

SPRING 2009 **Daman** 33 ISSUE

CELEBRATING 33 YEARS OF CONTINUOUS INNOVATION



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Forging Ahead During Tough Times.

**Refining software,
eliminating errors gain
20% - 30% efficiency**

AN ONGOING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIP WITH A CUSTOM SOFTWARE COMPANY THAT BEGAN IN THE 1990s IS PROVING TO BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN EVER IN THE CURRENT “BELT-TIGHTENING” ERA. THE DAMAN DESIGN TEAM, WHICH IS ALWAYS UPGRADING ITS PROCESSES, USES ADVANCED SOFTWARE TO AUTOMATICALLY CHECK AND CORRECT ERRORS IN DESIGN.

MORE EFFICIENT USE OF TIME. FEWER ERRORS. QUICKER DESIGN TIME.

Today's business climate calls for all three. At Daman, it's not a new concept, but certainly with economic woes – not just nationally, but globally – there is a call for renewed effort on everyone's part to streamline wherever possible.

One of the ways to make the best use of time and effort is to rely on technology. But technology that was first devised in the 1990s has run its course, and upgrades through the years have begun to lag in efficiency.

"Years ago, we decided to create our own custom programming code, linking the output of the third-party engineering software to our

"Getting rid of non-value-added work allows us to provide more resources to our customers."

CAD/CAM software. This enabled us to get the consistent design quality and reliability from the engineering software without sacrificing Daman output style and format," said Matt Giloth, WinWork Manager. "While custom programming usually gets you exactly what you need, maintenance and re-writes of the custom code because of changing requirements becomes a limiting factor over a period of time. This was beginning to occur with our application."

He adds, "With our deep-rooted company focus on continuous improvement, we recently used our knowledge of Lean principles and 5S to determine how best to upgrade our engineering and design system without incurring additional costs or increasing capital expenditures during a time of global economic turmoil."

Mark Pettifor, Daman Systems Administrator, noted that, "We decided that the best way to proceed was not to fix and update but, rather, eliminate the need for the custom programming altogether, without losing the output format we require at Daman. Having a 20-year relationship with our engineering software company has become the foundation for a great working relationship. We have been working with them to get the output we need directly from their software. This is actually happening with no capital investment – just our labor and theirs."

For Daman, the benefit is 20% - 30% gain in efficiency: less software, no custom code, and improved software tools by allowing us to use the most current versions of the engineering software. The benefit for our engineering software partner is in the ability to offer all of their customers a real and useful upgrade that is flexible enough to accommodate almost any required output format.

The result: one software, no custom code, and ease of IT maintenance of systems and hardware.

Pettifor also noted that any upgrades are always tied into 5S.* "Getting rid of non-value-added work is key, so as we've been able to move away from extra CAD steps, we have made more resources available to our customers."

In addition to technological improvements, adhering to the 5S tenet of having information all in one place as much as possible, designers can accomplish almost everything without leaving their desks – stopping to find information from someone else or going to where it might be stored in another part of the building has been virtually eliminated.

"They save time by having answers at their fingertips and all in one place, thus reducing the chance for errors. Having a system of internal networks, links and a logical approach to data storage is also an example of low-cost improvements that have a high level of return on investment," said Giloth.

Getting more work done without spending more money.

"The process for improvement is always the same, but the application is unique. NOT unique is the mindset that, by using our own resources, 'we don't have to pay an outside vendor.' At Daman, we always think 'What can WE do?' In a working environment where past success has led to a willingness to not only accept change, but encourage it, believing we can meet our own high expectations is business as usual, not an amazing occurrence," said Giloth.

He adds, "When you combine that self-belief with a vested



Keeping continuous improvement at the forefront with 5S

- SORTING tools, materials and anything in the workplace in the work area. Keeping only essential items.
- STRAIGHTEN (or Set in Order) so essential items are where they need to be.
- SWEEPING (figuratively or literally) to clean up and restore order.
- STANDARDIZING work practices in a consistent way.
- SUSTAINING and maintaining the new order.

interest in the successful outcome of improvement projects, you get a level of quality and success that you just can't buy from outside. Whenever possible, we want to utilize our own resources and skills to make improvements."

On the other hand, being part of a mutually beneficial collaboration with a professional custom software company has its advantages. "Because of our long-standing respect for each other, we enjoy a relationship that allows us quick turnaround time when we ask for help. If we had a technical question for many other companies, we could have a long wait time," said Matt Henkler, IT Manager.

Giloth notes that both companies have come a long way since pooling their resources. "Along the way, we have been able to get past many hurdles and roadblocks. Problems became opportunities, not frustrations. It's been a learning process as we worked to upgrade our software and make it fit our needs. We chose to be in business with the right people," said Giloth.

Relationships like that will allow Daman to weather the storm of uncertainty – not by denying the reality of the business climate – but by working smarter with the resources it has available.

*For details, visit <http://www.daman.com> and go to the Newsletters/Issue 32, "Improving efficiency by the numbers: 7 wastes and 5S improvements."

Steady progress results in new NFPA standard

THE WHEELS OF PROGRESS SOMETIMES TURN SLOWLY. SO SLOWLY, IN FACT, THAT EVEN THOUGH the National Fluid Power Association (NFPA) project undertaken by its T3.5 group is final and will be published this year, the project is still active.

