

May 2008

Feature undertaken by Brammer for Food & Beverage International Magazine

Authorised benefits

The benefits of using authorised distributors extend way beyond avoiding the dangers of the counterfeit industry, according to Brammer.

The growing global menace of counterfeiting is suddenly getting serious. It's moved beyond the fake luxury and consumer goods that are flooding European markets, and is now threatening the integrity of industrial production - including food and beverage manufacturing.

The most immediate risk is that counterfeit parts can and will fail - potentially causing severe damage to machinery, and resulting in costly downtime, lost production, delivery delays and expensive repairs.

But health and safety can also be catastrophically compromised for those using the machinery, Recent discoveries in Europe have highlighted the growing nature of this problem with over 3,500 industrial accidents per year due to poor quality fake products.

And it goes without saying that anyone who has bought counterfeit products can expect no redress from the manufacturers for any costs, liability or claims.

So it's pretty clear that any food and beverage company that cares at all about quality, brand reputation and social responsibility ought to take the obvious course of only buying genuine and fully branded products.



Painful experiences

As Europe’s leading distributor of maintenance, repair and overhaul (MRO) products, Brammer is well placed to help with this. Buying through an authorised distributor such as Brammer provides peace of mind through quality assurance, consistent part numbering, instant confirmation of availability, total product traceability, and full manufacturer’s warranty – all of which should far outweigh any short term cost benefit argument.

But the problem seems to run deep. Manufacturer’s must manage the conflicting pressures to improve production by reducing downtime at the same time as reducing maintenance costs. This relentless drive to stay competitive influences some companies into decisions based on unit price rather than total cost and performance - even in the food and beverage sector where quality and reputation are paramount.

The chance to get components cheaper can lead companies toward unauthorised distributors with their lower overheads and seemingly lower costs. However, any decision to choose an unauthorised distributor can potentially compromise machine performance and safety. Products from an unauthorised source are often not to the latest specification, have been incorrectly stored and handled and a lack of industry specific expertise can result in wrong fault diagnosis. It could also mean bearings that are counterfeit.

Brammer’s Managing Director Ian Ritchie, argues that companies need to understand the importance and relevance of the total acquisition cost, rather than just the unit cost. “To maximise production efficiencies, downtime must be minimised – and that in turn means a different approach to the specifying of components.”



Supplier consolidation

One key aspect of this approach, according to Brammer, is to identify opportunities for supplier reduction. This provides good prospects for streamlining business processes, consolidating expenditure, and eliminating many of the duplicated costs associated with multiple suppliers of the same products and services.

Suppliers who can reliably provide a comprehensive range of components and services will therefore offer an attractive opportunity to rationalise the supply base. And this can have a significant impact on achieving economies of scale and consistency of service through a single trusted source.

Another major issue is lifecycle or “whole life” cost – the need to take into account not just the initial purchase price of a product but its application, energy consumption, longevity and reliability.

Industrial electric motors and drives, for example, account for 64% of all UK electricity consumption. Yet 50% of all of these are unnecessarily over-sized. A motor will typically consume 100 times its purchase cost in electricity. A 10kW motor operating at 87% efficiency could cost £1,500 more over its lifetime than one that is just 5% more efficient. And fitting the right drives can save up to 50% in energy.

Facts like these make the point very forcibly that making the effort to think through the “whole life” cost issues, and specify parts that will do the job more efficiently in the long-term, can save money and pay big dividends.



Stand out opportunity

Cost-efficient energy management, according to Brammer, is a real “stand out opportunity” for manufacturers in the UK. Their recent survey of several hundred UK manufacturing companies revealed that only 50% have a formal energy management policy and action plan. A further 30% admitted to taking “opportunistic” steps to improve energy efficiency and reduce carbon emissions, whilst the remaining 20% take no action of any kind.

“Best practice in this area”, says Ian Ritchie, “suggests that to deliver the maximum benefit, time needs to be taken to identify the specific areas of the business where the biggest improvements and potential cost savings are achievable, rather than focus on changing just one or two individual components.

“Our challenge in all of these issues is to use our experience to identify ways that can help our customers improve their production output and efficiency, whilst reducing costs. Our investment in a nationwide branch network of 83 locations, national distribution centre, skilled staff and substantial stocks of our comprehensive product range are all designed to enable customers to improve productivity and save money.”

Cost savings

Last year alone, Brammer delivered over £21 million in operational cost savings to UK industry through innovation and added-value solutions - including energy savings, increased production efficiencies and improved maintenance management.

Brammer specialises in providing fast and friendly local service, offering same or next day delivery of the parts and technical expertise needed to keep production running smoothly.



As authorised distributor for many of the world's leading engineering component manufacturers, its comprehensive product range covers power transmission, bearings, seals, fluid power and general maintenance products. In a significant move, the company has recently announced that Festo have appointed Brammer as an authorised national distributor of its entire product range.

Brammer has also recently opened its innovative Centre of Excellence – a 5,800 square foot facility that's unique in the MRO world. Showcasing the product range of many key industry suppliers, it also demonstrates them in use in a range of applications, while providing a 21st century training environment and conferencing facility.

“UK food manufacturing”, says Ian Ritchie, “can have a strong future and continue to play a key role in a successful and globally competitive UK economy. To achieve this goal there are many challenges to be addressed in an increasingly competitive market - not least the need to achieve cost-effectiveness across the whole production process. Using the full capabilities of a leading authorised distributor such as Brammer can play a major part in this.”

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