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Boston Service Center's number one goal

Meeting the Demands of the Customer

At the beginning of 2000 the Vaisala Boston Service Center conducted a survey entailing a variety of questions covering the entire after-sales process. The survey showed that 98 % of customers were either satisfied or highly satisfied with Vaisala's products, with the majority being highly satisfied. The survey also showed that 96 % of those who responded expressed their satisfaction with Vaisala's service.

Over the years, the industry's focus on customer service and customer support has intensified to a degree that companies have begun to distinguish themselves by this particular aspect. Companies have begun to understand the need for offering more than just a quality product. The after-sales process is now just as important as the sales process. When it comes to making a business grow, keeping existing customers satisfied is just as important as finding new customers.

There are several facets to customer service and customer support. First and foremost are quick and accurate answers. Whether there are technical inquiries, status of order requests, or just general questions, answers must be prompt and to the point. In almost all cases, the question or inquiry needs to be answered immediately, and we make a point of providing our customers with answers on the same day, even if we simply acknowledge the question and inform the customer that we are working on it.

Customer service orientation

The Vaisala SSD Service Center in Boston has worked extremely hard over the years to offer customers better service than that provided by all of our competitors. Each member of the team understands the need to reflect this attitude at all times and work in accordance with the guidelines that have been set out and which put us above the industry standard.

Calibration of humidity and temperature equipment can be carried out anywhere. It is up to the customer whether to return the unit to Vaisala for service. With competition for this business increasing, the need to continually improving one's capabilities is essential. Being able to support the product that has been sold is a crucial role for a Service Center. Vaisala has taken the necessary steps to ensure that accurate testing and support for products can be carried out at each Service Center. The Boston Service Center provides calibration traceable to the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST).

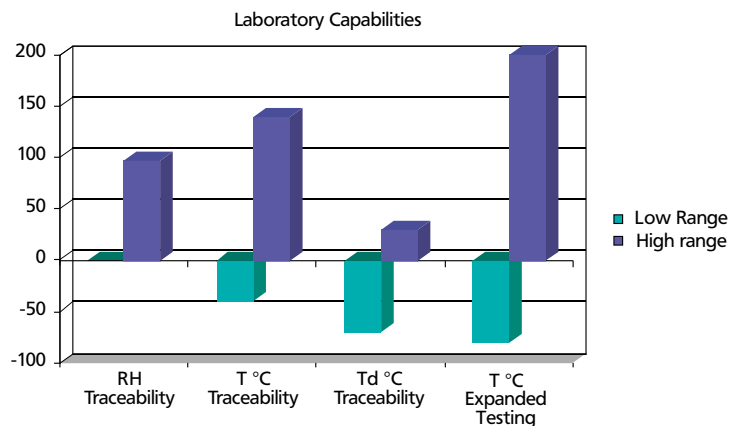
We also continue to support and service our older-generation products.

Improved after-sales support

Over the last several years, The Vaisala SSD Service Center in

Boston has continually improved upon all aspects of after-sales support. The success of this improvement can be measured in many ways, and most obviously from a survey of actual customer responses. At the beginning of 2000 the Vaisala Boston Service Center conducted a survey entailing a variety of questions covering the entire after-sales process. 61 out of the 150 surveys were completed and returned. The results were extremely positive and showed that the direction we are taking has proved to be correct.

The survey showed that 98 % of customers were either satisfied or highly satisfied with Vaisala products, with the majority being highly satisfied. The survey also showed that 96 % of those who responded expressed their satisfaction with Vaisala's Service, and 46 % of these were highly satisfied. The survey allowed customers to voice their comments, and



The SSD Calibration Laboratory includes equipment that will allow for testing at various temperatures, dewpoints and humidities.

PHOTOS BY KIM VACCA, VAISALA BOSTON.



From the left, Kim Vacca (Customer Service Manager) and Lori Summerlin (Customer Service Representative from the Customer Service Department in Boston. They handle all customer inquiries on service, repair, expediting and tracing orders, and any problems with orders or shipments.



Mike Johnson, Laboratory Manager



Rejane Smith, Senior Service Technician



The staff of the SSD Calibration/Service Laboratory in the group picture. From the left, (seated) Gary Francisque, Ed Mehu and Chang Pyun, (back row), Paul Joyce, Linda Hall, Patsy Wheeler, Rejane Smith and Mike Johnson.

most were very positive about the sales staff and customer service personnel. Comment such as trust, confidence and reliability appeared several times.

Flexible internet access

In today's market, end-users are presented with several choices when they need calibration or service. Providing something that is better than the rest can make the difference. This does not mean simply talking about service and support, but following through the actual process. It is even easier to access us via our web-site (www.vaisala.com/inc/ssdcat) for technical support, order inquiries or field returns. The standard turn-around time is, on average, between two to three days for all repairs performed in the Boston Office.

We also offer an express turnaround, which allows serviced products to be shipped back within two days. Our Calibration Reminder Program is made up of over 3,900 pieces of equipment. As part of the program a reminder is sent out a month before the calibration is due. This allows customers to keep track of their equipment to ensure that it is calibrated at regular intervals.

Developing customer training

To further improve the after-sales process the Vaisala SSD Service Center is working on developing a training course to educate customers on products, theory, calibration and measurements. The training course will take the form of a

two or three day event in designated regions of the United States that will combine a detailed presentation with a hands-on working session.

The automotive industry has toughened its requirements on the quality system of its vendors. This industry has adopted QS 9000, which means that all suppliers must be ISO Guide 25 accredited (soon to become ISO Guide 17025). The SSD Calibration Laboratory is looking to attain accreditation through third party assessment. The implementation and documentation of accreditation will further improve the calibration process, which will be of great benefit to most customers. This is yet another way in which Vaisala is committed to meeting all of the demands of a changing industry.

The Vaisala Service Center has evolved into a highly successful operation. Meeting the demands of the customer is the number one goal. We have purchased equipment that will allow for testing at various temperatures, dewpoints and humidities. We are able to simulate most processes on the field so that those products can be tested as close to the conditions of their environment as possible. We are committed to serving our customers with the best turn-around time without reducing quality. ■