



## FIVE WAYS TO SAVE MONEY ON YOUR ENCLOSURE PURCHASE AND SPEED YOUR MRO REPAIRS

By

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In this economy, no one can afford downtime. With customers ordering products with short time horizons, any delay risks losing that customer as they go to a competitor to meet their needs. At the same time, we are all being pressured by cost restraints and the requirement of saving every penny we can to remain not only competitive, but in reality, in business.

All too often, the enclosure is not considered until the last minute in any repair, the focus going on the active components. This can lead to a quick decision that often negates many cost savings in other areas. Therefore, we have developed five ways to save money on your enclosure purchase that will also allow you to be better prepared and reduce downtime.

1. As simple as it seems, use a standard enclosure. In the rush to replace a damaged or defective piece of equipment, the quick response is for an exact replacement. However, by choosing a standard, off the shelf, enclosure, the lead time and cost both decline significantly. It is important to remember that using a slightly larger enclosure does not impact the functioning of the internal components, so buying a box that is an inch larger could actually save money if it is a standard compared to the costs of developing the requested custom box.



2. Consider using a less expensive material. As an example, steel or aluminum are more expensive than plastic. In the United States, for NEMA enclosures, steel is the preferred material. In the rest of the world, plastics are more popular in no small part due to their low cost and more than adequate strength. If the application does not require the box to withstand constant physical abuse, plastic provides a lower cost and even more corrosion resistant option.

3. Do you need specific ratings on the enclosure or can you utilize the unit without those ratings? For example, does the unit need a UL rating or is the manufacturer's NEMA ratings sufficient? For example, Bud offers a NEMA enclosure line with several alternatives included an ABS plastic version that does not come with the UL ratings. For most applications, this box provides a perfect solution of value and function. In a similar vein, can you use a box with a lower level of protection? For example, a NEMA 1 box may suffice where traditionally one has used a NEMA 12 box (see side bar for NEMA description). Alternatively, if only a specific internal component needs to be EMI/RFI shielded, it is better to protect that component than to shield the entire enclosure.



4. Review which accessories are included so that the price comparisons are accurate. Some manufacturer's offer a turn-key rack line that includes many required add-ons such as fans, casters, shelves, and doors. There is typically a significant discount for these "all-in-one" units as they save on both packaging and freight costs such as in the unit shown to the left. Other examples are panels that are included in NEMA steel or plastic boxes, mounting provisions for wall mounting or equipment mounting an enclosure, and bails or handles for easy maneuverability. Consideration of these features can save significant cost and also insure that all components work well together.

5. If modifications are required, consider having them done at the manufacturer. The manufacturer knows the best approaches for drilling or punching based on the product materials and can avoid cracking or chipping the box itself. It avoids having to find a local source for the work, saving time and potential damage in multiple shipments of the product. The manufacturer can provide a turn-key product, speeding installation of the components and providing a rapid up-time.

QUICK GUIDE TO NEMA RATINGS
<b>NEMA 1:</b> Provides protection against incidental contact with the enclosed equipment and against falling dirt. Indoor use only
<b>NEMA 12:</b> Same as NEMA 1 plus provides protection against circulating dust, lint, and dripping and lightly splashing liquids. Indoor use only
<b>NEMA 4:</b> Same as NEMA 12 plus provides protection against rain, sleet, snow, wind blown dust and hose-directed water. Indoor or outdoor use



Nothing is more frustrating than unexpected down time. With these steps, you can insure that your frustration does not cost more than it should or slow down the repairs. Don't overlook the simple solutions to your complex problems.