeking Clamp 4.0 Work?*

A: Unlike fixed clamps, the Load Seeking Clamp 4.0, moves out the load to eliminate tenting and to stop the loss of containment force at the bottom of the load. The Load Seeking Clamp 4.0 attaches the initial tail before the clamp releases. When the clamp retracts, the arm raises and inserts the film securely into the clamp for the next load and the wipe down then secures the film tail to the load. The Load Seeking Clamp 4.0 takes control of both the leading and trailing film tails.

Q: *What Are the Advantages of the Load Seeking Clamp 4.0?*

A: 1. Reduces Downtime

The holding force of the Load Seeking Clamp 4.0 is 3 times stronger than other clamps reducing irritating and time consuming film breaks. Life cycle tested over 3,000,000 cycles.

2. Safe and Intuitive

The inflatable, pneumatic bladder, allows the film to easily be reattached. The floor is clean and clear under the clamp and automation unit. The components are away from the operator path and there's no sharp objects to injure the operator.

The Load Seeking Clamp 4.0 is available only for SL Series and S Series automatics.

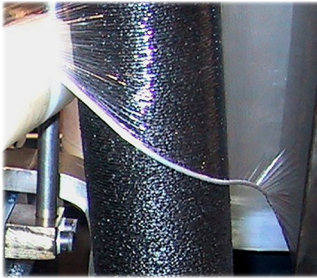


Top Productivity Enhancing Features

Pallet Grip®

Pallet Grip stops loads from sliding off of pallets by locking the load to the pallet and provides enough room for the forks to pick up the pallet without creating holes in the film, which could compromise the containment force at the base of the load

Q. How Does Pallet Grip Work?



A. 1. Roll Up.

Pallet Grip rolls the bottom 3-5 inches of the stretch film web into a tight film cable during the last seconds of the wrap cycle. The roll up of the film into a cable strengthens it and reduces the risk for it to unravel. Pallet Grip also prevents the film from tearing at the corners of the pallet.



2. Drive Down.

The cable is placed (*driven down*) just below the top deck boards of the pallet, low enough to lock the load to the pallet yet high enough to avoid the forks from pallet jacks or forklifts.

Pallet Grip is a standard feature on all L Series Automatics and S Series Automatics. Pallet Grip is available as an option on the Q Automatic.



Most Popular Options

Here's a list of the most popular options for automatic stretch wrappers:

Speed Packages (25 rpm – 40 rpm)

Wrap arm or turntable speed rotation is increased. Turntable models up to 25 rpm. Some straddle models up to 40 rpm.

Additional Wrap Height Capacity for Straddle High Speed Stretch Wrappers

For wrapping loads which exceed the 80" wrap height capacity of the standard system.

Will handle loads up to 110" tall.

Increases total height of the machine to 216" at standard pass height.

Additional Wrap Height Capacity for Turntable High Speed Stretch Wrappers

For wrapping loads which exceed the 92" capacity of the standard system.

Will handle loads up to 122" tall.

Overall operating height of system is 152" at an 18" pass height.

Conveyor Sections

Available in 3' to 13' sections.

Standard-spaced (2 1/2" diameter on 3-3/4" centers)

Close-spaced (2-1/2" diameter on 3" centers) and tight-spaced (2-1/2" diameter on 2-3/4" centers) powered conveyor rollers.

Standard and non-standard pass heights (15" – 38" range).

Standard duty (3,000 – 4,000 lbs.), heavy duty (4,500 – 6,000 lbs.) and gravity conveyors.

Cold Package

Allows for efficient operation of the stretch wrapper in an environment where the temperature range is +31 to +10 degrees Fahrenheit.

Corner Board Placer

Automatically apply corner boards to the load during the wrapping process.

