



CASE STUDY:
CONSUMER & INDUSTRIAL

Epta Group

Delivering greater transparency and operational oversight through digitized processes for field service engineers and technicians



Operating across five continents, Epta Group is a leading provider of refrigeration solutions, offering specialized, complementary, and modular services. To enhance oversight of its business operations, Epta partnered with OpSec to streamline key processes, focusing on its expert team of field service engineers and technicians who deliver critical solutions in the field.

Challenge

From large supermarkets to simple vending machines, commercial refrigeration has quietly transformed how businesses preserve and deliver fresh goods and produce worldwide. At the forefront of this market is Epta, an award-winning multinational enterprise reshaping the industry with innovations in sustainable cold technologies.

Founded in 2003 by Luigi Nociveli, Epta (from the Greek word ἑπτά, meaning 'seven,' in honor of Luigi's seven children) has strong roots in Italian home and commercial appliances dating back to the 1940s. Today, Epta is a global leader comprising several unique brands, delivering end-to-end commercial refrigeration solutions with a strong focus on sustainability and eco-friendliness. From design and production to installation and aftercare, Epta provides critical support to the retail, hospitality, and food and beverage sectors.

With over 40 technical and commercial sites and 11 production facilities spanning five unique brands across North America, EMEA, LATAM, and APAC, Epta generated over €1.4 billion in revenue in 2023 alone. The company also continues to pioneer industry practices aimed at reducing energy consumption, greenhouse gas emissions, and environmental impact. With such extensive and complex

commercial operations, efficient control and coordination of business processes are vital to Epta's continued success and consistent year-on-year growth.

To optimize its commercial operations, Epta identified the need to digitize key aspects of its business for improved oversight, traceability, and product control. This included field operations led by expert service engineers and technicians providing rapid support to clients worldwide. These efforts help to streamline processes and mitigate risks to brand integrity while offering greater transparency around product manufacturing.

Digitizing business operations is the key first step in Epta's digital roadmap. Developing and deploying new technologies to streamline complex technical processes helps monitor and track commercial operations globally. However, this is only possible if said technologies are properly implemented. A 2022 study highlighted this need, revealing that inefficient automation and optimization processes cost businesses around \$1.3 million annually. To address these obstacles, Epta turned to OpSec.

Solution

Epta Group and its aftercare service division, EptaService, leveraged OpSec's expertise in brand protection, traceability, and optimization to develop a comprehensive solution. This seamlessly connected Epta's products with its business operations and enhanced traceability for greater transparency while maintaining brand integrity.

OpSec designed and implemented sustainable, custom-made NFC labels containing a secure traceable unique digital identifier (UID). To ensure seamless integration with the Epta brand, the NFC tags were embedded behind a specially constructed pressure-sensitive label featuring the Epta logo and an NFC icon for instant user recognition.



OpSec **Product Integrity**: UIDs associated with each product enable Epta's field service engineers and technicians to authenticate, access, and trace product information in real time throughout their lifecycle.



OpSec **Connected Products**: digital UIDs were implemented using custom NFC labels designed by OpSec and applied to the metal frames of Epta's refrigeration units. NFC labels were chosen for their resistance to illicit replication and tampering, and ease of use as scannable identifiers.



OpSec **Traceability**: by leveraging the OpSec Insight digital cloud platform, each NFC chip has been encoded with a trackable URL that redirects authorized users to the EptaService web application. Here, product information can be dynamically viewed and recorded. Additionally, the NFC tag enables the identification of product locations whenever maintenance is performed, or a customer interacts with them. As a result, the NFC tag effectively becomes a digital touchpoint for Epta.

Despite their ease of use, NFC labels typically encounter issues when applied directly to metallic surfaces due to electromagnetic interference. To address this OpSec developed a durable label with specialized shielding that ensured reliable NFC functionality when applied to the powder-coated metal frames used in Epta's products. This innovative solution has since been rolled out across Epta's entire range of refrigeration cabinets.

Alongside ensuring NFC functionality, OpSec created a machine-readable data matrix code, designed to be printed on the reverse side of the NFC label liner during manufacturing. This allowed Epta's facilities to continue leveraging their existing barcode scanner equipment to easily and reliably associate product information with their ERP platform.

Once an NFC label is scanned, users are redirected via OpSec's Insight digital cloud platform to the Epta web application, where engineers and technicians can log in to access product details such as the serial number, production location, year of construction, and live diagnostics. The UID URL is tracked through the Insight platform, giving Epta valuable insights into global interactions and improving efficiency and transparency across field service operations.

Results

By collaborating with OpSec, Epta successfully completed the first step in its global roadmap to digitize business operations. OpSec's NFC label and Insight platform solution allowed Epta to better optimize and trace critical global commercial operations. Epta is now well-positioned to advance to the next phase of its digital roadmap, which includes further development of its industry leading sustainability initiatives, such as transitioning to an NFC-delivered 'paperless' documentation model. Continued progress in sustainability also positions Epta favorably to meet the upcoming EU Digital Product Passport compliance.

“NFC technology enables customers and technicians to instantly access digital product information with a simple tap. As a digital touchpoint within the Epta Service ecosystem, the NFC tag supports applications and value-added services, ensuring asset identification and location accuracy.”

Michele Vitali, General Manager After Sales Europe