

What Is An MDB In A Vending Machine?

The Multi-Drop Bus (MDB), sometimes called Internal Communication Protocol (ICP), is a US-European connection technology used within the vending machine industry. It powers coin validators, banknote readers, and the like.

Currently, MDB is the open standard of the American National Automatic Merchandising Association (NAMA) and is supported by the European Vending Machine Manufacturers Association, alongside the European Vending Association (EVA).

The MDB protocol for vending machines dates back to at least the early 1990s and is still being used to this day. It's actually extremely common due to the protocol standardization across multiple Vending machine manufacturers.

So while there have been newer technologies with other interfaces, a lot of vending machines still use the old but trusty MDB.

How To Tell If A Vending Machine Is MDB-Enabled?

The easiest way to tell if a vending machine is MDB enabled is by looking at the pin connector of the machine's peripherals; i.e., bill acceptor, card reader, or coin mech.

If the peripheral's control board is white, made of plastic, and comes with a six-pin plug, it's MDB compatible. If the machine's control board has nine or more pins and is made of different colors or construction, it isn't MDB enabled.

Vending machines manufactured within the last decade are equipped with MDB technology. If you've purchased a refurbished vending machine from the year 2015 and below, it's very likely it's MDB enabled.

What Are The Benefits Of An MDB-Powered Vending Machine?

One of the first questions a buyer has when purchasing a vending machine is, "is it MDB-enabled?"

MDB is popular for a reason: it's universal, easy to fix, and easy to replace. It also gives the vending machine the same type of "plug-and-play" capability as a keyboard or a computer.

Here are some of the biggest benefits of having an MDB-enabled machine:

1. No technical ability is needed to replace broken parts, saving them the time and money required to hire a professional.
2. Easy-to-source replacement parts
3. Allow you to upgrade to new vending machine technologies such as sensors, remote monitoring, and CC/debit scanning.
4. Simple and straightforward plug-and-play mechanism; no overly complicated wiring or circuit board.
5. Works well with most machines
6. Cheaper than newer peripheral boards such as [MDB-RS232](#) and [RS232-MDB](#)

Can You Install An MDB-Compatible Control Board To A Non-MDB Machine?

The best thing about MDB control boards is that they can be exchanged with other board types with little to no compatibility or harness issues.

Therefore, you can convert your non-MDB machine to an MDB machine by installing an after-market kit or an MDB conversion kit such as [Letpos](#) board.

This board will let you plug in a new coin mech/bill validator/card reader that can be read as easily and promptly as the machine's existing logic control board.

Just make sure the wiring harness has the same voltage requirements to prevent electrical issues for example, [Letpos](#) board need DC24V power voltage. You can easily test the voltage with a multimeter, which can be bought in any electrical store.

Can You Install An MDB Control Board In A "Single Price" Vending Machine With No Control Board?

Yes, it's possible to convert a single-price vending machine with no control board to a multi-priced MDB machine. But in most cases, doing so isn't cost-effective.

Single-price machines aren't equipped with the technology required for MDB control boards. If you want to install an MDB mechanism in a non-MDB-compatible machine,

you can convert your non-MDB machine to an MDB machine by installing an after-market kit or an MDB conversion kit such as [Letpos](#) board.

How Much Does An MDB Letpos Kit Cost?

MDB [Letpos](#) kits cost significantly less than “modern” MDB kits. In fact, it’s the least expensive kit that allows vending machines to take a credit card reader.

Conclusion

MDB-controlled vending machines have a single six-pin plug on their bill acceptors, coin mechs, or CC/debit card readers. Vending machines with nine or more pin plugs aren’t MDB-enabled.

If you want to replace your current control board with an MDB control board, you can do so by purchasing an MDB [Letpos](#) kit online or in a specialized store.

MDB converters follow a plug-and-play mechanism so you can easily install the device yourself without the need for professional help.

Letpos board