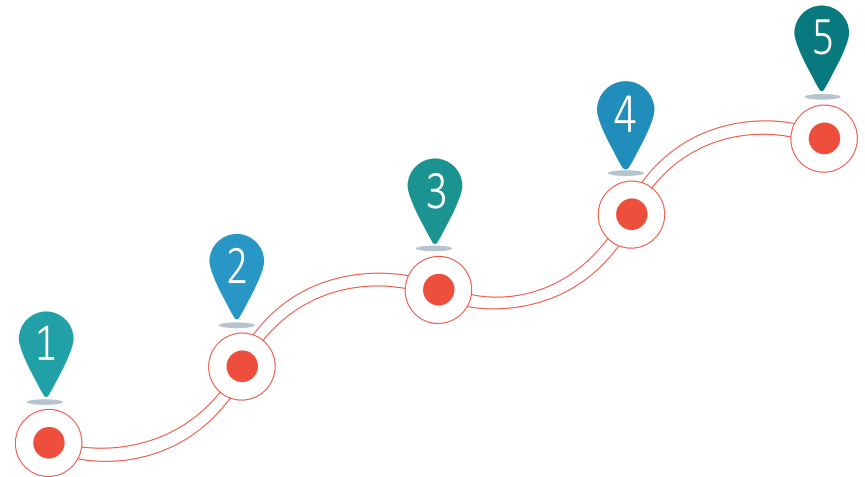
Top Sheet Dispenser

Automatically applies a sheet of poly film over the top of a load for moisture and dust protection.



Tips and Insights

These five insider tips will help you maintain a sense of perspective and insight to focus on the things that are really important to making the best decision possible for your company.



Tip 1. Think “Load” First

Stretch wrapping is about loads – unitizing and securing them so they have the best chance of reaching their destinations in the same condition they were in when they shipped.

Until recently, figuring out how to do this at the lowest cost was more art than science. Today, the science of stretch wrapping has surpassed the art, ensuring that loads are wrapped effectively, at the lowest cost, and have a better than ever

probability of arriving undamaged at their destinations.

Although stretch wrapping works remarkably well, there are still big improvement opportunities.

We estimate, for example, there’s about \$60 billion of products a year in just the food, beverage, and consumer product goods industries that become unsaleable from in-transit damage resulting from ineffective stretching wrapping.

We believe that at least half of that damaged product can be avoided by simply stretch wrapping better.

Take a hard look at your loads. If they’re not already more fragile and hard to wrap, the odds are they will be – soon. Understand it and its challenges, both current and future. Then go look for your new stretch wrapper.

Tip



Tip 2. Buy a Machine That Knows How to Wrap

Yes, today's most advanced automatic stretch wrappers know how to wrap. They're intelligent.

They don't need to be setup and adjusted by the operator, just tell them about the load and they'll decide how to wrap it.

They'll make sure there's enough containment force (the key determinant of successful stretch wrap-

ping) is present everywhere on the load – for every load – ensuring that you meet your basic safe-to-ship obligation.

The very best machines also improve the odds of successful shipment by locking the load to the pallet with a film cable to keep it from sliding off. They make the load still safer by ensuring there are no long or dragging film tails.*

Take the guesswork and potential for human error out of the stretch wrapping equation. Let the machine do this work and free your people to focus on the many jobs that people do best.

*Film tails provide an opportunity for the stretch film bands securing the load to unwind. Unwinding can reduce containment force, which could lead to load failure. Film tails can cause problems or even load failure if they get caught in downstream equipment such as conveyors or automatic storage and retrieval systems.



Tip 3. One Wrap Pattern Isn't Enough

A wrap pattern is the result of the machine setup and film choices chosen to deliver a specific containment force to a specific load type.*

Relying on one wrap pattern means that pattern has to deliver enough containment force to handle all loads. So the wrapper is setup for the most difficult case scenario. This may be practical, but it's not efficient – unless the different load types are similar.**

In an era of increasingly fragile and difficult to wrap loads, it's imperative that each load has its own wrap pattern. What used to be the hard and tedious work (as well as requiring a detailed knowledge and skill base) to discover wrap patterns yielding safe-to-ship loads has shifted from machine operators to the stretch wrapper itself.

Today's most advanced stretch wrappers know how to wrap loads so they're safe to ship – and they

can identify individual loads and select the appropriate wrap pattern for them.

Don't settle for the status quo.

