Service Helps EIFS Contractors Excel in Competitive Market

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(EDITOR'S NOTE: This is Part Two of a two-part article. Part One was in the February issue, page 28.)

Post-Job Inspections

Where owner and architect require a warranty, the site visits help to ensure that there will be no problems during the final inspection that is prerequisite to any EIFS manufacturer’s warranty. At Senergy, the inspection is done by the Technical Application Consultant at the contractor’s request, and the warranty is issued at the building owner’s request after any problems are resolved.

With the TAC program, Senergy expects so few callbacks that they offer a warranty to approved contractors that is different from the industry-standard three year materials warranty. Where it is in the contractor’s competitive interest to do so, Senergy will join with the contractor to offer a five-year labor and material warranty with the company taking full responsibility for the last three years on TAG approved jobs.

Hands-On Training

Another type of pre-job service the TAC program offers is hands-on workshops that can be tailored to the requirements of a particular contractor. We’ve found the individualized wet demos are more effective than large-group classroom situations in serving the priority needs of a contractor.

Workshops range from training a contractor’s new journeymen/mechanics in basic application techniques to introducing a contractor’s experienced EIFS applicators to new products or improved techniques for handling challenging design situations. Emphasis is on proper techniques that save time in the short run and that avoid problems which could cost time and money in the long run.

In some cases, Senergy offers seminars on estimating EIFS jobs. For example, Acousti Engineering of Alabama, Inc., plans to take advantage of its TAC consultant’s more than 14 years of estimating experience in a meeting on estimating and using Senergy products for its 23 estimators and project managers.

Gary LaGreide (center), a Senergy Technical Application Consultant based in Portland Oregon, works with a small group of EIFS applicators. Others shown are (left to right) Mario J. Subia, Sierra West Plastering Norco, California; Gary Prior and Tim Richmond, both of Richmond Plastering, Inc., Long Beach, California; and Bob Pullen, W.F. Hayward Plastering, Gardena, California.
Occasionally, for contractors who are fairly new to the EIFS business or who are facing a particularly challenging and substantial business opportunity, TAC consultants with the most estimating experience provide assistance on specific bids—even if it means sending them to regions they don’t normally cover.

Innovation and Vision

On staying competitive, American Lath & Plastering’s Robert Votolato attests that “profit really does become secondary. It’s more important that we stand behind what we do. That helps us stay with companies like Senergy. They help us in reaching that objective.”

In keeping an eye on long-term success as well as acceptable short-term profits, it is necessary to be innovative—to try new market approaches, to continually strive to develop more efficient application techniques, and to provide new materials that meet specific customer requirements. But successful innovation cannot be accomplished unless it is directed at fulfilling the priority requirements of customers. It requires front-line experience—another reason that the technical service program was developed.

Where the situation lends itself to some experimentation, this type of service partnership with contractors extends to the field testing of new products. Votolato, for example, owns a building that served as a test site for some new Senergy products designed for retrofit applications.

Such a partnership arrangement provides valuable feedback to the manufacturer and helps keep the contractor at the forefront of developing technology.

The front-line service partnership also helps keep in clear perspective a vision of growth for the future. For Senergy, it has validated our belief that a good part of EIFS industry growth during the next decade will be in the renovation market. The retrofit situation is one that often is negotiated directly with an owner rather than through bid. Profit may be less elusive than on a tightly bid job, but customer service becomes even more important—particularly in jobs where an architect may not be involved.

Automatic Priorities

In summary, superb customer service is geared to providing the kind of job that will ensure a growing business for the conscientious EIFS contractor. Focusing single-mindedly on such service automatically prioritizes and validates the efforts devoted to pursuing many other qualities for success.

Superb customer service automatically builds a contractor’s reputation for excellence.

Quality work is an absolute prerequisite to satisfying the customer. It is essential to meet the customer’s specifications and expectations—whether those specifications are for the finest custom work or the most serviceable and economical—but reliable—alternative.

Among the finer points that can distinguish a contractor in a highly competitive marketplace are the innovation and vision that provide long-term strength. Those characteristics, too, are encouraged in appropriate measure by superb, front-line customer service.

One additional service the Tac program offers is its TAC Advisor, a newsletter recently introduced to keep contractors who use Senergy materials abreast of approved methods for handling details and of proven techniques that might not yet be common in their areas.

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