

# Definitely a perfect team

The development of a technically qualified Customer Service program is particularly challenging in the specialty and customized equipment industry. Harro Höfliger takes on the task and leaves nothing to chance.

**H**einrich Havenstein and Jackson Heslop have a very dynamic working relationship. They are respectively responsible for the Production and Customer Service divisions at Harro Höfliger and have the challenge of coordinating an extensive variety of customer requests. Any conflicts, however, are quickly resolved because they both focus on the same question: How can we quickly and efficiently help our customer? "When service support is needed, then we work professionally to find the correct solution – and we always find one," explains Heinrich Havenstein, Managing Director Production at Harro Höfliger.

For the last several decades, the production team was responsible for the installation, start up, and service of the equipment worldwide. "Our customers appreciate that even years later, the same technician who built the machine was always the one who came to service the machine. For them, this was a constant in the agile pharmaceutical world," says Havenstein. But with an increase in company size, this model reached its limits. Since 2009, the company has continuously expanded the Customer Service area. Today Harro Höfliger employs specially trained service engineers, who are an integral part of the machine projects at an early stage.

As part of the 2020 company strategy, it has now been established as an independent division, which is growing continuously. "Independent, but not separate," emphasizes Jackson Heslop, Director Customer Service. "Our goal is to expand the needed resources and develop the level of expertise necessary to be able to self-sufficiently fulfill more and more of the Customer Service projects. At the same time we can always count on the knowledge and support from our colleagues in Production, since they have often been working on the machine project for over a year."

Jackson Heslop and Heinrich Havenstein rely on a close cooperation and a lively exchange of information and ideas while managing these projects. "Even if we are formally organized into two divisions, we work closely together and are

Illustration: Bernd Schifferdecker

always moving in the same direction,” points out Havenstein.

**Quality has to be right**

The company invests a lot of time and money in the development of the necessary resources. Our representative will always make sure that every question will be answered,” explains Heslop. Extensive training measures also provide the service team with optimum technical knowledge to be able to communicate and respond quickly.

“Internationally, we need personnel close to our customers’ location. This requires that we first bring their knowledge up to par with the high quality level of Harro Höfliger,” emphasizes Havenstein. Therefore, applicants receive training in the Production area in Allmersbach, while taking seminars offered by the Chamber of Industry and Commerce (IHK). The technicians work in the assembly area for at least six months before starting their work abroad.

*“Our worldwide customers need a dedicated contact person who cares about and responds to their concerns.”*



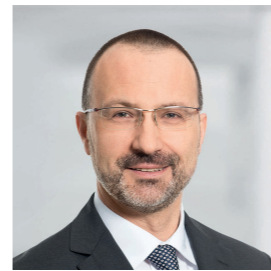
Jackson Heslop,  
Director Customer Service

This practical training program on the Harro Höfliger equipment is mandatory for all applicants. “Even experienced service technicians receive this in-depth training on our machines and get to know our corporate culture,” Jackson Heslop explains this thoroughness.

**A look to the future**

With additional team members, Heslop would like to continue to achieve more flexibility in the day-to-day business, but also offer new services. “We would like to play an even more active role in supporting our customers.” During regular service visits, the Customer Service team should not only conduct maintenance and repair work, but also act in an advisory capacity upon request – for example, in the management of a consignment inventory or in the streamlining of processes. This is in line with the vision that Thomas Weller, CEO at Harro Höfliger, has for the Customer Service division: “Instead of just supplying

*“Understanding our customers’ needs is important to us and – as has always been our philosophy – the personal contact.”*



Heinrich Havenstein,  
Managing Director Production

machines, we would like to become a solution provider. This includes taking an all-encompassing look at our customers’ production and presenting them with suitable solutions at an early stage.”

**Customer satisfaction as a benchmark**

At Harro Höfliger, the portion of turnover generated by services increases every year in relation to total turnover. But that is not the focus for Weller, Havenstein and Heslop. “We want to support our customers and ensure that their systems run reliably. For us customer satisfaction is the most important factor,” says Weller. And in order to ensure customer satisfaction, Jackson Heslop has a strategy roadmap which is currently being implemented. One of the focus areas is providing prompt assistance, which starts with order processing: “Every minute counts when ordering spare parts. This is one area where we are implementing solutions to make our processes even faster and more streamlined.”

If a service support is required, the experts at Harro Höfliger have already taken precautionary measures and launched the Service Portal together with the partner companies of Excellence United. This service can be used to remotely diagnose and correct many errors and to carry out maintenance work without the need for a technician on site.

It is however better, according to Jackson Heslop, to not let it come to failures: “Many customer service challenges are predictable. We want to continually look into the future in order to be prepared for the moment.” Customers already have access to a 3D spare parts catalog via the Service Portal. Each part is listed in a spare parts list, which is created individually for each machine. The list rates the expected wear, the probability of unexpected failure, and the resulting effects. “This is how we can clearly advise our customers which parts to stock for tactical reasons so that they can be replaced quickly. This also

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Thomas Weller,  
CEO

assists in planning our service team to be available to support with preventive maintenance activities,” says Heslop.

**Listening instead of analyzing**

Mundane customer satisfaction surveys do not come into question for Heinrich Havenstein or for Jackson Heslop. “We are always looking for a personal discussion. Checklists and questionnaires are not at all our thing. Understanding our customers’ needs is important to us and – as has always been our philosophy – the personal contact,” explains Havenstein. Thomas Weller agrees: „We are solid partners for our customers throughout the entire lifecycle of a machine. We listen to them and take them seriously. This is how we not only manage to remain market leaders, but also remain personable. This is important to us.” ■

Illustration: Bernd Schiffendecker, Pictures: Andreas Dalferth, Janine Kyofsky, Tom Philipp



The Service Portal offers additional service functions, which Jackson Heslop (left) explains on a tablet.

With the 3D spare parts catalog on the Excellence United Service Portal, searching for replacement parts for highly complex machines is quite simple.