

**In this issue:**

Message from our President 1

Customer Satisfaction 2

Here we grow again 3

Stewardship 4

Personnel Notes

# Accu-tec International May 2008

*Celebrating 20 Years of Service*

**Accu-tec shall be an integral part of each customer's success**

May 2008

Web Volume 1, Issue 8

## *A message from our President & Chief Operating Officer* **Going for Green**

April 2008 has concluded and the amount of enthusiasm for all that is "green" and environmentally focused culminating on April 22<sup>nd</sup>, Earth Day is now history. But, was it historical? Did it serve its objective?

It is with curious observation that I see, hear, and read how everyone seems to be talking up the "green" thing, yet only a few seem to be following their conscious and actually focusing their business on the environmental repercussions of their actions. Do not get me wrong, I am struggling with my conscious also. Am I doing my part to reduce the carbon footprint on this, obvious, fragile planet?

I have been given a gift to lead a company that is comprised of diligent, hard-working, and enthusiastic employees. Accu-tec International has always been alert to doing the right thing. Our foundation and task has been to always conduct ourselves according to the parameters of our Mission Statement (visit our web-site). Yet, there is more I (we) can and should be doing as occupants and the footprint we leave during our visit. Perhaps my conscience is challenging me to be a part of the solution, rather than being part of the problem?

It is with these thoughts, conscience or otherwise, that I should use my ability to lead. Accu-tec International shall now put into play the inclusion of an environmentally sensitive consciousness into our business plan. What does this mean?

- Research, pursue, and engage those businesses that are foundationally operating their company on reducing the carbon footprint of our planet.
- Commit Accu-tec International and its employees to engage in operations that are recyclable, renewable, and biodegradable solutions to our processes of manufacturing, packaging, warehousing, and distribution.
- Offer to our customers' solutions to their challenges of reducing any negative environmental impact within their control.
- Enjoin and partner with our suppliers and vendors to serve the greater good of the cause.

Even now, Accu-tec International is utilizing PLA (Polylactic acid), which is a totally bio-degradable solution to plastic polymers. We are investigating corrugate materials that use bio-degradable multifarious glues and inks made of vegetable compounds.

If you have any suggestions or offerings, please contact me. Perhaps, we can struggle together and make a difference!

*Accu-tec shall be an integral part of each customer's success!*

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## Customer Satisfaction – Setting Expectations

Training your team to set and meet customer expectations is key to the success of all customer service programs. There is nothing more frustrating to a customer than a failed commitment or no commitment at all. Here are a few important points to help your team improve service levels by setting customer expectations.

1. **Respect your customer.** Your customer has taken time out of their day to contact your company to get more information or to put something right. By welcoming each caller with respect, you are more likely to consider their needs and wants, and as a result, their expectations.

2. **Listen.** Every customer service training program tells you that listening is the most important part of communication, and it's a fact. You may think you know best, but you need to listen to your customer in order to give them your best. By listening to your customer, you get a better understanding of what they expect from you and your company, so you can decide which expectations are reasonable, which need to be adjusted, and which need to be set.

3. **Reaching agreement.** By respecting and listening to your customer, you are developing a partnership. As partners, you are reaching agreement on key points about your products, services, and future commitments. These agreements are crucial to build a foundation for your partnership. When you disagree with an unreasonable action point, you may need to remind your customer about how flexible you have been with previous points. For example, you may be flexible with your delivery times, but not your price per unit. In this circumstance, you need to remind the customer about your flexibility on delivery and what value that flexibility brings to them. You may also need to explain why their request to change your price per unit isn't feasible. Working through and agreeing these points are key to understanding and setting the customer expectations.

