

## Training

One thing often overlooked but very important to any successful installation of a new machine is operator training.

If I were a operator looking to buy a piece of equipment, after narrowing down my choice of brands and models would be to look not only at price, features and benefits but to see what type of training and start up support I get with my machine.

Most of the brands on which I am a factory authorized sales and service dealer have built into the price free start-up and operator training.

What this means is regardless of who installs the machine or who sells the machine, a factory trained technician will go to the customer location and verify the machine is installed correctly, the customer utilities match the machine's specifications, etc.. They will actually run the machine and then will provide training to operators on proper usage, operation, cleaning and maintenance of the machine.

Not all brands offer this. It is not "free" free. Obviously it is built into the price of the machine. Those who don't offer it value lower price over a hassle free start up on a new machine.

I know for a fact the reason my companies offer it. If you have a proper installation and good training you will have fewer calls on the machine under its warranty and this saves the company money in the long run.

I recently had a pretty big order with a retailer in my area. As the day approached when we would install the machines and put them into use, I kept asking store management when we would schedule training. They just weren't willing to invest the time. I insisted and insisted to no avail.

So I took the bull by the horns and took one the machines into the store and set it near the sales floor. When sales associates had free time, I would grab them and train them. Eventually management watched one of the sessions and realized

how much there was to actually know to properly use the machine and get the most out of it. Pretty soon they were making the time and sending me employees for individual training. I did this over the course of three days.

When we installed the units and went live, the bulk of the operators had been trained. There were very few issues and no delays in customer service. The installation was a complete success and my personal training did not cost the store anything, over and above, the purchase price of the equipment.

I had to beg to give free training. I am sure; I will never have to ask with this customer again.

So if you are buying a piece equipment, ask yourself if it is something you can risk learning how to use on the fly or whether you need something a little more in depth. Is training even available and if so, how is it conducted? Is it included?

Training pays big dividends to everyone.