



Colfax Streamlines Shipbuilder Supplier Sources

Problem:

VT Shipbuilding found itself faced with a complex and cumbersome list of suppliers, including an array of sources for vital pumping equipment. That meant a two-fold challenge: to streamline its supplier list, yet still ensure that the company had quick access to quality pumps that met its stringent performance demands; and to reduce costs.

Solution:

Colfax Corporation embraced the VT Shipbuilding procurement relationship approach to its marine pump equipment requirements, which focused on making the manufacturer-supplier relationship more efficient, more cost-effective and better able to assure critical product availability.

Results:

By selecting Colfax as its preferred supplier of marine pumps, VT Shipbuilding was able to pare its pump supplier list down from a half dozen disparate sources to just one, strengthening both its supplier connections and its bottom line. Today Colfax is supplying a variety of pumps to the company for two major shipbuilding projects, one for a Caribbean country and the other for a Middle Eastern country.



Photo courtesy of VT Shipbuilding.



The Mission: Reduce Numbers, Raise Quality

A designer and manufacturer of elite Naval vessels used by the United Kingdom's Royal Navy and other Navies around the world, VT Shipbuilding had been looking for ways to rationalize and reduce its vast supplier database. Specifically the Portsmouth, England-based company wanted to find a new procurement strategy that allowed it to cut its source list down from thousands of suppliers to approximately 200.

That effort included narrowing down the list of pump suppliers, as well. Previously VT Shipbuilding would seek out bids on a contract-to-contract basis, from up to six separate pump suppliers – a time-consuming process involving reviewing extensive performance and price data records, before selecting a final supplier. Despite making reductions in the number of pump suppliers, VT Shipbuilding had to retain its high quality standards; it needed the best pumps available, to keep its vessels running as they patrolled the seas.

A New Strategy for Success

The shipbuilding company's strategy was to classify all of its suppliers as "strategic," "major," "important" or "commodity." Pumps were placed in the "major" category; and because of that classification, VT Shipbuilding sought to establish a long-term agreement with a supplier that had a long and time-tested record of quality and performance. Potential suppliers were judged on their product availability, as well as their quality, technical support both before and after the sale, and overall value. After all submissions were carefully evaluated, VT Shipbuilding selected Colfax as its preferred pump supplier.

"It is vital to have the best pumps at work in our vessels, as they patrol international waters in order to protect the world," said Steve Weeks, commodities purchasing manager of VT Shipbuilding. "We have always been impressed with Colfax for its technology expertise and breadth of products, and we are very pleased to work with it as our preferred supplier of marine pumps."

Better Systems. Better Pumps. Better Performance.

Colfax was able to help VT Shipbuilding meet its new procurement strategy for pumps by offering a solution that allowed for a relationship approach, in place of the outdated quote/order procedures. Working closely with VT Shipbuilding, the Colfax team was able to develop a program that met the specific pump requirements for vessels and at the same time uncovered cost-reduction opportunities. This new way of working also allowed both companies' design teams to create better system standardization that both improved performance and could lead to even further cost savings.

"We know that the quality of our pump lines is crucial to the success of a company such as VT Shipbuilding," said Bob Allen, sales manager of the Colfax Naval Pump and Engineering Division. "But we also understand that a commitment just begins with a sale. That's why we have to offer solutions that include complete after-sales support and service, along with comprehensive training programs."



Photo courtesy of VT Shipbuilding.



The Right Pump for Every Job

The original Colfax-VT Shipbuilding agreement called for two orders: three ships for a Middle Eastern country, with 26 pumps per ship; and three offshore patrol vessels for a Caribbean country, with 16 pumps per ship. Colfax would supply VT Shipbuilding with a portfolio of pumps from its leading brands, including Allweiler and Imo AB.

The pumps selected were centrifugal and progressing cavity pumps from Allweiler, for seawater cooling, bilge and ballast systems, freshwater cooling and supply, firefighting, and hot and cold domestic water services. Imo AB pumps were selected for fuel and lube oil services.



A Lifetime Commitment

Colfax understands VT Shipbuilding's need for a long-term commitment, starting with new-construction product specifications and lasting throughout the decades-long service life of the average vessel. As such, Colfax offers a proprietary Navy standard documentation package, which provides all of the necessary information for the installed pumps, including parts lists, recommended spares for mission duration per vessel, and base spares for the class, maintenance and reliability information. Colfax has also committed to providing consumable parts within 48 hours and guarantees availability of all spare parts for the lifetime of the vessel. The company maintains worldwide regional centers staffed with access to its Naval experts, to assure rapid service and support for all of its pump products.

About Colfax Corporation

Colfax Corporation is a global leader in critical fluid-handling solutions, including the manufacture of positive displacement industrial pumps and valves used in global oil & gas, power generation, marine, Naval and a variety of other industrial applications. Key product brands include Allweiler, Fairmount Automation, Houttuin, Imo, LSC, Portland Valve, Tushaco, Warren and Zenith. Colfax is traded on the NYSE under the ticker "CFX." Additional information about Colfax's products, businesses and practices is available at www.colfaxcorp.com.

About Colfax Navy Solutions

Colfax Navy Solutions serve the U.S. Navy and Navies around the world with fluid-handling solutions that deliver the highest-quality products and performance for this demanding environment. With brands with over 100 years of experience, Colfax delivers a portfolio of positive displacement and centrifugal pumps and valves, deep application expertise, and a commitment to practical, continuous product development and improvement, to meet unique Navy needs.



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