



CASE STUDY: **OERLIKON**

Key Challenge: Maximize uptime at Oerlikon's 17 plants to deliver on customers' 48-hour turnaround demands at least 80% of the time.



SOLUTION

When Oerlikon began expanding its production facilities in 2013, New Electric, which had been onboard for electrical repair, maintenance and troubleshooting at various plants since 2010, wired and powered everything from production equipment to security, information technology, HVAC, ventilation, and lighting.

New Electric facilitated the start-up of the first 22,000 sq. ft. plant in Geneva, Illinois, then

Oerlikon's largest U.S. plant to date, a 42,250 sq. ft. plant in Lake Orion, Michigan and a 30,000 sq. ft. plant in Guelph, Ontario.

In 2017, New Electric was hard at work on the 2,200 sq. ft. plant in Toledo, as Oerlikon's production technology manager Brian Scheblo, remains fully committed to maximizing Oerlikon's uptime and always meeting customer's 48-hour turnaround times with the support of New Electric.

REQUIREMENTS

- National presence with an Eastern and Midwest focus
- Same-day repairs to minimize downtime
- On-call service to match shifts
- Capabilities with production equipment, HVAC, indoor air quality, gas detection, security, information technology, communications, lighting and other systems for plant start-ups (new-build and renovated)
- Consistent service levels (Oerlikon typically experiences a 50% drop soon after contractors win their business)

BENEFITS

- New Electric's 4 U.S. branches (80 employees) and 7 Canadian locations (190 employees) service all of Oerlikon's North American facilities.
- Arrive on-site within two hours of receiving repair requests.
- 24/7 availability
- New Electric's multinational customers ensure their familiarity with Oerlikon's international equipment and electrical standards.
- New Electric's deep skills, expertise and experience facilitate and expedite plant start-ups.



PROJECT

Innovative, inventive and resolutely international, Swiss-owned Oerlikon and its 13,700+ employees at 170 locations in more than 35 countries have high expectations precisely because their customers do!

“In the U.S. and Canada, Oerlikon coats components and products for automotive, aerospace and industrial customers with exacting specifications and 48-hour turnaround times at least 80 per cent of the time,” says Brian Schlebo, production technology manager, whose ultimate goal is ensuring Oerlikon’s 17 North American plants always meet customers’ exacting demands. “At Oerlikon, we live with the high-stress reality that our customers will immediately turn to our competitors if we don’t meet their needs and timelines.”

Because Oerlikon’s customers consistently expect so much from the firm’s 17 plants, in turn, Oerlikon has to ask a lot of its suppliers. Initially, they relied on New Electric to provide repair and maintenance services to a handful of plants in the USA and Canada. Scheblo soon recognized the value of dealing with a one-stop electrical shop that truly understood exactly what Oerlikon’s customers expected and recognized the consequences if Oerlikon failed to deliver.

New Electric’s teams generally arrive at Oerlikon’s sites within two hours of being called – a staggering improvement over competitors more typical three- to four-day average. In addition, New Electric recognized that certain

upgrades, such as replacing all legacy lighting in every plant with energy-efficient LEDs, provided a return on the investment. In just two years, the energy savings covered the cost of the LEDs and their installation and showcase the benefits of this proactive partnership.

“I started working with New Electric and my costs fell, while my uptime increased immensely and my stress plummeted tenfold,” says Scheblo. “Because New Electric understands that Oerlikon’s customer satisfaction and retention are based on plant uptime, they literally climb into their vehicles and head to our plants the minute I call – days, nights and weekends.”

Surprisingly to some, Oerlikon and New Electric’s service parameters and service level agreements are anything but highly detailed and defined. Instead, New Electric has an uncanny ability to react intuitively because they listen, observe and ask the right questions.

“They give me exactly what I need without being told and that means I have 25 fewer things to worry about,” says Schlebo, who relies heavily on New Electric’s Terry Firestine and his team in Michigan.

As Oerlikon, a firm with a long-standing presence in Asia and a strong foundation in Europe, has expanded in the U.S. and Canada, that growth has seen the forward-looking firm grow from 4 to 17 plants in the U.S. in

CUSTOMER PROFILE: OERLIKON

Oerlikon North America manufactures and applies protective coatings for precision tools and components for automotive, aviation, oil and gas and specialized industrial customers.

- 16 plants (Midwest, Alabama, Massachusetts, South Carolina, Oklahoma City); 1 in Guelph, Ontario, Canada
- Plants range from 2,500 to 42,000 sq. ft.
- 400 employees total



just 22 years. To date, New Electric has been involved in nine of those due in large part to their familiarity and ease with the firm's globally-sourced equipment. While Oerlikon designs and builds some machines in-house, it also relies on equipment that's manufactured in the U.S. and throughout Europe.

"Equipment that ranges from 110 to 120 and 203, 208, 400 and 480 volts has been a major problem for every electrical contractor we're ever met with the exception of New Electric, which seamlessly managed those installations," says Scheblo.

The move from the 9,600 sq. ft. facility to the new 42,250 sq. ft. plant in Lake Orion, Michigan, an multimillion-dollar project, was particularly daunting as the plants needed to run simultaneously, with just 72 hours to relocate each of the 35+ machines. The project's scale combined with the fact they remained fully operational with no shutdown during the transition made it particularly high-stress for Oerlikon and Scheblo.

Meanwhile, New Electric had to coordinate the disconnections, pack, load and transport the equipment, then offload, unpack, install and connect all water and power sources for each piece of equipment. New Electric even had to carefully and safely suspend three, 3,000 lb. transformers from the ceiling. New Electric also handled everything from the climate control systems, including air conditioning, to the specialized gas detection system, Internet

connections, intercom, external air exhaust and the IT cabling required for screens, monitors, printers and more.

"In my 30 years in this business, I've never encountered the depth of knowledge, experience and attention to detail that I get on daily basis with Terry Firestine - you can't imagine what a fan I've become - he and New Electric have really earned my trust and loyalty as my one-stop electrical shop," says Schlebo, who values Oerlikon's long-term relationship with New Electric.

"I no longer waste my time and energy worrying about electrical and repeatedly starting from scratch because I've had to replace multiple electrical contractors whose service levels typically drop 50 per cent within a year of winning my business."

TALK TO AN EXPERT

Choosing the right contractor can be stressful, time consuming and confusing. New Electric recognizes the value of rapid response times, comprehensive project management, superior quality workmanship and a deep commitment to safety on every job site.

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