

▶ THE W-4 MINDSET

KIMBERLY PIGEON, NATIONAL SALES MANAGER, BUFFALO ABRASIVES

Buffalo Abrasives, since 1988, has been focused on custom engineered abrasive products with an emphasis on quality, consistency, value added, service and doing business the old-fashioned way. Today's market has required many adjustments in the way our industry does business with supply chain, labor, and other factors that have come into play since 2019. Buffalo, like other companies, has adjusted to these variables – the one area we haven't changed is “doing business the old-fashioned way.”

The focus must be the entire process and supported at every level. It's what we refer to as the W-4. All must win to make it work.

Win – Customer. It's important to understand the product and grinding requirements of the job. A product that increases productivity, finish, or other components of the job are value added and cost effective. Work on the wish list.

Win – Distributor. They are a key part of our service level – their personal relationship with the customer and offering local stock or technical support. Partnering with key distributors to support current and new business in a joint effort equals success. Both the distributor and manufacturer must make sure everyone is able to talk to

a live person when they call in to get the needed answers.

Win – Representative. Giving them a product and service that can be introduced with confidence, as well as technical support that allows them to problem solve versus order take.

Win – Manufacturer. This goes beyond making a good product; it's the ability to develop new products based on applications. Providing technical support to the field, looking at the needs of all involved: the customer, distributor and representative.

Some call the grinding wheel business a “horse and buggy” business – this isn't the case. To best service all involved, the sales applications should be reviewed every few years. What should remain “horse and buggy” is dealing in this volatile market by respecting everyone's business and contribution person to person.

Everyone must contend with the new market COVID left us with, but the core of how to do business hasn't changed. We're all in the same boat, and developing strong partnerships working together will determine who grows and gains opportunities.



PIGEON

▶ HELPING CUSTOMERS ACHIEVE GREATNESS

MARK WILCOX, PRESIDENT, WALTER USA

Since its founding in 1952, WALTER Surface Technologies has strived to help workers achieve greatness by being a one-stop shop for metalworking solutions. WALTER offers an ever-growing, wide array of products such as abrasives, WALTER, Triumph and Drillco tooling, power tools, cleaners, degreasers, ArcOne and Allegro personal protection and on-site safety equipment, and welding-process solutions. This means that customers can rely on WALTER in all stages of the metalworking process, from beginning to end.

With over 70 years of experience in the industry, the WALTER team works to help customers work better through innovative and safe tools, productive consumables, and expertly customized recommendations aiming

at increasing and enhancing productivity, safety, and customer experience.

WALTER's commitment to these goals is not only reflected in its products, but also in its many programs. One of the longest-lasting programs is the free Safety Seminars Program, which has been training end users and distributors on the proper use of abrasives and power tools since 1987 to help prevent workplace injuries, increase safety, and improve overall productivity.

Building on the long-standing legacy of personalized service, our end users and distributors also have access to product demonstrations and training sessions onsite, virtually as well as at one of our campuses. This allows them to learn more about

the products, their applications, safety and ergonomics features, and productivity benefits. These one-on-one visits and trainings allow WALTER experts to provide personalized improvement recommendations to enhance customers' productivity and safety.

WALTER also provides distributors with web banners, social media posts, customer flyers, catalogs, videos, in-store merchandising displays, co-branded literature, content for e-blasts, trainings, tech support, customer service assistance, and more to ensure they can answer to all their customers' individualized needs and help them achieve greatness.

When you work with WALTER, you get a dedicated partner invested in your success.



WILCOX



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▶ 'NORTON FOR ALUMINUM'

ADRIANA FUENTES, PRODUCT MANAGER, THIN WHEEL ABRASIVES, NORTON | SAINT-GOBAIN ABRASIVES

Industry demand for different types of materials is changing due to several factors including the reduced availability and increased cost of materials such as steel. Reacting to these supply chain difficulties, manufacturers are seeking out alternative solutions that allow them to keep their operations and processes going while providing cost reductions. The search has led to other material alternatives that are more economical, recyclable, and lighter. These shared characteristics can be found in aluminum and its alloys. Aluminum production is on the rise in industries such as transportation, construction, aerospace, and automotive, all which drive over 80% of its usage.

