

Technical Note



Remote Access – Overcoming Security Concerns to Embrace Time and Cost Savings Benefits

Automated packaging processes are designed to improve efficiencies by reducing costs and increasing output. When any aspect of that system does not function optimally, rapid service becomes critically important. Downtime is costly and especially when expert support from the Original Equipment Manufacturer (OEM) is required, their technician's availability and travel time often becomes a limiting factor as to how fast a resolution can be provided.

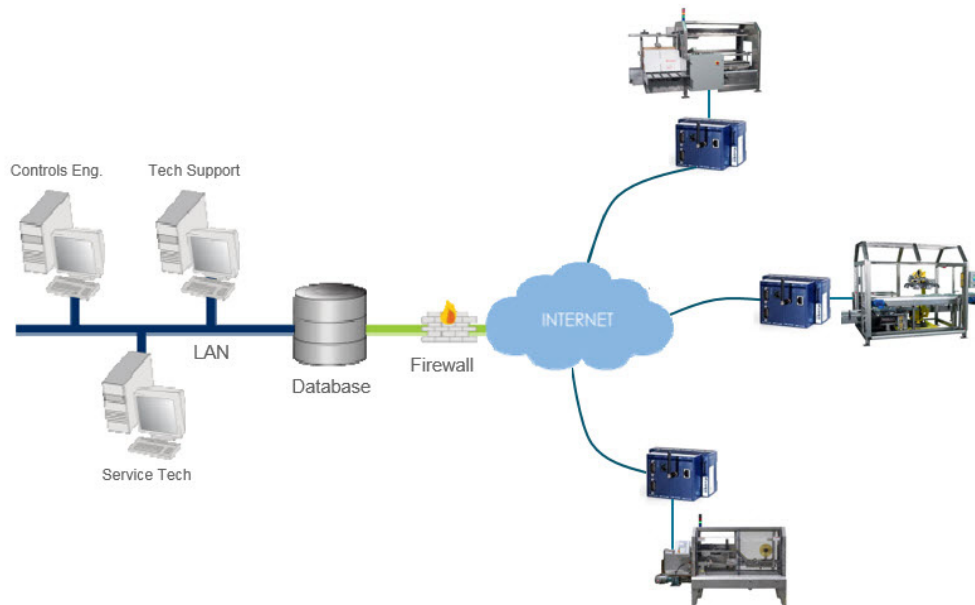
Offering over-the-phone diagnosing and troubleshooting assistance attempts to ease the problem. However, without any data, diagnosing can be very difficult. This would be different if engineers and technicians had access to the machine's control program. Remote access provides fast, convenient and economical service, allowing the OEM to either solve the issue entirely remotely, prepare for a service trip by diagnosing the issue ahead of time and better support their technicians on-site during a service trip.

For years, Remote Access (RA) has been gaining traction in the secondary packaging industry. However, despite the substantial benefits including reduced downtime and significant cost savings, some companies have been resistant to the idea primarily due to network security concerns. IT departments, responsible for the integrity of corporate data are particularly wary of outside access to their internal networks, machine controls and various data. However, restrictions on accessible devices and connections, data encryption, customizable security settings and activity monitoring validate Remote Access as a convenient, reliable and most notably: safe technical support solution.

Pearson Packaging Systems

Pearson Packaging Systems specializes in the design, production, integration and service of secondary packaging automation solutions. As a systems provider, Pearson offers a full line of customizable machinery to erect, pack, seal, and palletize top-loaded cartons, cases and trays.

Focused on minimizing total cost of ownership, Pearson Packaging Systems is dedicated to a solution-driven partnership. For sixty years, a diverse set of high-volume manufacturers and distributors has relied on our engineered systems and continuous service support.



Only designated devices are remotely accessible

In order to establish a remote access connection, machine control panels must be connected via an Ethernet port to an industrial-grade router (or routers) over a local area network (LAN). The router(s) then links to a wide area network (WAN) via a cloud-based Virtual Private Network (VPN) and a client software program allows authorized users to log in from any location with a reliable Internet connection. Only the machines intentionally connected to the router(s) on the LAN are accessible to the OEM – other machines and devices are not.

Only outbound connections can be initiated

While information can be exchanged between the router-equipped machines and the OEM support team, only outbound secure VPN connections are supported. This eliminates the possibility of an outside source assuming machine control or obtaining network information. Additionally, the machine owner always has full control over connectivity and can easily enable or disable the WAN port and local connection at any time with the flip of a switch.

Shared information is encrypted

The VPN tunnel through which information travels is encapsulated in an encrypted protocol that prevents communication from being “readable” at any point along the transmission path. Pearson Packaging Systems does not store or monitor any content. Machine or system information is only available to the designated users on either end of the connection in real time.

Security settings are customizable

Unique logins enable remote access administrators to tailor user access rights to best suit their company’s needs. With the ability to grant access only to the employees who need it – and with varying levels of privileges - only designated team members can view, initiate, monitor or control account and connection settings on a machine-by-machine basis.

User activities are monitored by administrators

Additionally, connection history records containing login information like date, time and session duration are available. This level of visibility enables administrators to monitor remote access activities and oversee login frequency to better manage users.

What originated as an out-of-the-box-idea-of-the-future is now a reality. Remote diagnosing and troubleshooting helps maximize equipment uptime while reducing service costs for manufacturers and other companies utilizing secondary packaging automation equipment. The continuous advancement of security features accelerates acceptance even among IT departments reassured that network safety will not be compromised at the expense of faster and more affordable support services.

To learn about Pearson’s exclusive remote access partner eWON, please contact us directly at 1-800-732-7766.