

Getting what you pay for?

One thing we hear on occasion is that our technicians were on the phone, or looking in a manual or looking at their laptops. Some customers believe if they're paying for a service call that their technician should be turning a wrench the entire time or they are getting charged for unproductive labor.

So what exactly is going on?

Let me preface my answer by pointing out something completely obvious to those of us in the industry, but maybe not to end users.

You have a Hobart dishwasher and it is the only dishwasher you have and you're pretty familiar with it because you use it every day in your operation. But do you know how many variations there are of your machine that has been produced in the last 20 years?

Let's imagine we are talking about an undercounter machine. Is it a hot or cold water unit? If it is cold is it fed hot water from an external booster or is it chemical sanitizing? What voltage and phase are the electric? Is it a FFW, WM, LX or LXe series? What was the year of its manufacture?

The answer to each of these questions, points to variations in very similar type machines, which in turn often leads to different designs, functions and replacement parts.

That is just one generic type of dishwasher. Now add stationary rack, conveyor and flight type to the mix and imagine all the possibilities of each type.

Now move beyond dishwashers, to cooking, food preparation, scales, wrappers, etc. and see the infinite number of unique units made in the last 20 years.

Remember too that 20 years is just an average number; we can and do, very often, work on much older units. Similarly we work on the latest models as well.

My point here is that it is impossible for the best technician in the world to rely on his memory and trouble shooting ability to diagnose and repair every machine made by the ITW Food Equipment Group.

That is why we have parts and service binders in our trucks. We have special software on our laptops and we have access to the best technical support network in our industry.

Time spent researching your issue and finding the correct information to solve your problem are not separate from your repair, they are a vital and, more importantly, beneficial feature of doing business with us.

All of our factory training schools, manuals, software and tech support are not free to us. As such, the investment we make in keeping current and having access to these resources are a cost of doing business. These expenses are factored into determining our prices. Often times this might be the difference in cost between us and our non-affiliated competitors. Keeping in mind, they don't even have access to 10% of the information we have at our finger tips.

Our company is unique in the industry and we know firsthand because we work on many, many non-ITW brands. They don't produce anywhere near the level of service support materials and often times tech support doesn't not come direct through the manufacturer of a machine, but through the parts wholesaler.

So when you are tempted to complain about research time and don't feel it should be part of the repair process, think about how hit or miss it would be without it. Be realistic about the process and realize it is an asset we have to help solve your problems correctly and efficiently.