

# Timing Is Everything

Rob Guertin

In the world of business, much like in everyday life, timing is everything. It can be one of the most critical factors to the success or failure of any company. And more often than not, every company experiences unexpected events, setbacks, and generally, just bad timing.

This was the case for a subsidiary of one of the world's largest metallurgical coal producers for the global steel industry when, in summer 2010, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) informed the manufacturer that the current operating facility that was housing its centrifuge was no longer up to code and meeting current safety requirements. An upgraded facility would need to be constructed and the centrifuge transferred to this new location. As a major manufacturer of blast furnace and foundry coke, the Alabama-based subsidiary operates three batteries with a total of 120 coke ovens that produce approximately 460,000 tons of coke each year. The company is also a major producer of industrial coke, egg coke, buckwheat coke, nut coke, light oil, and coal tar. So needless to say, building a new facility for the centrifuge and moving the operation to this new location without effecting productivity was going to be no small feat.

And to make matters worse, this all had to take place within a few months to meet EPA deadlines. Not only would the new facility need to be built from the ground up, but every part of the project needed to be up and running as quickly as possible to avoid any downtime and loss in production. This included replacing the centrifuge's pumping equipment, which plays a critical role in the coke manufacturing process. These heavy-duty pumps remove the harmful by-products from the centrifuge that result during production. Many of these byproducts are then pumped out of the facility where they go on to play important roles in a variety of other industries, including the extremely corrosive ammonium sulfate that is used throughout the fertilizer industry as an ammonia source.

With time working against the coke manufacturer and the EPA's deadlines fast approaching, the manufacturer turned to their "pump guy," Matt Gentry, a Sales Representative for Pumping Systems, Inc., located in Pelham, AL.

"I knew it was only a matter of time before they would be required to build a new facility, the old one was falling apart and crumbling," explains Gentry. "So after the EPA came in, I knew I was going to be working with a tight deadline and the project had to be completed very quickly. The old building was in such bad shape the new building had to get up and running fast."

Ultimately, the coke manufacturer was relying on Gentry to determine what type of pumps were needed, get the pumps delivered, installed and running smoothly in the shortest amount of time possible. To get this accomplished, Gentry first had to determine how the piping would need to run from the centrifuge to the pumping

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equipment. Secondly, he had to verify the correct pump losses and flow rates that would best suit the application. "After taking a closer look at the project and determining what type of pumps would fit best, I gave this information to the manufacturer. But for whatever reason, they kept dragging out giving me the pump order. And when I did receive the order, it had to be completed even quicker than I had expected," says Gentry.

When considering that the project was running short on time and the pump installation would need to take place in the upcoming weeks, Gentry immediately contacted Steve Cox, the Southeast Regional Manager for Griswold™ Pump Company. Not only was the EPA's deadline nearly upon them, but the pumps would need to be installed quickly to avoid any stoppage in production when the centrifuge was moved to the new facility. When Cox arrived on the scene, he immediately contacted Griswold's manufacturing facility and ordered Griswold 811 Series ANSI Centrifugal Pumps constructed with CD4MCu material, which is a higher-grade material and ideal for this type of application.

"Griswold was able to produce the pumps and get them out within four days of the order. After delivery time, it was about a week from order to delivery, going all the way from California to Alabama. The manufacturer received the pumps, put them in service and they run great. Everyone was so happy, and actually the facility then ordered additional spare units for future use," explains Gentry. "As a distributor, I really appreciate the sense of urgency that Griswold understands is necessary."

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