

TekniPlex Healthcare helps companies commercialize swab sticks for COVID-19 testing needs

Quick turnaround for form-fill-seal material, coupled with technical support from TekniPlex Healthcare enabled first-time swab stick manufacturers to quickly ramp up production.

COVID-19 Self-Test (Rapid Antigen Test)



PROBLEM

The global COVID-19 pandemic presented unprecedented challenges for healthcare companies who wanted to deploy their expertise to support frontline efforts. TekniPlex Healthcare was approached by three separate companies, each requiring various levels of assistance to commercialize a product they had never made before—a nasopharyngeal swab stick for COVID-19 testing.

CAUSE

Two of the three companies had not previously manufactured swab sticks, and the third (Company A) needed to ramp up to help meet global demand for COVID-19 testing. All required assistance to source packaging materials in faster-than-normal turnaround times. Unfortunately, due to the unprecedented sudden demand, packaging materials were in short supply.

Here are the three separate scenarios:

Company A. A medical device manufacturer was given a government grant to boost its swab stick production. The company not only had to source the packaging material, but it also needed to purchase and validate multiple form-fill-seal machines.

Company B. The CEO of another medical device manufacturer reached out to the governor of his state to find out how they could provide assistance. The request was to manufacture swab sticks for COVID-19 testing. The company already had form-fill-seal equipment in place for current medical device packaging.

Company C. This company is a contract manufacturer with a sister company that manufactures dental products. The two related entities teamed up to produce swab sticks for the first time. The contract manufacturer also had to source form-fill-seal equipment.



SOLUTION

Each of the three companies required assistance from TekniPlex Healthcare to meet their objectives. Here's how TekniPlex Healthcare deployed its resources and supply chain connection to deliver the top web, barrier packaging materials:

Company A. TekniPlex Healthcare had already been supplying this customer with heat-seal coated paper for other product applications. When doing an analysis of requirements, TekniPlex Healthcare discovered that the other products were being used for elective surgeries. Since the demand for those products had decreased, it was able to free a significant portion of the material for swab stick packaging use.

However, the issue of turnaround time still remained. The company needed lightning fast supply so that it could validate the form-fill-seal equipment it was buying from a European machine manufacturer. Due to TekniPlex Healthcare's relationship with the paper supplier and experience with managing a vast supply chain, the typical six-to-eight week lead time was reduced to eight days. The material was air shipped to Europe and the validation was able to take place.

Company B. This company had been using coated Tyvek® lidding for a different application. Since there wasn't time to validate new material, it decided to use the same structure for its swab stick package. TekniPlex Healthcare was challenged to source enough of the Tyvek® base stock, and then schedule the coating operation at its plant to meet this company's supply requirements. TekniPlex Healthcare worked with DuPont (the supplier of Tyvek®) to get the supply required. Additionally, the company needed TekniPlex Healthcare personnel to fly to its U.S. manufacturing location during the COVID-19 lockdown period in order to oversee initial production runs.

Company C. Having never produced form-fill-seal packages previously, this contract packager and its sister company needed assistance with both the top and bottom web materials, as well as equipment validation. It chose to source the total package solution through TekniPlex Healthcare. Additionally, the company needed a TekniPlex Healthcare technician to fly to its U.S. manufacturing location during the COVID-19 lockdown period in order to oversee the validation sampling.

TekniPlex Healthcare's vast technology capability and supply chain network delivers solutions

- Reduced lead times
- Reallocated inventory
- Delivery objectives
- Technical assistance
- True strategic partnership



BENEFIT

By harnessing the power of TekniPlex Healthcare's vast technology capability and supply chain network, these three companies who volunteered to produce swab sticks during the COVID-19 pandemic benefited in the following manner:

- Harnessed the power of TekniPlex Healthcare's **procurement relationships** with suppliers to dramatically reduce lead times for initial material delivery by months.
- Reallocated existing TekniPlex Healthcare **product inventory** to divert to time-sensitive COVID-19 projects.
- Structured a **longer-term supply plan** to meet delivery objectives.
- Leveraged TekniPlex Healthcare's **technical assistance** to facilitate fast ramp-up.
- Established a **true strategic partnership** to get critical COVID-19 testing swab sticks to the marketplace.



TekniPlex Healthcare
dedicates resources to
help meet demand for
swab sticks.

ABOUT TEKNIPILEX HEALTHCARE

TekniPlex Healthcare deploys world-class material science expertise to deliver value in creating products for medical devices, diagnostics, and drug delivery. With a deep understanding of the needs of end-users, our offerings ensure we provide innovative solutions at the point of patient care. For more information about TekniPlex Healthcare and our solutions, visit www.Tekni-Plex.com/healthcare.