



# NATION PIZZA AND FOODS SLICES RESPONSE TIME AND DOWNTIME

MOTOTRBO™ DIGITAL RADIOS IMPROVE PLANT EFFICIENCY BY 10% PLUS



For 65 years, Nation Pizza and Foods has been a leading manufacturer of baked, prepared and frozen foods. They are experts at creating innovative solutions – from microwaveable panini sandwiches to sweet treats to legendary frozen pizzas. Their patented raised edge crusts and “fresh off the pan taste” of microwaveable products are just two state-of-the-art technologies that have given them a competitive edge.

Tracing their heritage to Father and Son Pizzeria in Chicago, this family-owned business has evolved into two USDA facilities in Schaumburg, Illinois and McPherson, Kansas. Today, Nation Pizza and Foods prepares over two million products a day for leading food customers and is the proud recipient of Nestlé’s “Contract Manufacturing Supplier of the Year Award” for 2011-12.

As times changed and their capabilities expanded, this progressive manufacturer sought a communication solution that would improve operational efficiency at its 190,000 square foot main plant with six production lines and over 600 employees.

## CUSTOMER PROFILE

### Company

- Nation Pizza and Foods, Schaumburg, IL

### Industry

- Food Products Manufacturing

### Motorola Solution

- MOTOTRBO XPR™ 6550 Portable Radios
- MOTOTRBO XPR™ 8400 Repeaters
- XPR™ 4550 Base Stations
- Capacity Plus Single-Site Trunking
- Motorola Original Audio Accessories
- Text Messaging

### Solution Features

- Enhances safety throughout the plant
- Increases efficiency of multiple production lines
- Significantly reduces wasted time and resources
- Improves overall communication
- Teams organize faster to tackle issues instantly
- Exceptionally clear audio in loud environment



**THE CHALLENGE**  
**IMPROVE RESPONSE TIME AND REDUCE DOWNTIME**

Nation Pizza and Foods relied on a one-way overhead paging system that was increasingly inefficient as their footprint expanded to 190,000 square feet. If a production line went down, the floor supervisor would leave the equipment, walk over to a wall phone, page maintenance and wait. According to Julian Bauer, Process Improvement Supervisor, "Many times you would hear several pages for the same downtime issues over and over again. The response time could be up to ten minutes."

"Mechanics would be called to a production room and not know which machine to go to," explains Bauer. "Pages were not specific and since communication was one-way, they couldn't respond back to operators for details on the issues." This resulted in mechanics going to the wrong machine, not having the appropriate equipment or tools to resolve the issue, or the wrong mechanic assigned the work order if special skills or training were required. Repeated and extended downtime occurrences were proving costly – too many employees were standing around and production equipment was being underutilized, wasting time and money.

**INCREASE EFFICIENCY IN EVERY DEPARTMENT**

Nation Pizza and Foods knew it had to improve communications in its core departments: topping, bakery, maintenance, sanitation, quality assurance, warehouse and security/safety. Key operators who experienced the greatest downtime could not get hold of each other quickly because the paging system was one-way. "There was a lag in response time even when you did find a phone or page someone," recalls Vince Nasti, Plant Manager. "There was built-in frustration among our operators because their needs weren't addressed."

Add to that the loudness in the plant as employees strained to communicate above noisy equipment. "Because we require ear protection, it was hard to hear pages," says Bauer. "Many people would miss pages and if someone was not in the plant, you would never know unless someone else paged you and told you."

**THE SOLUTION**  
**MOTOTRBO DIGITAL RADIOS ARE THE KEY INGREDIENT**

With a hunger to improve efficiency, Nation Pizza and Foods got in touch with Dale Phillips of Portable Communications Specialists, Inc., a local Motorola



channel partner. "We wanted a solution for our people to connect quickly," explains Mike Alagna, COO. "We have a Motorola two-way radio system in our Kansas plant and it has proven to be a great tool for communication."

Both believed a digital system would ensure continuous communication throughout the large, noisy, multi-room Schaumburg plant with metal walls that hindered radio signals. "I proposed MOTOTRBO as the right solution. There is a lot more versatility with digital and it is a platform they could add to later," says Phillips.

"We knew there were real advantages with digital radios," says Alagna, praising their greater coverage and capacity, clearer audio in noisy environments, integrated voice and data capabilities, and longer battery life. "There was a cost differential with digital versus analog, but we realized very quickly it was worth the extra cost."

**ROLLING OUT THE SYSTEM FROM SCRATCH**

Approximately 90 MOTOTRBO XPR 6550 radios were distributed to key personnel to see how they would accelerate response to mechanical downtime. "We did a two-week test on our biggest production line. We gave the radios to the operators, leads, supervisors, managers and maintenance personnel. The trial was very successful," says Bauer.

"Initially we had to convince people they needed radios" recalls Alagna. "After two weeks, the feedback was it really helps them perform their job better because they can communicate between teammates in their departments and quickly coordinate with their peers in other departments."

The results were so significant, 33 additional MOTOTRBO portables were purchased for other departments, from reception to warehouse. These



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- Vince Nasti, Plant Manager

extend the value of the solution beyond plant communications into a broader and more complete workforce solution for the entire facility.

