

Innovations

Dedicated to the success of TLP's **biomedical** customers



Tailored Label Products, Inc.
"Passion for Innovation"

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How Our Corporate Culture Benefits Customers



If you've read newspaper or magazine articles about TLP you know that our culture is special ... that we focus on it ... and that we attribute much of what we've accomplished over the past few years to it. Our culture has gained TLP a lot of recognition and awards. But most importantly,

our culture directly benefits our customers.

It starts with our hiring process. We look for people who are collaborative, creative, hard-working and who enjoy being challenged. Often, we hire people who may not be the most experienced in a position, but who we believe will be the best "fit" because they have the capacity and desire to learn and grow as part of a team.

Regardless of the level of the position, all employee prospects, even interns, go through a very detailed hiring process that includes multiple interviews. In addition to learning WHAT they've done, we're perhaps even more interested in learning WHO they are and making sure they know who we are.

After a person joins TLP, they quickly learn they're not alone, but rather part of a team that looks out for each other and strives for successes beyond our individual capacities. Our emphasis is on working together and keeping fellow team members informed. Everyone cares because no one wants to let other team members down.

Every month team members from each department meet to go over production samples that exceeded

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In The News

Thank You to Our Readers - We appreciate the time you took to complete our survey in the winter edition of the newsletter. We will be making some changes and using many of the article ideas that our readers mentioned. Look for these changes starting with the fall issue.

See TLP in Booth #1057 at ATX Expo - TLP will be exhibiting at the Assembly and Automation Technology Expo, McCormick Place North, Chicago, IL, September 20-22, 2011, Booth #1057. As a UBM Canon Trade Show, ATX will be joined by the following shows in Chicago: Medical Design and Manufacturing and Design and Manufacturing Midwest, among others.

Jarrold Wallner Promoted to Second Shift Lead Press Operator - Jarrold will provide guidance, assist with training and offer general support during TLP's second shift.

Joe Phelan Promoted to Graphics and Digital Department Manager - Joe will continue to lead the graphics and digital portion of TLP's business, specifically focusing on day to day scheduling and leadership along with departmental goal setting.

Jason Heun Promoted to Press Operator - Jason will utilize his education in Print Media as a vital member of the press operations team at TLP.

Harsh Storage Environments Can Create Labeling Nightmares

Security and chain of custody are the main requirements in research laboratories, inventory storage and other environments that require extremely cold temperatures to preserve samples.

These labels often have variable information printed on them for track and trace initiatives, including serialization, lot/date codes, expiration dates, and barcoding.

Maintaining the integrity of the label is difficult in the cold but complicating matters is the thaw: whether it's a slow thaw at room temperature or a fast thaw in a 38 degree water bath; labels can chip, flag and become ragged, potentially destroying or impairing important labeling information.

"TLP staff are highly experienced in creating and customizing labels to withstand harsh biomedical environments," says Jim Petersen, District Technical Sales for TLP.

Each layer of the construction

including liner, adhesive, facestock and top coat, is analyzed to combat common issues in biomedical applications. By utilizing specific materials such as high tack adhesives, low temperature materials, and conformable facestocks, TLP is able to customize constructions for each challenging application.

"We create labels that can maintain their integrity in common laboratory storage environments: liquid nitrogen, +4°C, -20°C and -70°C," says Jim.

"We also understand that once labels are adhered to the surface of the vial, there is a very limited time period before they are placed in storage and we provide labels that can adhere rapidly and solidly to the surface."

In addition, these constructions accept variable printing, and can be hand applied or fed through a high speed auto dispenser.



Quality Engineering **Tips** From the TLP Team



Sue Cantwell Jim Brown George Scannell Tina Stewart

Customer Satisfaction Surveys Provide Useful Data to Meet Core Values

Exceeding customer expectations and providing exceptional customer service are some of TLP's core values. To determine our level of success in these areas, we send customer satisfaction surveys to you, our customers, so you can tell us how we're doing and offer suggestions for enhancement or improvement.

"TLP started sending surveys in 2003 via snail mail," says Ruth Herdrich, TLP Customer Service Manager. "Since then, we've progressed to online surveys to make it faster and more convenient for customers to provide feedback."

Surveys are sent quarterly to a random selection of customers who've recently completed projects with TLP. Survey questions use a scale of "1" to "10" and TLP strives to earn a "9" or "10" in all areas.

"When we receive an "8" or lower in any area, the customer service staff is brought together to brainstorm and to develop recommendations for how TLP can improve. Then we create an action plan to implement the improvements," Ruth says.

"For example, a survey revealed that a customer sometimes had a problem contacting her inside sales representative. We changed the representative's duties and provided her with an assistant to do order entry. That freed up the sales rep to spend more time with her customers ... which benefited both TLP and all of this representative's customers."

TLP also creates plans to address quality issues by monitoring the number of incidents and working on the most troublesome areas - like printing voids and registration.

