



An HVM Customer Testimonial

HVM Restores Distribution Operations After Breaker Failure and Expands Maintenance Engagement

HVM responded to a critical breaker failure that halted operations at a high-volume distribution center, quickly restoring power through onsite diagnostics and corrective action. The engagement uncovered underlying maintenance gaps, leading to expanded preventive maintenance and additional engineering support.

Background

A major retail distribution network operates a large network of high-volume facilities across the United States, including a key distribution center in Illinois spanning approximately 500,000 square feet. This facility plays a critical role in supporting Midwest logistics operations, where continuous uptime is required to sustain automated sorting systems, material handling equipment, and high-throughput distribution processes.

The distribution center is supported by multiple primary electrical feeds that supply power across the entire site, making electrical reliability essential in maintaining operational continuity. As part of a broader national network of more than 40 distribution centers, the facility is a key node in ensuring consistent inventory movement and timely delivery across the region.

An unexpected breaker failure occurred at the facility, resulting in an immediate impact on critical distribution systems. The customer engaged their electrical supplier for urgent support, who then brought in HVM to provide on-site technical expertise, assist with evaluation, and troubleshoot the issue. This marked HVM's first involvement at the facility and established direct contact with key operational stakeholders.

Company Profile

A global retail leader operating a vast network of stores and distribution centers, the company supports high-volume inventory movement and nationwide fulfillment. Known for its scale, efficiency, and strong supply chain infrastructure, it plays a critical role in delivering goods quickly and reliably to consumers.

Industry

Retail and Supply Chain Distribution

Location

Illinois, USA

Benefits

- Restored operational uptime and minimized disruption to distribution operations during a critical outage
- Reduced risk of future unplanned downtime through identification of underlying maintenance issues
- Improved visibility into electrical system condition through comprehensive testing and evaluation
- Strengthened system reliability through corrective actions and system validation
- Established foundation for ongoing preventive maintenance and reliability planning

Challenge

The failure resulted in a trip unit malfunction and an immediate loss of power to critical distribution systems. With automated sorting, conveyor systems, and material handling equipment dependent on continuous electrical supply, operations came to a complete stop, preventing shipments from being processed or fulfilled across the site. Because of the scale and throughput of the facility, even a short interruption created an immediate downstream impact. Orders quickly began to back up, disrupting normal distribution flow and creating urgency to restore power and avoid extended delays in outbound shipments. As the outage continued, pressure escalated from internal operations and leadership due to the direct risk to delivery schedules and customer commitments.

Beyond restoring power, the situation required rapid technical clarity to determine not only what failed, but why it failed and how to safely return the system to service. With multiple parties involved in the response, including facility personnel and contractor support, coordination and technical ownership had to be established quickly as the situation unfolded in real time. The combination of active outage conditions, time sensitivity, and shared responsibility required fast diagnosis, decisive action, and a structured technical response to restore operations without introducing additional risk to the electrical system.

Solution

Given the urgency, HVM prioritized rapid response and full technical assessment of the affected breaker and surrounding electrical infrastructure. Once on-site, the team conducted a comprehensive series of diagnostics and inspections in accordance with NETA MTS standards, including insulation resistance testing, contact resistance testing, secondary injection testing, functional and mechanical testing, and a full visual inspection of the breaker and associated systems. These efforts confirmed the root cause as neglected maintenance and lack of routine servicing.

With the issue identified, HVM executed corrective actions, including cleaning the breaker, properly resetting protective settings, and performing full functional verification prior to re-energization. To meet the urgent timeline, additional technicians were deployed after hours, and existing infrared scans and coordination studies were reviewed to validate system conditions. Throughout the engagement, HVM maintained full focus on restoring operations, treating the situation as an active priority until the system was safely returned to service. In parallel, the team conducted a broader system evaluation using field findings and available studies to identify maintenance gaps and potential risk areas.

This level of responsiveness and technical depth shifted the customer's perception of HVM from just an emergency support provider to a trusted technical advisor. As confidence grew, discussions expanded into proactive reliability support, including updated infrared scanning, an arc flash study refresh, and the development of a structured electrical maintenance program to prevent future failures.

Results

- ✓ Restored facility operations within the required emergency timeline
- ✓ Prevented extended downtime, avoiding an estimated \$100,000 per hour in operational losses
- ✓ Completed full breaker testing, diagnostics, and corrective actions in accordance with NETA MTS standards
- ✓ Identified broader maintenance gaps that expanded the engagement into engineering and reliability services
- ✓ Established HVM as a trusted partner for ongoing preventive maintenance, infrared scanning, and arc flash study updates

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