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## Manufacturer Discovers Benefits of Aluminum Extrusion over Welded Steel

### Problem

A large packaging machinery manufacturer was using powdercoated, welded steel frames to mount and support their equipment at their customers' pack stations. The steel structures were partially fabricated at the plant and then shipped in pieces to local distributors for delivery and installation. These components were very heavy and, because they were welded ahead of time, very large and awkward to handle. They were also expensive as welding, grinding, prepping and powdercoating steel are very labor intensive and time consuming processes. So to reduce costs, the pre-fabbed stands were purchased in large quantities and inventoried at the factory, taking up lots of room and tying up cash. An added disadvantage was the fact that very often the pre-built stands did not quite match what the customer wanted or needed. But because they were pre-welded and in stock, there was very little ability or desire to customize and adapt the stands to different needs. As a result, many times the end user had to build their own stands, or have them custom made at great expense

### Solution

The AluFab t-slot aluminum framing system provided the flexibility, modularity and lightweight structure this manufacturer was looking for. AluFab aluminum extrusions are much lighter than steel, but because of their internal structure they retain much of the strength of hollow steel tube. The t-slot extrusion members are fastened with nuts and bolts, not welded, so stands are sent as kits instead of large sub-assemblies, making transport easier and shipping costs lower. In addition, assemblies using extruded aluminum framing take very little labor compared to those that are welded. The extrusions are pre-anodized; no grinding, cleaning, priming or painting is needed, making structures easy to design and quick to deliver. The packaging manufacturer is now able to quickly provide custom-built, easy to install, lightweight and strong mounting solutions to their customers without having to inventory any material at all. A rough sketch faxed to the AluFab office is all that's

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needed- within 24 hours they have a 3D AutoCAD drawing and a quote. Lead times for the finished kits are typically less than a week.