

case history

Market: Baking; Cereals

CUSTOMER

General Foods production plant in Modesto, CA, makes Grape Nuts, Bran Flakes and Honeycomb cereals.

PROBLEM

Previously, the facility had used Revere load cells to monitor weight levels of cereals kept in surge bins. But the units were unreliable, says Doyle Howe, Maintenance Leader at the plant. "We had lots of problems keeping them in calibration, and we had a lot of circuit board problems with them." The facility needed a more reliable solution for its weight monitoring needs.

APPLICATION

The facility decided to install three Kistler-Morse Load Discs under each of four different surge bins. Two bins measure 10-feet tall by 10-feet in diameter; the other two measure 20-feet tall by 8-feet wide. After the cereals are baked and cooked, they are blown into one set of surge bins and weighed. From there, the Grape Nuts are ground and blown into the final surge bin. Meanwhile, the Bran Flakes are somewhat doughy after just being cooked, so they are first dried and flaked, then sent into the final surge bin. The Kistler-Morse Load Discs send 4-20 mA outputs which help to control the baking, drying and grinding process.

BENEFIT

"We're getting pretty good accuracy from them (K-M Load Discs)," according to Howe. "When the bin levels get low, they (Load Discs) send signals to a relay logic system that switches the process on again. Basically, they give our operators a sense of whether they should run the process faster or slower. We try to never shut down production completely."

CONCLUSION

Weight readings from the Kistler-Morse Load Discs under the surge bins allow the 24-hour round-the-clock facility to always be in the production mode. And they're durable. "They're very reliable," Howe says. "Much more so than the Reveres. I've been here four years, and in that time we've never lost a load cell. That's pretty good for that type of equipment."