

Customers Design Reid Supply's New Web Site

Reid Supply Company, a leading supplier of industrial products and free CAD images to engineers, technicians and others has enhanced their web site with direct input from their customers. The new site offers a Knowledge Base, free CAD library, free Resource Guides and more.

July 8, 2009 (FPRC) -- MUSKEGON, MICHIGAN -- What Does It Take to Build a World-Class e-Commerce Web Site? According to the web services team at Reid Supply Company, a Michigan-based global distributor of industrial parts, components and supplies, all it takes is getting direct input from many customers, along with some savvy data managers, creative web designers and clever web developers to incorporate the customers' desires.

In a continuing effort to improve the customer experience, the web development team at Reid Supply enlisted the help of long-time patrons to understand their ecommerce needs for industrial supplies. What they found was good news.

"We discovered that we were on the right track with our developmental planning for the new ReidSupply.com," said Greg Palmer, Reid Supply Company's Director of Marketing. "In a survey sent out to thousands of customers, we learned that they wanted a simpler and more direct shopping experience. That was exactly what we were planning, and that is exactly what we've built."

According to the company, their new web site is much more than better data; an improved search experience was number one on the customers' request list.

"We conducted a deep survey of Reid Customers and frankly, discovered a few problems," said Palmer. "We found out, through direct and indirect contact, that users wanted a better, smarter, search tool; they wanted an easier way to manage their on-line accounts; and they wanted a site that was clear of marketing clutter so that they could find the products that they needed faster."

They determined the new site would need a lot of web images because they wanted it to be image-driven, as well as data searchable. The Reid team utilized all of their print catalog images, took photos of missing images, and utilized computer aided design (CAD) drawings, which are free to the customer, to give the site added functionality.

"The first thing we considered was how we could create a simpler and smarter search app that delivered what customers were looking for," said John Carrier, President of Reid Supply Company. "Our new Smarter Search function is very intuitive in the sense that as you are typing, it is auto-suggesting in a drop-down window. This can be very handy if you don't know exactly what you want. The search engine can be very helpful."

By all indications, Reid customers are delighted. Early responders have said that the new web site is more user friendly, and more importantly, more effective in guiding the user to the exact item they need much faster.

Reid is on the cutting edge of technology and offers free CAD drawings on more than 90% of everything on their web site, ReidSupply.com. "We have over 40,000 free CAD drawings that

anyone can download,” says Palmer. “This is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, free CAD database in the industrial supply industry. It would be very beneficial for an engineer or technician in any industry to come to ReidSupply.com and simply download the CAD part they need for their engineering designs.”

The company’s revamped web site offers a Knowledge Base for engineers, machinists, hobbyists and scholars. This repository of information features the free CAD library, a large collection of reference books, a free “Ask An Expert” feature, a free e-newsletter, free Resource Guides, special requests and more.

Reid Supply Company, which started selling industrial supplies in 1948, serves virtually every industry with products ranging from clamps, to power transmission, to structural systems, to hardware and everything in between.

“We are always looking toward the future for our Customers,” says Carrier. “As technology changes, so will we. But one thing will never change here, our rallying cry, ‘while others may be bigger, nobody will serve the Customer better’ which is really all about us staying at the forefront of serving everyone who shops the new ReidSupply.com.”

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