

Total Control Systems

The right coating opens doors globally for Indiana manufacturer

Biodiesel is known as an attractive alternative to traditional petroleum diesel fuel. It's clean burning, renewable and gentler on our fragile planet. But when it comes to biodiesel's effects on paint, it's anything but nice.

This was the challenge Total Control Systems faced when the Fort Wayne, Ind., company wanted to expand its production to include products made to handle the ever-increasing demand for biodiesel-compatible meters.

TCS is a leading ISO-9001 certified manufacturer of piston and rotary positive displacement flow meters. TCS manufactures flow meters mainly for the petroleum industry. Transport trucks, aircraft refuelers, home heating oil equipment and boats often include TCS meters.

The agriculture industry kept the company's focus until about 2000, when leaders decided to branch out and serve a wider range of industries. TCS CFO and COO David Musselman and his team began to experiment with many promising industrial coatings, including automotive paint, with the No. 1 criteria being its ability to stand up to biodiesel. Secondly, they were concerned with the coating's ability to stand up to ethanol.

Another major concern from an operations standpoint was VOCs. For environmental and employee safety reasons, Musselman wanted a paint with a low VOC rating.

Hunting down a coating for tough jobs

The environments in which TCS's customers use meters are harsh. First, the meters have to withstand the wear and tear of delivery, often in open-air trucks, across the United States and beyond. TCS has customers in Australia, Singapore and the Middle East, with more than half of their business going across the water.

After talking to other manufacturers and distributors, and having no luck, Musselman met with the Accessa Coatings Solutions team from Indianapolis. To find the right product for these tough jobs, they carried out a salt spray test, scratch test and many soak tests in which painted products were immersed in biodiesel and ethanol. Musselman says they just sat back and waited for the paint to peel off. In the case of the Accessa Coatings Solutions product, that didn't happen, and they knew they had a winner.

"We tested a lot of products ... when we found the right product, it was the one that could take care of our customers," he says.

"It could handle the biodiesel, the salt environments, the ethanol, and it could stand up to being on a truck in an outdoor environment. Once we found that product, we locked in on it and have been using it ever since."

The Accessa product also had low VOCs, but the job wasn't quite finished. Bill Adams is the Accessa Coatings Solutions Consultant on the TCS account.

"One of the unique challenges with TCS was the application process, and we worked very closely with equipment representatives and TCS to be sure we were supplying not only the material, but also the correct way to apply that material," Adams says.

The application process Accessa Coatings Solutions helped develop includes two products: a fast-drying acid wash primer and then the Accessa Coatings Solutions *INVIR*Athane—low VOC polyurethane paint.

How the right partner can make a difference

Without having a partner in place to research, test and deliver a complete coatings solutions package that worked, TCS would not have been able to successfully expand its production. With a partner like Accessa Coatings Solutions at the ready to troubleshoot any problems, issues or concerns, TCS can confidently keep growing their business.

How Total Control Systems stays ahead

1. CONSISTENCY IN QUALITY. Accessa has helped TCS better control variables related to durability, ease of use and dry time so their customers receive high-quality products every time.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE. Accessa didn't sacrifice product performance for environmental responsibility. The Accessa products TCS uses are low in VOCs, making them more attractive to use and market to customers buying meters.

3. CULTURE OF INNOVATION. "We work together to get the best product to our customers and it's all about doing things better the next time," Musselman says. "Accessa has been a great partner and it's been a great paint."

Are these the kinds of challenges you face? If so, contact vtoddjr@accessa.com to start a conversation about how Accessa can be a partner for you.

Contact

Vince Todd Jr., Principal

vtoddjr@accessa.com

P: 317-879-2055

F: 317-879-2051

TF: 1-800-593-0126