

Dematic Corp.'s new project targets companies looking to save on fixing fraying conveyor systems

By [Julia Bauer | The Grand Rapids Press](#)

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GRAND RAPIDS -- Customers with aging conveyors and tight budgets are the target for a new suite of modernization products from Dematic Corp.

"We know there are thousands of systems out there that need to be modernized and upgraded," said Ken Ruehrdanz, market manager. Dematic, the latest brand for the Rapistan business born in Grand Rapids, is touching base with companies whose conveyor and distribution systems are in the five- to 15-year range.

"We can come into the facility and put in new controls, new software, to make the infrastructure run more efficiently," Ruehrdanz said.

Fraying conveyors can be replaced, ragged rollers renewed, and retro-fit kits can speed up motorized moving parts. Software upgrades can improve sorting prowess, while brighter, more efficient lighting is being offered as part of an energy management package.

"There's always a need to upgrade and modernize," Ruehrdanz said.

"What's unique is, we've built such a wide package of offerings -- dozens of kits customer can use. It really hits the three areas."

- Operational -- maintenance audits, operations assessments, preventive and on-site maintenance**
- Facilities -- re-lamp, replace lighting; energy management**
- Material handling -- repair/rebuild sorters, pulleys, other parts, and new software to run the system**

"Essentially, it's extending the life of the technology," Ruehrdanz said. "Instead of replacing it, you're rebuilding it for half the cost of a new one."

Typical return on the investment is 18 months to three years, he said. But there are "soft returns" on the investment, too.

"If the system performs with fewer errors, and the customer gets orders without errors?" Ruehrdanz said. "Some companies are doing that, to get ready for the recovery."

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