



Issue 27: Bud's Take on The Value of Service & Support

The Value of Service & Support

This is a difficult article to write because we are in the business of customer relations. Sometime the cold hard facts are just the cold hard facts. Since this is my experience, it's a true "Bud's Take."

My Past

In my early days as an application engineer I was responsible for taking projects from *cradle to grave*. What this means is that I would be involved in early design. Design included bearing selection, drawings, running calculations, testing, sampling, the entire approval process. Often this process included traveling to the customer multiple times for meetings.

When business was gained my responsibility switched to handling all technical aspect of the application. This included installation training, technical assistance, handling any unforeseen issues, and failure analysis.

Often we did not gain the business. My hours of work, traveling, and all associated headaches resulted in nothing more than a thick file folder headed to the "no new business" file cabinet.



Pic. 1: File folder

At this point in my career I was not the person in charge of sales so I didn't put much thought into what had happened. I had other projects lined up so I just grabbed my calculator and started building another file folder. It was up to sales to determine what happened?

Today

Today my position has changed. I am responsible for the engineering/technical support along with sales in the Midwest and Northeast. I no longer work for the manufacturer yet I am involved in parts of the same process with Midpoint Bearing, industrial distributor.

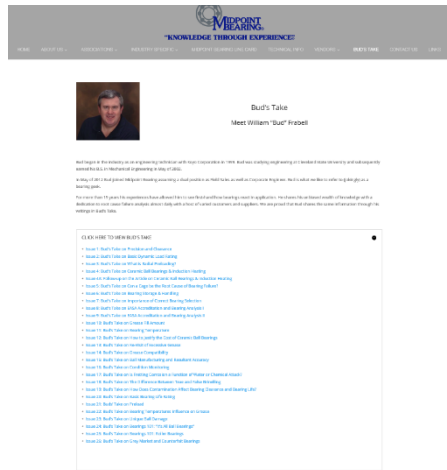


Pic. 2: Technical presentations



Pic. 3: Failure analysis

At Midpoint Bearing we provide additional technical assistance from failure analysis (3rd party view), technical training, training articles (Bud's Take), charts and graphs to help in your day to day operation.



Pic. 4: Bud's Take articles on website

Shaft Size	Housing Size	Fit Type	Notes
1/2"	1/2"
3/4"	3/4"
1"	1"
1 1/4"	1 1/4"
1 1/2"	1 1/2"
1 3/4"	1 3/4"
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Pic. 5: Technical charts

Recently, while providing technical training at a customer, the shop manager made a comment to the trainees, “this is the reason we buy all our bearings from Midpoint Bearing.” He turned to me and asked, “We do buy all our bearings from you, don’t we?”

The honest answer was “No.” We lose some orders because purchasing is directed to bid every order. Again, the question is what happened?

Sales Person’s Responsibility

In both situations the sale was most likely lost due to being out bid. Sales professionals tend to get mad at the buyer, but the buyer is only doing their job. It is our job as a sales force to ensure that the purchasing manager, shop manager, and upper management are aware of the value added “extras” we provide with the pricing we offer. It is critical that the buyer understands this added value and takes this benefit into consideration when reviewing pricing.

Final Thought

Because I know well the added value Midpoint Bearing brings to your company from an engineering/analysis point of view, we will continue to search for a way to convince you that our price is not just for a replacement part. Our price includes support from *cradle to grave*.

Are you currently buying from your competition? At Midpoint Bearing we do not sell motors! Topic for another day!

If you have any questions, comments, ideas for future topics please feel free to contact me directly at bud@midpointbearing.com

