

## Being All We Can Be...(ok...not just in the Army but here at Colson, too!)

by Don Laux, President and General Manager Colson Caster Corp.

Hello Everyone,

As always, I look forward to each of our newsletters as a means to share company news and events with you, our valued distributors. But, this time, I would like to start off by wishing you all the very best of a happy holiday season and wishes for a full and prosperous New Year!

There is nothing that compares really to this time of year, and it's made more wonderful being able to reflect back on a successful one. We are keenly aware that our success is due to you, our partners, working hard to sell Colson products and challenging us every day.

Colson constantly strives to 'be all that we can be'—from standing by our products, to in-house testing and engineering and to providing you the best new products to sell Colson successfully in a changing marketplace. Overall, 2010 has been a successful year for Colson, and according to MHIA, the material handling industry as a whole is seeing an 18% increase in new orders over 2009. That's good news for all of us, and I hope your sales did even more than the average!

All indicators tell us that 2011 is shaping up to be a good year, as well. We do know, though, that we need to keep moving in order to 'be all that we can be' and here are just a few things we plan to do in 2011 to help:

- Continue to release new products. (L & G Series are a good start to this!)
- Improve our lead times.
- Constantly evaluate pricing to provide the best possible pricing available.
- Work with you on inventory levels to keep you ahead of the competition. (We will keep more stock on certain items when you alert us to bigger demands.)

But that's not all! This is just a starting point for what we want to be. Through our ongoing communication, we will make sure we not only expand services and product selections, but also tweak areas of our business that can be improved to help you grow your businesses and stay competitive. An example of you telling us what you want to be, and Colson following through, is our new L & G Series. You wanted to be in lighter duty, less expensive markets, and our two new Series now offer you that quality and economical option. It's a niche you told us we needed to fill and it is my hope that you find this new line successful. Keep talking and we'll keep listening!

Again, I wish you happy holidays and good luck in 2011! At Colson we are looking forward to next year and to being even more than we can be!

Quarter 4, 2010

### New Products



Trans-forma LT Wheels  
[\(Click here for more info\)](#)



Stainless Steel Bearing  
[\(Click here for more info\)](#)



L & G Series  
[\(Click here for more info\)](#)

### Colson In The News

Modern Materials Handling:  
Colson Expands Line  
[\(Click here for more info\)](#)

New Equipment Digest:  
Lower Cost Caster Selection  
[\(Click here for more info\)](#)

## Colson Highlights

**Partner Perspective—Colson and Linco Team UP:** 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 ourselves 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.

*Contributed by Ryan Patterson, Vice President, Linco*

**Sales Tip—It Pays to Pay Attention!:** Did you know you can get a big return for simply paying attention to the little nuggets of information your prospects tell you in passing? But, the key is then to be proactive and find a smart way to act on those little pieces of usable data.

Here's an example from one of our Colson Regional Managers: On a freezing January day in the Northeastern U.S., a client casually mentioned how cold it was and that she had recently lost her favorite scarf. Being the fine listener and the good guy that the salesman was, he quickly made arrangements for a beautiful scarf to be embroidered with our company logo and sent it to the customer.

Needless to say, the client was surprised and pleased to receive the thoughtful gift. It probably wasn't actually the scarf, of course, that made the biggest impression, but the fact that her salesman had listened and acted on what might have been considered idle conversation. The end result of his ability to listen and act on those stray bits of information surely created a special memory for our customer and will probably work to place Colson top-of-mind the next time she needs to order casters.

So, as you can see, it's the simple and smart things we do, like paying attention and being attentive, that have the possibility of big payoffs. So, let's start 2011 with a fun but rewarding effort to pay more attention and see where it takes us in this New Year!

### **Specially Engineered for...YOU!—Adjustable Height Swivel & Rigid Casters:**

Take Advantage of these New Adjustable Height Swivel and Rigid Caster Assemblies.

#### **Customer Request:**

In November of this year, one of our West Coast customers requested a set of casters with low-profile, high-loading and height adjustability in both the rigid and swivel.

The customer needed a 500 load rating with a low profile design. The critical feature was to design a swivel and rigid caster with height adjustability AFTER the caster was mounted to the unit.

- The swivel caster was designed so that after the caster was mounted by the top plate, a simple rotation of the threaded stem would give an adjustment feature of 1-1/2". A simple locking nut would keep the caster at a desired height. ( See picture)
- The rigid caster was more difficult in design and functionality as the customer wanted the caster to be mounted by the top plate and to have the ability to adjust the height of the caster without removing the caster or losing the alignment.
- The solution was to add alignment pins (guide pins) to the stationary top plate and design a stem such that the stem would rotate independently of the caster fork. This gave the rigid caster perfect alignment capabilities along the full range of height adjustment. (See picture)

If your customer has an application this might fit, please know that this design is available for your use!