“We created a list of positions that would benefit from radios. A lot of other people have come to us with their own justification of why they need MOTOTRBO. To put it simply, everyone wants a MOTOTRBO radio now,” says Nasti.

### **ADDING CAPACITY PLUS TO THE MIX**

“Portable Communications Specialists worked with us to find the optimum network design to get good range and reliable coverage. They put repeaters on the roof and even if we are a couple miles away at our warehouse, the MOTOTRBO radios work perfectly,” says Bauer. Today we have a talkgroup for every major department. This has helped us organize much better and speed the response of a mechanic or lead supervisor to a request or an alert.”

Portable Communications Specialists recommended MOTOTRBO Capacity Plus, a single-site trunking solution that enables a high volume of voice and data communication for a large workforce without adding new frequencies. “It’s helped a lot because we don’t have to wait to talk to departments. With Capacity Plus, now all six voice channels can talk at once, at any time. This is another benefit of digital you don’t get with analog,” says Bauer.

### **THE BENEFITS CONNECTING AND COLLABORATING LIKE NEVER BEFORE**

“Our production lines are quite large and distributed across different rooms. Now our lead in production and packaging can communicate without having to run over to another room to find their counterpart,” explains Julian Bauer, Process Improvement Supervisor. “We can communicate with anyone in the plant in seconds versus five minutes. MOTOTRBO radios streamline our communication and are a huge benefit overall.”

**10%**

**“MOTOTRBO DIGITAL RADIOS  
IMPROVE PLANT EFFICIENCY  
BY AT LEAST 10%”**

- Mike Alagna, Chief Operating Officer

“You can send someone to the warehouse a mile and a half away and get hold of them or they can get hold of you. We have a lot better communication not only within the plant, but around the plant,” adds Mike Alagna, Chief Operating Officer.

Plant Manager Vince Nasti concurs, “With the press of a button, I not only reach someone right away, but I can reach the right person right away. It brings down the frustration level and response time and builds more teamwork. People are constantly giving each other updates and you see the dialogue that wasn’t there before the radios. They had to work a lot harder to communicate the same amount of information they communicate right now.”

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overall.”**

- Julian Bauer, Process Improvement Supervisor

### **RESPONDING INSTANTLY TO RESOLVE ISSUES**

“Response time was one of our biggest issues,” says Bauer. “Today operators communicate with mechanics quickly to get problems solved. Outcomes are faster, teams are more organized and it’s a lot easier.”

**CASE STUDY**  
NATION PIZZA AND FOODS



"As soon as there is a problem, they get on the radio instantly instead of taking time out to locate a phone. In the past, operators may have tried to resolve the problem on their own, and that took longer. While mechanics are heading to the line or equipment, they can update them on what's going on or what may be needed. Communication is more thorough and they can multi-task enroute," explains Nasti. "It doesn't stop at downtime, it's overall communication. Our lines are set up for processing and packaging. When team leads are able to communicate, there's better coordination on the line."

"Even more important is the dialogue between production and warehouse and between quality control and production on issues that arise. The real benefit is better communication and understanding by all," says Alagna, emphasizing it improves worker safety, too. "If there is an accident, there is much quicker response time."

**COMMUNICATING CLEARLY IN LOUD AREAS AND ON LONG SHIFTS**

Because employees must wear ear protection in the plant, Portable Communications Specialists recommended earpieces that slip over the ear and fit comfortably under head gear. "The sound quality of digital is ideal for our noisy environment. Everyone can

hear clearly," says Bauer. "The lapel microphones are noise-cancelling, so people can hear what others are saying without background sounds interfering." With three shifts that run 24/7, "We needed a battery that would last as long as our shift, at least eight hours. The MOTOTRBO radios actually last nine or ten hours. Most of our production positions share radios, so they just change over batteries when they change shifts, and that is working out really well."

Top management at Nation Pizza and Foods uses text messaging to stay connected without distractions. In the future, they are looking at MOTOTRBO's many applications, such as work ticket management or automatic machinery monitoring and alerting to further improve efficiency.

**"MOTOTRBO has definitely reduced response time and is definitely paying for itself."**

- Julian Bauer, Process Improvement Supervisor

**RESULTS THAT SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES**

"Our plant has six production lines and over 600 employees working each day, and any gained communication efficiency is vital to our operational performance," says Julian Bauer. "MOTOTRBO radios help enhance the throughput of the line because everyone is communicating quicker, problems are getting solved faster, and everyone is more organized."

"The end result is we are running more efficiently and profitably. MOTOTRBO has definitely reduced response time and is definitely paying for itself. I recommend manufacturers test out MOTOTRBO and experience the benefits for themselves. Once they do, they will probably come to the same conclusion we did and implement the system."

For more information, visit [www.motorolasolutions.com/MOTOTRBO](http://www.motorolasolutions.com/MOTOTRBO) or contact your local Motorola representative.

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**ABOUT PORTABLE COMMUNICATIONS SPECIALISTS, INC.**

A valued Motorola channel partner since 1989, Portable Communications Specialists is recognized for their commitment to service excellence and industry-leading Motorola products they use to develop and implement unique communication solutions for Chicago-area businesses, government, manufacturers and schools.

**MOTOTRBO**  
DIGITAL  
REMASTERED.