Buy an intelligent stretch wrapper – one that can wrap each load, regardless of variety, exactly the way it should be wrapped so it has the best chance of reaching its destination looking like it just came off your production line.

*Automatic stretch wrappers can be programmed to identify specific load types and apply an appropriate wrap pattern to each load. Loads are typically identified by bar codes or by the length of their pallets. We have observed, however, that most machines with this capability have defaulted to a single wrap pattern. Go figure?

**Generally, loads fall into one of these categories and containment force requirements range (based on Lantech's CFT-5 containment force measuring tool) from 2 to 20 pounds depending on load category and individual load characteristics:

1. Very light.
2. Stable mid-weight.
3. Heavy unstable.
4. Very unstable.



Tips

Tip 4. Don't Buy Speed You "Might" Need.

Many people overestimate their throughput requirements by as much as 25 to 50 percent.

Be realistic about the capacity of the production line the stretch wrapper will support. Most lines

never approach their theoretical maximums. High speed automatic stretch wrappers with excess capacity are expensive. And that extra capacity will also lower your Overall Equipment Effectiveness (OEE) score.

If you need more throughput later, in some cases the machine can be upgraded in the field with a speed package. Also, the speed of the conveyor drives can be increased.

Tip



Tip

Tip 5. Don't Forget the Support System

The Automatic Stretch Wrapper is only a single link in an effective stretch wrapping value chain. It's part of a process. For it to deliver the results you want, it needs help.

You need these support elements to get the most value from your machine:

1. A stretch wrapping standard for each load type.

At a minimum it should specify:

- a. The load's containment force requirement.
- b. The load to pallet bond requirement.
- c. A requirement for no long or dragging film tails.

2. Periodic preventive maintenance.

The run-it-until-it-breaks mindset isn't sufficient. Machines with maintenance problems encourage operators to resort to "work-arounds" that invariably reduce wrap quality.

3. Feedback loops.

Is something deviating from standard? What actions do we take? The sooner deviations are found, the easier they are to fix.

4. Knowledge.

Make sure your people are properly trained and have the skills needed to maintain the performance of your stretch wrappers. Otherwise, buy a machine that has these capabilities built in. They're here now.

Take a hard look at your support infrastructure. The advanced capabilities of today's latest stretch wrapping technology can compensate for many of the organizational, procedural and people constraints managers face today.

Make sure your next Automatic Stretch Wrapper is a step forward rather than one that simply maintains the status quo.

[Click here for Lantech's 10 Step Process for Damage Reductions.](#)

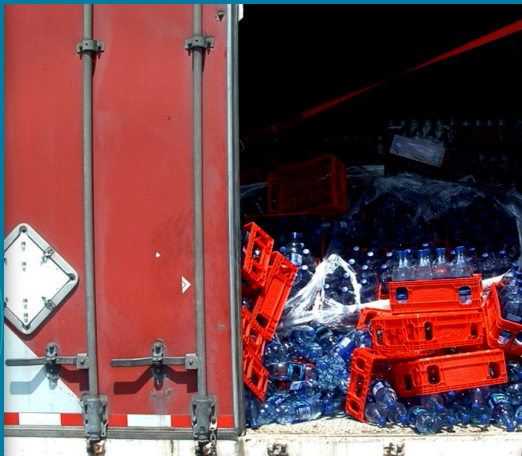




Insights

Loads are Harder Than Ever to Stretch Wrap

Sustainability initiatives have challenged all of us to think about ways to be better global citizens of the environment. Companies are rethinking the types and amount of materials and packaging used in their products. Manufacturers continue to reduce materials through down gauging and removing primary and secondary packaging.



Bottled water is a great example of this change. There has been a 60% reduction in plastic content of the bottles over the past twenty years and reduction of packaging by 41% in the last ten. These changes all add up to some serious challenges when stretch wrapping and shipping the bottles of water successfully.

Older stretch wrapping technology hasn't kept up with the new challenge of – fragile loads, display ready loads, reduced packaging materials and sustainability initiatives.



Appendix I - How to Effectively Stretch Wrap Your Loads

First things first!

