

PARTNER PERSPECTIVE

COLSON/LINCO SUCCESS STORY—TEAM EFFORT SAVES THE DAY:

About a year and a half ago, one of our biggest customers called in a panic. A caster that they were buying from one of our competitors was failing. They needed a solution within weeks because this caster was (and still is) their biggest seller. Our customer also had a bunch of dogs out in the field, so they needed to replace casters they had already shipped which made the critical dimensions -- overall height, mounting type, capacity, color, tread type, and wheel size unchangeable. The quantities we were potentially dealing with were big (about 50,000 pieces a year). Orders like this don't fall into your lap very often, if at all, and it seemed way too easy, like a slam dunk on a *Nerf* hoop.

After a quick meeting with George Rife (Western Regional Sales Rep.), and a lunch spent counting the money we were *going* to make, George and I went back to the office and poured over some catalogs to try and find a solution. We quickly found out that, other than our competitor's caster, an equivalent didn't exist. We had a week to find something. To try and get our selves and our customer out of this jam, George and I tried to create some sort of Frankenstein using disparate components. We came up with a big, fat, goose egg. Nothing. It became clear to us both that we were up against a wall. George, however, had one Hail Mary pass left in his playbook. He said he needed to make a call to "The Secret Weapon", Chuck Harris (Colson's Head Engineer).

Chuck dove in and set to work right away. He got in touch with our customers' engineers and within days had sourced the stem, matched the overall height, color and wheel material (black, non-marking Performa rubber), and had the confidence in Colson's product line to re-rate the caster at a higher capacity. Donald Johnson had samples made and air freighted out to us. The samples were hand-delivered and approved by the Underwriter's Laboratory, and within the week we had an order for several thousand pieces. In my customer's eyes, I was a hero. George, Chuck, and Donald got the assists.

Since then, this business has flourished and it's opened up other opportunities with this company. Our customer has increased their volume to over 60,000 pieces a year and Chuck and our customer's engineers have been working on a new caster designed specifically for an application they are launching next year.

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