

Assessing the effectiveness of your spray system

Many spray systems today are manual systems. However, automated systems — with a controller that “manages” performance — are gaining popularity quickly.

Whether you have a manual or an automated system, there are two main considerations when evaluating your spray system.

1. How is your system performing today?
Could you improve performance by making some minor modifications or changing your maintenance procedures?
2. Could performance be further enhanced if you automated your system or upgraded your existing control device?

A Spray System Optimization Program begins with an assessment of your current system — manual or automated. In some cases, the signs that your spray system performance could be improved are easy to spot. But most of the time, the signs are subtle and difficult to detect even though the associated costs can be extremely high.

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In general, a good place to start is to review your costs for water, chemicals and electricity. If your present system isn't performing properly, you could experience significant waste and increased costs. The charts on pages 10 and 11 will give you a feel for how much this waste could be costing.

As you think about your application, keep the following factors in mind as well. They can have a significant impact on cost, too.

- **Labor:**

Are you spending a lot of time operating or monitoring your system?

Is manual intervention required to adjust nozzles in conjunction with batch or process changes?

Is cleanup required due to overspray?

Are you spending excessive time on maintenance?

- **Increased scrap:**

Even a slight increase in your reject rate can be extremely expensive.

- **Lost production time**

- **Environmental concerns:**

such as byproduct disposal and emission costs.