When cutting and grinding aluminum, basic requirements for a quality

result include having an operation that is non-loading, has reduced downtime, and avoids extra costs from additives or re-works. With that in mind, Norton | Saint-Gobain Abrasives has developed a new line of grinding and cutting wheels called Norton for Aluminum.

Our Norton R&D Engineering team has designed the wheels to produce less aluminum transfer to the wheel surface, as well as reduced heat sensitivity so that the wheels can also be used on other non-ferrous materials.

With a specific focus on right-angle grinder applications, the specialized bond technology, in conjunction with the high-quality aluminum oxide grains, resists loading and heat generation on the Norton for

Aluminum wheel. When heat generation is reduced and material removal rate on the wheel is optimized, wheel life is extended by reducing the load and improving the overall performance.

Due to the wheel construction, end users have a much more comfortable grinding experience as they require less energy and pressure to grind. Applying extra pressure will not help the process, and contrary to what you might expect, it will create extra heat and excess loading, resulting in reduced wheel life. For cutting applications, the Norton for Aluminum free load wheel provides faster and cleaner cuts with long-lasting performance and defect-free edges across the piece.



FUENTES

▶ GEMTEX PRIVATE LABEL PROGRAM

FRANK PRENDA, VICE PRESIDENT, SALES AND MARKETING, GEMTEX ABRASIVES

With increased mergers and acquisitions taking place, there is a heightened interest to private label products enhancing market awareness while solidifying a new corporate identity.

Gemtex Abrasives conducted an independent survey with a cross-section of industrial distributors in 43 states throughout the U.S. as well as six provinces in Canada and discovered that 78% of polled distributors were interested in a private label program. An astonishing 90% of those distributors chose not to pursue a private label program due to high minimum requirements. The data was very clear; this was an excellent opportunity to fill a need that was not being addressed.

At Gemtex, we offer a private label program for "box quantity" minimums (if a distributor decides to buy one box of 25 resin fiber discs, we will label the box with the customer's label). In the case of Flap Discs and Strip Away Discs, Gemtex will private label the product ring label (type 27 or type 29) as well as the box label for box quantity of five pieces. The Gemtex name does not appear on the product, so the end-user will refer to the box or ring label

when it is time to repurchase that product.

In the event a distributor purchases in larger quantities, Gemtex will "brand" the distributor's name directly on the product as well as on the box. We actually offer three label options: (1) Private Label (distributor's name on the label); (2) Generic Label (no name on label, just product description, part number, quantity, etc.); and (3) Gemtex Label.

In addition to having their company name on the label, distributors can secure their own formula for a specific product type. Because Gemtex is a coated abrasive manufacturer, we often partner with distributors to develop custom formulations and product colors based on application or distributor's corporate image. As an added service, our graphics department offers the option of enhancing a desired image or logo for a box label or designing a new corporate logo or private brand for a new product launch.

It is safe to say, the Gemtex Abrasives private label program has been instrumental in cementing long-lasting business relationships with our distributors.



PRENDA

UNIQUE TRAINING WITH PFERD ACADEMY

STEVE SCHNOLL, PFERD TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

At PFERD, we create a partnership with our distributors and give them an opportunity to understand our vast variety of products and the value they bring to their customers. All this is done through our PFERD Academy.

This is a unique training program that provides an opportunity for attendees to gain valuable classroom and hands-on experience using our innovative products. The two-day training takes place in our state-of-the-art facility in Milwaukee. We provide a safe and controlled working environment and have an open forum so our attendees are able to ask questions freely and become more

knowledgeable about our products and the abrasive industry. We cover everything from files, tungsten carbide burrs, mounted points, grinding and cut off wheels, flap discs, wire brushes, finishing products, and more!

Can't make it to the in-person training? We also offer hybrid options where a portion of the training would be virtual and the hands-on training would be in person with a PFERD representative at your facility. We want to be flexible and provide the best training experience that works for our partners and their teams.



SCHNOLL

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