The goal of stretch wrapping is to get the Load from Point A to Point B in as made condition at the lowest cost effectively shipped.

What is “As Made” condition?

It's the condition the load is in when it arrives at the stretch wrapper. If it was damaged before it arrived to the stretch wrapper, we can't do anything during the wrapping process to fix that damage. But we can control what happens during the wrapping process.

What is lowest cost?

It's the stack up of all the cost associated with owning and operating an automatic stretch wrapper. Film costs, downtime, labor, maintenance, damage...

What is effectively shipped?

It means the load or product arrived in as made condition at the lowest cost.

Standards ensure your loads are wrapped effectively. At a minimum, each load type should have:

1. A containment force standard (e.g. 12 pounds of CF everywhere on the load).
2. A load-to-pallet bond standard. (e.g. load is locked to the pallet with 3 to 5 inches of stretch film rolled into a cable and driven down onto the pallet just below the top deck boards).
3. And a film tail standard (e.g. no film tails longer than 4 inches).

Make sure your system has a feedback loop in place to ensure that your stretch wrapping standards are being maintained and take immediate corrective action if they're not.





Appendix II - Note on Damage

What is Damage?

Damage is any change in the as made condition that reduces customer satisfaction.

Damage can be a returned truck load of bottled water. There's a significant cost and excess hassle to this type of damage. Think about what should take a few minutes to unload now takes hours. What happens to the damaged product? Is it given away, sold at discount or does it end up in the landfill?

Damage is also the dented can or crumbled box of cereal on the shelf at the local grocery store. Think about how many times you push the imperfect carton or box out of your way because your satisfaction would have been reduced to purchase the damaged one. This damage is harder to quantify but can be very harmful to your brand reputation.

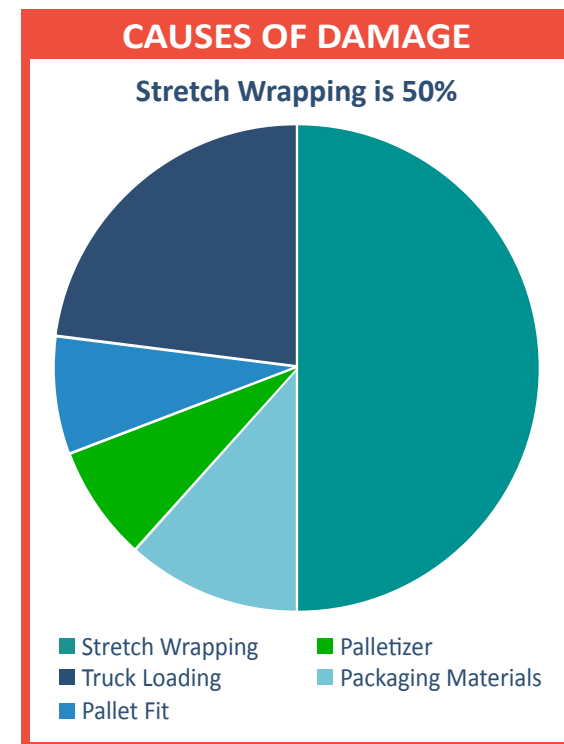
There are five primary causes for damage.

1. Package Materials
2. Pallet Fit
3. Palletizer Function
4. Truck Loading
5. Stretch Wrapping

The dollar value of the products that aren't fit for sale because they were damaged in shipment is huge. We estimate there is \$60 billion of products annually that are unsaleable because of ineffective stretch wrapping.

What are you doing to reduce your risk for damage? Did you know this is a fixable problem with effective stretch wrapping? Are you effectively wrapping?

By doing something as simple as stretch wrapping your products better, you could reduce your risk for in transit damage.





Appendix III - Big Barriers to Effective Stretch Wrapping

Biggest Barrier?

It looks easy but it's really hard.

"It's not you. It's me," is often used as the excuse in break up scenarios. This is the way it is when trying to stretch wrap effectively. It's not you. It's the machine.

