



I blinked and 20 years were gone...

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

Dear Colson Partners,

Consider the enormous changes in mediums of communication we've experienced in the past 20 years...remember VCRs, fax machines, overhead projectors, land-line phones, Sony walkmen and big ol' pagers? All have morphed into something else, or simply become obsolete.

Today, business communication is all about smart phones, powerful laptops, emails, websites, and texting, not to mention social media outlets like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn and YouTube. In a minute we'll all turnaround to see them changed as well!

With all of the possibilities, it makes sense that in the caster manufacturing world, the best means of communication to our key customers will not be the same for everyone. But, we are thinking that it is time that Colson put the most effort into the means of communication that you, our customers, are most likely to use. That's really what this letter is all about. How do I get you the information you need to review our newest product specs, a special offer, or reduced prices on casters? What is the best, most timely and most effective means of communicating with all of you?

In a perfect Colson world, I would post new products on interstate signs, across your television screen, on billboards, air banners and even across your car windshield to get your attention. (Hmmm, looking at this list I just drafted I can see I am really thinking in the past.) So, I am asking for your 'input'! How do we get your very critical attention when we have something special to say? Please give this some thought and then take a moment and email me your top three methods of communication at info1@colsoncaster.com, and put the words "Top 3 Communications" in the subject line. Also, let me know which you think would be the 'best' for communicating with you. Let's see what we can put together to keep our very valuable lines of communication open...no matter what form they may take!

Hmmm...could I have Tweeted you this letter?

Colson Highlights

How to Identify Colson Products: Flattery or Fraud?

We are aware that there are many suppliers, fabricators and resellers who claim to provide Colson branded products when, in fact, they do not. They are misrepresenting our brand by substituting products from all over the world -- in other words defrauding our customers. While they may look like Colson products, they have critical quality differences with regard to testing,

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News!

Colson Earns New ISO Certification

[\(Click here for more info\)](#)

Did You Know?



2 Ser Directional Lock

- Use wherever you need swivel casters to become rigid
- For 2 Ser swivel top plate casters
- Compatible with full range of wheels
- Applications: food service & medical equipment, among many others

[\(Click here for more info\)](#)

Colson In The News

Total Industrial Plant Solutions:
Colson Supports Special Olympics

[\(Click here for more info\)](#)

specifications and performance. In addition, these non-Colson products do not carry our warranty and technical support guarantees or our service and field representation. Some suppliers have placed a Colson wheel in a non-branded fork and hoped that their customers, and our customers, wouldn't notice the difference.

We are here to tell you there is a difference.

As the old saying goes, "Imitation is the greatest form of flattery." Well, in this instance, we are not flattered. It's fraud. We believe if you order Colson, you should rest assured that you have received a Colson product and not a dangerous imitation of an inferior product that could lead to catastrophic failures.

Please [click here](#) to see our website page showing the images and location of identifying marks and brands belonging to Colson Caster Corp. By publishing this reference guide, we hope to eliminate the "bait and switch" and make it easy for you, our loyal customers and partners, to be assured that you have received the product you are expecting and upon which you rely.

As a user of casters, and one of our valued customers, we believe you deserve only the best--a true Colson product. So, bring it to our attention if you should discover any caster wheels or forks pretending to be Colson.

Sales Tip: Envision what you want the prospect to do before you meet!

Sales Call 101 with your customer or prospect: Create clear objectives for the meeting, jot down what you need to learn from the customer, make notes on what you want the prospect to learn from this visit based on their possible needs scenarios. But, don't forget to add to your list what you want the prospect to do AFTER the meeting. Yeah! THE COMMITMENT, THE ACTION, and THE TIMELINE!

Always create potential commitments and actions for your clients before your meeting. Have an outline in your head, better yet, write it down! Decide on the optimal commitment, options, and actions in between, and the minimal solution you feel could be an appropriate result. Now, this could change during the meeting but your plan is a starting place and a valuable asset to have in place. You will have already thought through practical and flexible solutions. For example, if the customer is not ready to give you a PO for an order of 10,000 G Series top plate casters by the end of your meeting, maybe they would agree to a smaller order for a specific application to let the product prove itself. Allow an agreed upon period of time and schedule the follow up date before you leave. Have this type of information and suggestion ready for your client and ASK for their commitment, SPEAK everyone's action items, and CONFIRM the timeline.

In short, many times we walk away from a meeting with a list of things we need to do in order to advance the sale. However, if we are leaving the meeting without an agreement upon what the customer should do as well, the sales cycle will likely stall. So, plan in advance what you want the customer or prospect will do after you leave and NEVER leave a meeting without a follow-up date or timeline. Make sure you gain agreement from the customer before you leave on what you both should do next to advance the sale - and when. Otherwise, nothing may ever happen!

