

A VALUE-ADD PROPOSITION

HVAC Gaskets

All working relationships are not created equal. For some companies, success is driven by partnering with suppliers that can adapt to their unique situation – here, productivity gains were achieved through Mueller's problem-solving abilities and **Armacell in action.**

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MAKING A DIFFERENCE AROUND THE WORLD

HVAC Gaskets

Mueller and Armacell: Adding Value Through Cost-Effective, Timely, and Adaptable Supply of HVAC Gaskets

INTRODUCTION

Reevaluating supply partnerships can improve productivity, reduce costs, and save time. Armacell repeatedly demonstrates their customer-centered approach, providing solutions that match the customer's ordering practices. And, for decades, Mueller Die Cut Solutions has gone beyond flexible material manufacturing to the "Mueller Way" of exceptional quality and pinpoint customer focus. Together, the Armacell / Mueller partnership met the need for flexible supply of HVAC gasket material for a major provider of air conditioning systems, services, and solutions.

THE SITUATION

Mueller takes pride in their ability to exceed expectations and their long-standing customer relationships, including their successful 30-year relationship with Ingersoll Rand.

When Ingersoll Rand acquired Trane, a provider of air conditioning systems, services, and solutions, they asked Mueller to evaluate the materials processes at the Clarksville, Tennessee location to determine if there were any cost-saving opportunities for the 300+ part numbers – with the caveat of no changes to the existing approved raw materials or material suppliers.

Over a two-day period, the Mueller team of four compared the parts specifications to the line drawings and physical parts – to determine the specifications on which to base the quote for the material fabrication. Following this exercise, Mueller was awarded the business for all 300+ parts and began working in November 2014 with the existing material suppliers, including Armacell and other vendors, to ship parts to the Clarksville location.

The supply of six parts became particularly challenging. All six parts used material from the same supplier, who had a regimented ordering process consisted of strict minimum orders, strict lead times, and excessive expedite charges to meet shorter lead times. The lead times and minimum order sizes were difficult to meet given Trane's inconsistent ordering process, resulting in high expedite fees. After a year working together, Trane was confident in Mueller's abilities and open to suggestions for an alternative material supplier using the value-add, value-engineered (VAVE) process. Mueller thought there was an opportunity to create cost efficiencies and prevent excessive expedite fees to Trane.

THE SOLUTION

The Mueller team turned to Armacell to supply the material for the six part



Mueller operates a 134,000 square foot facility in Charlotte, North Carolina

"We advocate for our customers and help them reach effective solutions that work within their existing environment. Armacell does the same."

Michael Bryant – Mueller Sales Manager



numbers. Not only had they successfully partnered before but they also knew that Armacell had the material capabilities, could accommodate short lead times, was willing to fill smaller orders, and did not charge expedite fees.

“No one has the breadth of product line that Armacell has.” Mike Bryant. “We introduced Trane to Armacell’s EnsoLite® EF0, a material that met all the specs for the parts that Trane needed.”

Mueller laminated the EnsoLite EF0 foam to an adhesive and sliced into tape rolls on an ALS lathe slitter. The end use was as insulator gaskets around the doors of an industrial HVAC rooftop unit.

After reviewing samples and prototypes, Trane approved the use of Armacell’s EnsoLite® for all six part numbers. It was similar to the material it was replacing, and Armacell could adapt to

Trane’s unpredictable ordering volume and timing.

THE OUTCOMES

Today, Mueller and Armacell continue to deliver a more even supply chain fulfillment to Trane. Through the existing relationship between Mueller and Armacell, inventory strategies and plans were already in place to manage Trane’s parts needs and ordering process. As a result, tens of thousands of expedite fees were eliminated for Trane.

At Trane’s request, Mueller showed that a partnership with Armacell met the ebbs and flows in material supply, satisfied the need for short lead times, and avoided excessive expedite fees. ■

Lower Left Photo: 1 of 4 ALC lathe style slitters, up to 24” OD for longer roll lengths, longer run times, increased productivity



“Even though lead times were comparable between the two suppliers, Armacell’s can-do attitude and willingness to be flexible met the needs of our customer, Trane.”

Michael Bryant – Mueller Sales Manager

- EnsoLite® EF0 Foam Specifications**
- // Black, very soft, semi-closed cell “crushed” EPDM, 4-8 lb/ft³ density product
 - // Typical 25% compression deflection values of 1.0 psi max.
 - // Meets the horizontal burn / flame requirements of FMVSS-302 at 1/8” and higher
 - // Wide temperature range
 - // Excellent UV, ozone, and weathering

All data and technical information are based on results achieved under typical application conditions. It is the customer's responsibility to verify if the product is suitable for the intended application. The responsibility for professional and correct installation and compliance with relevant building regulations lies with the customer. By ordering/receiving product you accept the Armacell General Terms and Conditions of Sale applicable in the region. Please request a copy if you have not received these

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ABOUT MUELLER

Mueller provides custom solutions for various industries, including but not limited to, Industrial, Automotive, HVAC, Aerospace, and Electronics in the following applications: thermal and acoustical management, insulation sound bonding, enclosure seals, vibration dampening, EMI/ RFI shielding, seals, gasketing and diaphragms, bonding and adhesives.



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