Stretch wrapping effectively is hard and tedious work. When setting up a machine to wrap a load effectively there lots of choices and adjustments that must be made. They are:

1. Film width
2. Film gauge
3. Prestretch percentage
4. Wrap force
5. Film revolutions at the top of the load
6. Film revolutions at the bottom of the loads
7. Film band overlap amount up
8. Film band overlap amount down
9. Overwrap amount at the top of the load
10. Film delivery system speed up
11. Film delivery system speed down
12. Turntable or wrap arm speed

The problem with all these is the impact of the changes is interactive and largely invisible. It's a frustrating process to figure out the right combination of settings to get the correct amount of containment force. Failure to get the adjustments right can result excessive downtime, increased costs, and in-transit load damage.



Appendix III *Continued* - Big Barriers to Effective Stretch Wrapping

Thousands of load wrapping audits tell a chilling tale of how often an effectively wrapped load isn't achieved and how hard it really is. Because it's difficult and time consuming to do, operators don't do it.

The technology of the equipment hasn't kept up with ensuring the products you are wrapping today are safely shipping or making any easier for operators to set up a wrap pattern to wrap effectively.

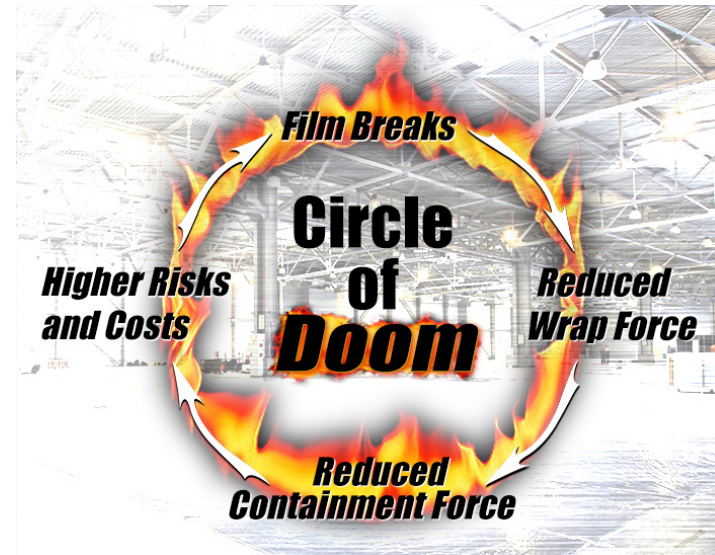
Next Big Barrier? Film breaks.

Film breaks are the enemy of containment force. Stretch film breaks a lot - about 3 to 7 times per roll on the average. The common causes of film breaks include load profile, clamp failure, film flaw, wrapper setting, and operator error. But in the hustle and bustle of the typical workday, stretch wrapper operators simply don't have time or know how to figure out which of these causes is making their stretch film break so much.

So what do they do? They turn the wrap force down - to the point where film stops breaking.

Although it solves the immediate problem, that simple turn of a knob can set off a chain of destructive, unintended consequences that undermines the whole purpose of stretch wrapping - making sure your products ship safely to their destinations.

Film breaks are more than just an annoyance. They're the number one problem in stretch wrapping. *And they are, indeed, the enemy.*





Appendix IV - Automatic Stretch Wrapper Buyer's Checklist

Checklist:

- ☐ Does your stretch wrapper make wrap quality visible?
- ☐ Can you see where film is being applied to your load before the wrapping process?
- ☐ Can you easily make adjustments to the wrap profile?
- ☐ Does the machine help to set up and maintain containment force standard?
- ☐ Can you effectively bond the load to the pallet?
- ☐ Does the machine eliminate or reduce film tails?
- ☐ Does the machine have features to eliminate or reduce film breaks?
- ☐ How does the film delivery system perform with various load types?
- ☐ How robust is the film clamp?
- ☐ Does the film clamp move to the side of the load?
- ☐ What type of production data can you get from your stretch wrapper (e.g. historical downtime, film usage, blocked or starved time, etc.)?

Questions:
800-866-0322 or email at
CRT@lantech.com

Lantech[®]