

## ▶ DEBURRING AND EDGE-ROUNDING CASE STUDY

MICHAEL THORNE, GENERAL MANAGER, FLEX-TRIM USA

A Danish manufacturer of fertilizer and salt spreaders, Bog-Balle A/S, had a major problem with deburring and rounding of edges after laser cutting. Its spreaders are used in a work environment that requires a high level of paintwork. Therefore, it is critical to start with a surface that is free of burrs and imperfect edges, where the deburring and edges are rounded to perfection. It is imperative that the paint sticks to avoid rust problems in the future.

After trying several different failed solutions to improve its finish, the company turned to Flex-Trim, a leader in brush sanding in the United States since the early 2000s and worldwide since the mid-1990s.

Once Flex-Trim was invited to take on the task, several tests were run to identify the problem and the best solution. It was determined that it was not difficult to create a

surface that would be suitable for the paintwork needed using Flex-Trim products. The problem was that the machine to do the job did not exist!

Together, Bog-Balle and Flex-Trim created a machine designed and manufactured to meet the needs of the customer. Today, Bog-Balle sends all of its laser-cut items through the machine with stable edge-rounding. The machine runs on average five hours per day. In spite of the major deburring and rounding requirements, the company has achieved a lifetime average on the sanding strips of three months. The machine costs only \$4 an hour to run. Our solution resulted in a significantly improved surface quality and value to the customer.

At Flex-Trim, we believe that we have not reached our goals until our customer has succeeded in finding a solution to their problem.



THORNE

## ▶ A BETTER WAY TO DO SALES

RICK SWANSBRO, DIRECTOR, CHANNEL DEVELOPMENT, SPX FLOW

"That's not good enough!" That was the takeaway from sales manager training many years ago. Well, maybe not the only takeaway. Back at the office, we heard the infamous phrase "Get out and sell something!" Oh yes, let's not forget the acronym ABC for "Always Be Closing." Not much in the way of strategy.

Fast forward to today's competitive environment driven by technology. That's quite a leap from the days of cold calling! Today's selling environment offers buyers many options for choosing products and systems. Not the least of which are internet platforms offering instant information at our fingertips.

Where does this leave suppliers looking for ways to better serve customers and grow their business?

Pushing inventory onto distribution is not a strategy. Distribution is faced with the daily challenge of reducing logistical and transactional costs in order to remain competitive. Speculating on inventory is not an option.

Rather than pushing inventory onto channel partners, suppliers must start with pull strategies that initiate product and system demand. Demand creation starts with identifying markets that the supplier is positioned to serve. Market selection criteria include channels to market, market intelligence, product and system-fit for purpose and competitive price points. By satisfying these four key criteria, suppliers are in a better position to target such markets.

Channels to market typically

include distribution. Choosing distribution partners with a history of serving target market(s) is a critical precursor to success. This sets the stage for leveraging the aforementioned key criteria for the benefit of customers, distributors and suppliers. A win/win scenario!

A partnership between distributor and supplier offers an excellent opportunity to target accounts within the intersection of markets targeted by suppliers and markets served by distribution. Within this space resides customers with whom the distributor has a trusting relationship. These target accounts is where we jointly focus our efforts.

It's a better way to do sales!



SWANSBRO

# MOBILE ACCESS CHANGES APPROACH TO CUSTOMERS

TOBY IMGRUND, DIRECTOR OF MARKETING & PRODUCT MANAGEMENT, RENOLD

Google states that 89 percent of all industrial B2B buyer research is now done online. More specifically, customers have access remotely to information through smartphones and tablets. As a result, marketers are addressing their mobile presence, ensuring that website navigation is designed accordingly and content is easily accessible on smaller screens.

Mobile access has unearthed a change in the way we tag and use search text as well. Computer-based search text, which is tied to typing almost exclusively, tends to be choppy, abbreviated terminology. The expansion of talk to text conversion for mobile devices has changed search text as well. Queries tend to be longer and more detailed in this format. There is less effort involved in speaking a question than in typing. The way in which we attract web traffic is in a complete overhaul to cater to on-the-spot needs through dictation.

There is no shortage of information in our world today. As marketers, we have greater insight into what information our customers want now than at any time in the past. The potential to drive business through mobile activity is vital to our ability to maintain relevance, regardless of market served. As we continually strive to make business transactions easier for our distribution partners and end users alike, we are focused on providing information where and how it is needed most. It's an expectation in doing business in our world, and we're rising to meet the challenge.



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