

## SUBSTITUTIONS SOLVE SUPPLY CHAIN ISSUES

FRANK PRENDA, VICE PRESIDENT SALES AND MARKETING, GEMTEX ABRASIVES

The bad news in regards to the global supply chain issues is that most businesses are affected. The good news is that the current upheaval causing the major problems for North American businesses is an opportunity for companies to strive by adapting and providing product alternatives. An unusual aspect that currently exists includes the inability to provide actual lead times to customers, which is very frustrating on all fronts and may be the case well into the third quarter of 2022.

Due to the inconsistencies of raw material availability, Gemtex has developed the Got-It-Now program to reach out to customers purchasing products that fall into the “unavailable ship date” category, to provide alternative products to meet their demands NOW. Many alternatives will provide solutions to various abrasive applications. The goal is to provide a recommendation which will perform the best with what you have to offer.



A couple of examples of how this program works is as follows: If a customer looking for mini resin fibre or mini cloth discs requires a grit or grain that is, for some reason, out of stock, we will substitute with a Mini Grind R, which fits on the same backup pad as a mini fibre disc, but has a full plastic back. Another example would be to substitute a 5-inch resin fibre disc with a 5-inch

Trim-Kut disc, which perform as well, with added benefits of being trimmable and does not require a backup pad to grind.

We can also provide our hybrid CZ45 Grinding/Sanding disc to replace a 4 1/2-inch x 1/4-inch grinding wheel if the situation arises.

As I indicated at the outset, we are all dealing with the global supply chain abnormalities in one way or another. Companies with the flexibility and ingenuity to ship products and solve problems will flourish during these unprecedented times.



PRENDA

## EASE OF USE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER

ALICIA CASTAGNA, PRODUCT MANAGER THIN WHEEL ABRASIVES, NORTON | SAINT-GOBAIN ABRASIVES

With ongoing labor shortages and retirements of experienced workers, improving productivity and ease of abrasive use is more important than ever. Getting the job done quickly, safely, and without having to stop and change consumables means shorter job turnaround time with fewer resources. At Norton | Saint-Gobain Abrasives, our R&D teams are constantly innovating with new materials and formulations to offer the best performance and overall value to our customers.

The lower up front cost of aluminum oxide abrasive wheels makes them popular for many fabricators and welders in small to medium operations, and for large job sites and pipeline operations where it is challenging to track the value offered by premium abrasives. Our Gemini cutting wheels have been the

market leader in their class for years, offering premium performance at an economic price point.

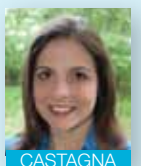


SAINT-GOBAIN

Now, our popular Gemini Grinding and Combination/Pipeline Wheels have been upgraded with a new advanced aluminum oxide grain featuring a specialized bond designed to increase grinding speed by 15 percent and life up to 60 percent. The upgraded wheels offer a controlled yet aggressive feel without causing the fatigue of other competitive high performance wheels. Also, our Norton Gemini high-speed cut-off wheels now offer up to 50 percent faster cutting speeds and twice the

life. These abrasive wheels do the work for you, working faster without having to stop and change product. This means getting to that next job quicker with less unproductive downtime.

In addition, with more turnover and new employees coming up to speed on best practices, it is critical to keep proper safety training and OSHA compliance top of mind. The new Gemini wheels have been updated with large, industry standard icons that cross language barriers and are an on-the-wheel reminder of proper machine selection, safe usage and PPE (personal protective equipment) needed. Nothing is more important than worker safety, for more safety resources visit <https://www.nortonabrasives.com/en-us/norton-product-safety>.



CASTAGNA

## WORKING THROUGH TODAY'S CHALLENGES

KIMBERLY PIGEON, SALES & MARKETING MANAGER, BUFFALO ABRASIVES INC.

Buffalo Abrasives has been in business since 1988 and, like the rest of the market, we haven't seen business conditions like they are today in the whole of the 33 years in business. As a custom-designed manufacturer of abrasives and not participating in the commodity market but, rather, in production and in difficult applications, it's always been important to support our distributors with valued-added, cost-effective, consistent quality products.

Buffalo Abrasives is aware that custom-made wheels aren't readily available for distributors to find

off the shelf if their customer needs something unexpected. Developing a partnership with our distributors with open communication is key to our continued success. Distributors need to be proactive in determining the needs of their customers and communicating those needs to their vendor. It's important that the manufacturer is flexible and has the information to be proactive in needed raw materials, labor and schedule projections. With a high-tech production application, the distributor should bring to the manufacturer the parameters to see if there is a better wheel for the application to increase

efficiency. This is where the partnership comes into play to develop teamwork between the end-user, distributor and manufacturer.

Business isn't "normal" anymore and strong distributor and manufacturer communications and partnerships is the only way to support continued growth. Working with our distributors this way, along with providing strong field support, we're weathering today's business climate successfully. For 33 years, this has been how we've always worked with our distributors.



PIGEON

## NAVIGATING UNCERTAINTY WITH RESILIENCE

LEO LAVIGNE, DIRECTOR OF PRODUCT MANAGEMENT, UNITED ABRASIVES/SAIT

Since 1970, United Abrasives/SAIT has been synonymous with quality, reliability, innovation and value. We have navigated the uncertainty of the pandemic with resilience by continuing to develop and manufacture superior products, while maintaining high stock levels of our products.

Since the start of the pandemic we have seen an increase in customers wanting to purchase American-made goods, leaving behind competitive, cheap imports lacking the proven quality and reliability of American craftsmanship. Our products are made to perform to the highest standards, supported by

superior service and support. United Abrasives/SAIT is proud of its commitment to manufacturing in America.

United Abrasives is committed to supporting the end-user and the distributor. Together with the distributor, we can help generate sales, trust and partnerships to win at the end-user. To assist the end-user in a more productive and safer work environment, United Abrasives is willing to come to you and do a safety seminar or demo. Contact us via our website or by calling 800-428-5927 to set up a visit and/or demo with your end-user.



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