



International USTER Service Training on the USTER® HVI 1000 at Uster, Switzerland.

Dedicated and experienced, meet the USTER people who keep mills running smoothly

The technology is in place, the products are ready to roll... But it's people who provide the vital link to bring it all together perfectly, and keep it going as smoothly and efficiently as possible. USTER'S worldwide service teams are dedicated to giving textile mills a rapid response, with expert personnel always on hand. A phone call or a service visit – whatever is needed, customers have direct access to USTER people who can deal with a problem and find a solution.

Here is a typical scenario: Mehmet's phone rings, and it's a mill manager on the line. He's worried about his USTER® JOSSI VISION SHIELD performance. The call takes about 10 minutes and Mehmet

gives some instructions. Shortly afterwards, the customer calls back, happy to report that the cotton cleaning system is now readjusted based on the recommendations and is again performing to his expectations. Mehmet imagines the smile on the face of another satisfied customer.

Mehmet is Service Manager with Uster Technologies Turkey, and has been with the company for 11 years. He is just one of a global network of 125 people in USTER service centers covering China, India and South East Asia, Japan, Turkey and surrounding countries, and the Americas. An agency network with another 50-plus staff covers the rest of the world.

Just as with Mehmet's mill manager in our example, all USTER customers have the direct number of their service contact – and are welcome to call any time with queries and problems. Usually, USTER service people can sort things out immediately, over the phone.

If the issue is more complex, the service team will plan a mill visit. "Based on the information we have, we will look at several possible options and pack the appropriate spare parts, so that our staff are fully prepared to avoid or minimize any downtime at the mill," says Kris Suresh, Head of Service based at USTER headquarters in Switzerland. USTER offers service contracts with value added serv-

ices and support, and these are well appreciated by customers, most of whom continue the service contract for lifetime of the product.

A day in the life of Prabakaran...

Prabakaran, based in Coimbatore, India, is another member of USTER's service team. Today, he starts work at 5:30 am, driving to a customer located near Madurai – a journey of about three hours. Two days ago, he was informed about a problem with variations in mic readings in the customer's USTER® HVI 1000.

At the mill, Prabakaran checks out some possible causes of the problem: he carries out gas regulator cleaning, adjusts chamber size and air settings and calibrates the mic module. He tests some reference samples himself and asks the customer to do the same. The values match closely, so Prabakaran hands over the USTER® HVI 1000 again. The customer is very happy, and so is Prabakaran, who now writes his work bulletin, has a final discussion and handshake with the mill manager and departs, ready for a new mission tomorrow.

This one-day snapshot of an USTER staff member's work is typical for his average of 150 customer visits per year. This particular trip covered 400 kilometers. A monthly breakdown of all USTER service people's journeys shows an average of 61,000 kilometers – equivalent to 1.5 times round the world. Total travelling time each month averages 4,600 hours, or more than 190 days and nights.

Beyond expectations

USTER Service goes way beyond problem-solving. Fixing an issue in a minimum of time is one of three aspects: USTER staff investigate the cause of the problem and discuss with the customer actions to prevent any similar occurrence. On-site they take some time to train operators to execute the tests optimally and to get the most out of their quality testing and monitoring equipment. Senthil Kumar, General Manager of Service in USTER India, points out: "Customers like to take the chance to discuss application issues with us, and we are always glad to support by sharing our experiences. Often, what starts as a business connection will grow to form strong bonds. Several USTER India Service staff



International USTER Service Training on USTER® low volume instruments (LVI) at Uster, Switzerland.



Francis and Simon at a customer visit.

have more than 20 years' experience – and therefore have built close working relationships over that same time."

Ultimately, it's not only the duration which will strengthen these relationships. It's also a question of fulfilling, or exceeding, the customer's expectations when an issue occurs. "We would never say that a problem doesn't concern us or that we could not take it on. We will try to find the source, no matter which machine might be the cause – and we will always listen and advise," Senthil Kumar says. "This attitude and commitment has brought respect and recognition from customers as characteristics which make the USTER Service team special."

The other role of USTER Service

When it comes to customer satisfaction with USTER Service, nothing is left to chance. USTER carries out regular customer surveys, to gauge improvement potential. "I'm happy with the last survey result saying that 95% of customers rate

their USTER service experience as all positive," says Suresh. He attributes this to a circle of success. It starts with experienced staff – 8 out of 10 of worldwide staff have been with USTER more than 10 years, so they have the detailed know-how to support customers as efficiently and effectively as possible. Satisfaction breeds trust, and service staff enjoy the appreciation they have from the customer side, creating a pleasant working atmosphere and encouraging them to stay with USTER, continuing the circle of success. "Customers are satisfied with the service but also because they rarely need the support of our service team. It generally takes years until a first issue with a new instrument occurs. This is also proven by statistics," says Suresh.

The USTER Service team also plays an important role in the company's success. Trusted service enhances overall trust in the brand, a benefit acknowledged by Uster Technologies CEO Thomas Nasiou: "Loyalty from customers has to be earned," he says. "And our Service team earns a relevant share of it. They are on duty 24/7 with a customer-focused approach and great commitment. It is not unusual for customers to tell us that they regard the standards achieved by USTER Service as the industry's defining benchmark." ♦