4. **The Five Steps to Commitment.** When establishing your commitments, use a standard SMART Action Plan to run through each point, all the time seeking agreement.

a. **SPECIFIC** - explain, in plain language, what you will do for the customer. Confirm and agree that this is the action the customer needs and wants.

b. **MEASURABLE** - tell the customer how they will know the specific task is complete. "What does 'complete' look like to that customer? If you aren't sure - ask them!"

c. **ATTRIBUTABLE** - who will you be working with? Who will be conducting any follow-up activities? Set out who is responsible for next steps in partnership with your customer. Make any introductions that are necessary, and make sure you involve that colleague as soon as possible.

d. **RESOURCES** - how will you achieve your side of the agreements? Are there knowledge resources you need to consult? Do you need additional time because the resources are unavailable? Tell the customer - within reason - any limitations you may experience because of seeking out other resources.

e. **TIME-BOUND** - when will you contact the customer with an update? When and how do they prefer contact? This is critical to service delivery, particularly when dealing with complainants that feel they have spent enough of their time on you and your firm.

5. **Documentation.** You've worked hard to set these expectations; so don't let them be forgotten. Ensure that you've documented each agreement in your customer files, and update your organization systems and calendars so you can follow up appropriately.

6. **Follow-Up.** If you are dependent on other departments or resources to assist in meeting the expectations you've set, then you need to begin follow-up as soon as is practical. Use every tool at your disposal, e-mail, telephone, even the escalation process, to ensure you follow up appropriately to meet those commitments.

Setting a customer's expectation is a powerful way to build relationships with your clients, and can even bring unreasonable or difficult clients back to the table. It is the key to all successful customer service programs.

**Susan L. Browning**

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We're on the web

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## Here we grow again!



Accu-tec International continues to expand. In response to a Business Partners need for climate-controlled storage, Accu-tec has acquired climate controlled storage space in Louisville Underground. The Louisville Underground features an ambient temperature of 56 to 64 Degrees Fahrenheit year round. Humidity can be controlled to the customer's requirements. This leads to significant energy savings for these kinds of projects. This is just another step in Accu-tec Internationals environmental efforts to reduce its carbon footprint. Louisville Underground has a total of 3,200,000 total SF. Ceiling heights are currently available at 22' - 24', but space under construction could be made available up to 40'. Accu-tec Internationals main office is just 7.3 miles from Louisville Underground.



Louisville International Airport and interchange of I-65 and I-264 are within 1 mile. Warehouse, distribution, and manufacturing can be done in a climate controlled, and secure environment. There are two passages in and out and they are constantly monitored and security manned. You are under surveillance cameras the whole time you are in the Louisville Underground. The entire facility is located underground which provides the highest level of security and protection from weather. Geologists say that Louisville Underground can take a direct hit from a 747 jet and sustain no damage, which makes the facility unique in its physical protection. Weather is also no problem. Once again, the expert's say that Louisville Underground can sustain an F-5 tornado and would not even know that it was taking place above-ground. Loading and unloading is all done inside the Underground and is never hampered by weather conditions.

Barry Epstein

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**ACCU-TEC PERSONNEL  
NOTES**

**May Birthdays**

- Mavis Addei 5/01**
- Ladonna Whalen 5/04**
- Stacy Spencer 5/09**
- Warren Ellis 5/16**
- Darryl Roberts 5/19**
- Barry Crawford 5/28**
- Vince Singleton 5/28**

**May Anniversaries**

- Andrew Mahabir 1 Year**
- Danny Williams 4 Years**
- Darryl Roberts 16 Years**
- Violet Branham 16 Years**

Stewardship

Last month I attended a manufacturing conference in North Carolina. The pre-show publications were full of advertisements about "Green this and Green that". Space on the Exhibit Hall floor was marketed as having Green Zones with companies focusing on Green. The bulk of what I saw, were green corrugated boxes and some green painted conveyor, very little to do with investment in any environmental issue.

Suffice to say that the Green Movement in Corporate America is in its infancy. I am confident to say that Corporate America and corporations globally as they move into this arena have the ability to do more good around this issue than most any other entity. If the public truly recognizes a need to adjust methods based on global concerns, environmental concerns, and/or political concerns, and the public gets behind the movement, corporations around the world will pick up the charge and run with it. They will do so because it will be in their best interest to do so. They will do so because it will be what their customers want. Businesses are in business to stay in business, because they take care of their customers wants and needs. Those that are good will excel. Those that are not will eventually disappear with the ease of any biodegradable material.

**Jeff Davis**  
**CEO**  
**Accu-Tec International**