Results of the surveys and subsequent action plans are reported to the executive committee on a quarterly basis.

TLP is beginning a campaign to

educate customers about the company's expectations.

"While we don't want customers to simply give us a '9' or '10' because that's our goal, we have found that some customers were perfectly satisfied with their projects and still gave us an '8' because they considered that to be a great score.

We want our customers to understand the goals we strive for and if we meet those goals to award us the appropriate score ... but if we fall short, we want them to be honest and let us know," explains Ruth.

TLP continually updates its surveys to ensure they are easy to understand and will provide information that is actionable. TLP offers the following advice for companies that want to create Customer Satisfaction Surveys.

Survey Guidelines

Base questions on what you'd like to know from customers. Ask questions about satisfaction related to a purchase, a service performed, customer service received and general impressions of the company. Customer loyalty questions include asking if the customer would do business with you again and/or recommend your business to someone else.

Arrange questions in a meaningful manner. Craft questions that are important and use as few questions as you can. "We have found that longer surveys don't get a lot of response...people are very busy and you want to respect their time," notes Ruth.

Use multiple choice options or a scale for most of the questions. Too many open-ended questions can be difficult to analyze and again, customers may not take the time to

provide feedback.

Read your draft survey carefully. Make sure you are asking the right questions in the right way so the feedback will allow you to make informed decisions. This is accomplished by asking what steps you would take if you received a low mark for this question. If you are not certain, re-write the question.

Test your survey with a small group of customers. Customers can point out questions that may be confusing from the customers' standpoint. This will allow you to send a strong, well-crafted survey.

Send your survey to customers, receive your results and compile the answers. The answers will pinpoint areas that need improvement or help you set new goals.

Keep in mind that surveys can also be a good way to create awareness about your products or services. For example, if TLP was looking to boost awareness of their design services, a question asking customers to rate TLP's in-house design services could be used.

Another useful element of a customer satisfaction survey is that it allows customers to highlight exceptional service by team members. "Customers will often mention our team members by name and we make sure the comments are passed on to those team members at monthly meetings and other appropriate occasions," says Ruth.

Some companies use incentives to help encourage participation. Since July 2010, TLP has been making a \$5 donation to Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Research for every survey returned. The donation total through May was \$245.



Solutions

Biofilm Performance Products

TLP's Biofilm laboratory identification products are designed to serve the biotechnical, medical, pharmaceutical, agricultural, environmental, forensic and industrial markets. These products meet four current labeling challenges associated with sample container tracking: sizing, legibility, durability and increased information requirements.

TLP-943 Biofilm - Thermal transfer printable, white, auto or hand application, small diameter vial marking, designed for +4°C, -20°C, -70°C and liquid nitrogen applications. Exceptional conformability.

TLP-770 Biofilm - Thermal transfer printable, premium gloss white, dimensionally stable, auto or hand application, Autoclave, excellent chemical resistance, cold temperature applications down to -20°C.

TLP-743 Biofilm - Thermal transfer and dot matrix printable, matte white, hand application, designed for kit box and bottle labeling at room temperature, cold room storage at +4°C, -20°C and -70°C.

TLP-821 Biofilm - Thermal transfer printable, white, auto or hand application, UL approved, designed for general product identification on a wide variety of surfaces.

TLP-745 Biofilm - Thermal transfer printable, white, auto or hand application, small diameter tube, designed for cold room applications down to 0°C. Storage conditions include room temperature, +4°C, -20°C and -70°C.

Please contact a TLP representative for technical data sheets containing further details on these products.

Chain of Custody Made Easier with Dual Label Verification System



Maintaining the integrity of the chain of custody process is complicated, especially when the contents of a cryogenic vial need to be tested.

TLP offers a dual label verification system that allows a lab technician to remove the first layer of the label, while a duplicate label remains on the vial.

The labels are premier biofilm laboratory identification products designed for cryogenic environments. In addition, specific information regarding each sample can be printed onto each label.

With TLP's dual label verification system, technicians:

- Apply the label to a specific vial
- Store that vial in a cryogenic freezer
- Thaw vial to utilize sample material
- Remove the first layer of the label with duplicate label still on the vial
- Place the vial back into the cryogenic freezer

With effective duplication of tracking information, the chain of custody will never be disrupted.

Should more testing be required, TLP can create multiple layers in a "piggyback" construction, as well.

Corporate Culture Benefits Customers

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expectations, as well as projects that posed unexpected difficulties or issues. Team members brainstorm about what we can do differently on future production runs to get better results.

This is not a typical corporate culture. No one is guarded or has reason to be looking over his/her shoulder. It's an environment where

people promote one another and cheer each other on. Everyone shares achievements as well as occasional lapses in excellence. This way everyone is able to celebrate success and contribute to continual improvement.

In the end, we enjoy an energized and engaged atmosphere where the focus is on the

CUSTOMER through an emphasis on the TEAM.

That leads to better customer satisfaction. And it all starts with a better corporate culture.



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