Remember one more thing...it is the customer who matters most, so be prepared - you can plan all you want ahead of time but if you aren't also ready to listen and adapt to your customer's needs and concerns, someone else will. Having your plan and possible suggestions in place will make this critical process just that much easier!

Success Story: Reinventing the wheel can pay off

Colson & C.P. Lauman collaborate with toolbox manufacturer

When a well know toolbox manufacturer's team of engineers began designing a new heavy-duty toolbox line, there was an immediate determination that the toolboxes needed extremely robust caster wheels that could carry weights as high as 7200 pounds.

The new toolboxes are larger and heavier than traditional toolboxes. Offered in single, double, and triple bank, as well as two-bay configurations, the toolboxes require a heavier capacity wheel than anything else the manufacturing customer offered in the past.

Durability, ease of rolling, and safety locking were going to be important factors. Also important was the ability to stand up to the type of chemicals and cleaners likely to be present in the motor vehicle repair, aviation, and maintenance & repair operation (MRO) environments that would be the primary markets in which the toolboxes would be used. And, last but not least, the customer was also looking for something that would add a bit more style and just a hint of "bling."

Collaboration in design leads to new caster

According to the toolbox manufacturer's vice president of sales and marketing, when designing the new toolbox units much attention was paid to what today's technicians are looking for-- a higher level toolbox that stands up to industrial use but has a more stylish appearance with a wider range of configurations to meet the market need.

The toolbox manufacturer found what they were looking for in a unique new wheel engineered in collaboration with its long time supplier of casters, C.P. Lauman Company. C.P. Lauman is one of Colson's leading distributors. The company has partnered with Colson for more than 20 years and supplies the toolbox manufacturer the majority of its existing caster wheels.

According to Colson sales engineer Blake Lamberson and Heidi Alcock, President of C.P. Lauman, the collaboration with the engineering group for the new technician toolbox wheels was an 8-month design process. It included numerous back and forth meetings and discussions among the parties to choose the best chemical-resistant material, develop finishes, colors, and a new brake design that would safety-proof the units in mobile configurations.

The process began with a concept from the Colson engineering manager, which was taken through development of samples, production of 3-D models, review of prototypes, development of at least three color changes, and many meetings with engineers to agree upon finishes and colors.

The wheel that resulted from the design collaboration has 33 percent higher capacity than the toolbox manufacturer's heaviest duty wheel. "Whereas the majority of typical mobile cabinets use rubber wheels with either 600 or 900 pound capacity for each wheel (for a total capacity of 2400 or 3600 pounds), the new wheels offer a 1200 pound capacity each, or a total of 4800 pounds for toolboxes with four casters and 7200 pounds with six casters," said Lamberson.

The wheels are 6-inches by 2-inches, and feature an exclusive, ultra-tough thermoplastic compound that resists hard impacts and drop shocks. The material used is impervious to most chemicals, solvents, salts, gases, alkaline, and steam cleaning and does not absorb water. It is ideal for the users of the toolbox, where oil, grease, and brake fluids can break down other materials traditionally used in casters. When compared to other hard tread wheels, the wheel model used requires less force to roll and swivel. It is ideal for many industrial and institutional applications. The toolbox manufacturer's vice president of sales and marketing agreed. "The wheels are made of material that rolls like a charm."

The new locking system locks the wheel rotation as well as the swivel, making the unit more stable when the lock is engaged. "The total lock brake on swivel casters for mobile configurations added an extra level of safety," said the vice president.

And now for the bling. To meet technicians' growing expectations for style and appearance, the toolbox manufacturer asked C.P. Lauman to come up with a design for a wheel cover/thread guard to dress up the wheel and give it that high quality appearance. C.P. Lauman and Colson designed the thread guard or hubcap specifically for this toolbox application in conjunction with its Maxim model of wheel. The thread guard is made of high impact material for rugged use, but gives the caster a polished appearance to improve the looks over the standard wheel. "It's like a car with a great-looking set of wheels," says the vice president.

In addition to the snazzy appearance, the new casters, made at Colson's Jonesboro, Arkansas manufacturing facility, come equipped with a factory warranty from the company, which has been in business for more than 50 years in Jonesboro alone. According to Heidi Alcock of C.P. Lauman Company, "The warranty brings peace of mind that any issue would be dealt with. In the 20 years that C.P. Lauman has been supplying Colson casters to the toolbox manufacturer, there has never been a field failure."

This is indeed one case where reinventing the wheel paid off for the toolbox manufacturer and the technicians who use the new heavy-duty, "blinged out" toolboxes. In addition to being durable, safe and customized for the work environment, the sharp and stylish stainless steel wheel with hubcap-like thread guard is now the envy of technicians everywhere.

To learn more about C.P. Lauman Company, go to www.cplauman.com.