Tom Weinkauf, who wears many hats at Daman as a distributor services team member and project engineer, also serves NFPA as Chairman of Committee T3.5, Chairman of Technical Committee T1.0, and Chairman of US/TAG to TC131/SC5/Working Group 2. At the Paris meeting, he was designated a “US expert,” with the task of advising other US experts.

Ten years ago, Tom Weinkauf attended an ISO meeting in Paris where French committee members requested a standard for screw-in threaded cartridge valve cavities. After lengthy discussions and, ultimately, cooperation from countries around the world, the standard has been adopted by NFPA.



He reports that “despite spinning for nearly 10 years since its proposal, and strong opposition from one European country representative, the project passed ballot of a majority of countries. Since screw-in threaded cartridge cavities are mainly an American product, the consensus was that it should be an NFPA standard. The next step was to get agreement from manufacturers.”

At a meeting in London last fall, a template for an ISO version of document TR17209 was written. Because of Weinkauf’s work, he is the US project leader. “Now that the standard is final, the ISO project is active. It will be a Technical Report (TR) instead of a ‘standard’ because the inclusion of inch threads disqualifies it in the ISO world,” he said.

More work is still needed.

Because of the differences between the way ISO and US standards are written, the TR will give the dimensional detail so that the cavities can be identified and inspected worldwide, to provide a single source familiar to users of ISO documents. Weinkauf is now drafting an international standard level report that countries need to finalize. “Internationals have to agree as a national body through their companies. This may take three to five years to accomplish,” he said.

Weinkauf’s participation in NFPA and ISO is a direct result of Daman’s support for its industry, as well as support for its employees, by allowing Tom to spend time away from his job to travel and complete committee work.

Department grows with added personnel and technology

IN HARD TIMES, COMPANY GROWTH DEPENDS ON THE ABILITY TO SERVE CUSTOMERS WHO NEED design work. When we look at how to achieve that growth by adding personnel, we look at several factors: Does the person know the “nuts and bolts” of design? Is he or she “teachable”? Does the person exhibit the soft skills that fit our culture?

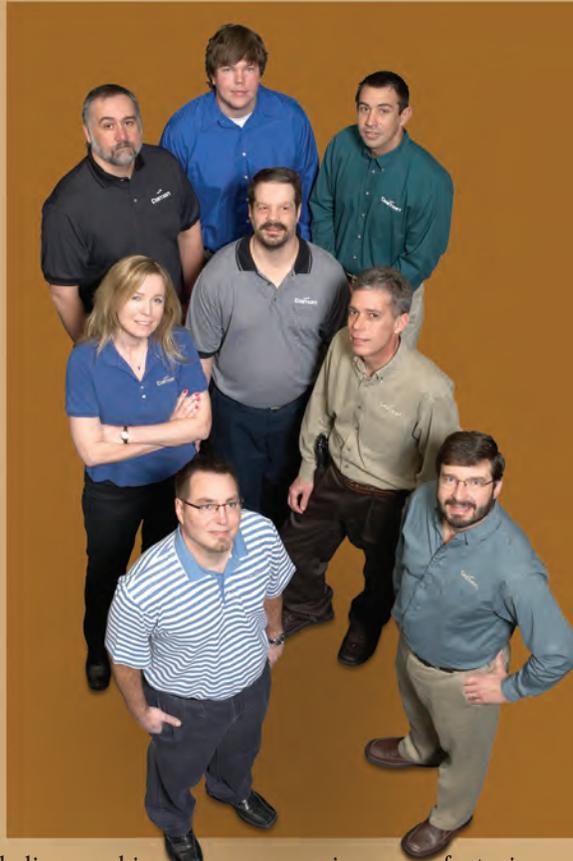
Another choice we often make is to hire from within the Daman family – a tact that has served us well in the past.

We recently added Trevor Henkler, the brother of IT Manager Matt Henkler. Trevor comes to us from Purdue University, with an engineering background and experience in a number of other areas. According to Matt Giloth, WinWork Manager, “Trevor isn’t afraid to get his hands dirty. He loves complex problems and has a curiosity and focus to get to the bottom of any problem.”

He further noted that, while Trevor has no specific manifold design experience, “We always look first to intellect and a willingness to learn. With those two criteria, we can teach new hires what they need to know about Daman. They ‘understand the process.’ It makes us a better design team. In fact, our department is comprised of people from the quality field, assembly line machine programming, manufacturing production, stamping plant and just out of high school.”

In addition to the human factor, the other key to department growth is the continued modification of our software programs. (See related article on pages 2-3.) Those upgrades alone have allowed Daman to “gain” a designer, not by adding another person, but by efficient use of resources.

“As we combine the abilities of our people with the technology we have available, we are determined to provide the best products and services for our customers,” said Giloth.



Department growth takes place because of two factors: intelligent people and cutting-edge technology. We never want to exclude the human factor, but we also never want to fall behind because of outdated software. Our goal is to find a successful combination that adds the most value to the service we provide our customers.

Saying goodbye to passive communication with “Tour de Force”

PASSIVE COMMUNICATION JUST DOESN'T WORK FOR US. FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN WE HAVE A QUESTION or problem, and then call a business and get voicemail, we have to wait for an answer. As a caller, that makes us unhappy. And businesses cannot afford to have unhappy customers. That's why we have eliminated “the wait.”

“In today's environment, everyone is ‘mobile,’ and there is no excuse for not getting an answer **now**. Callers to Daman have a variety of options, thanks to Tour de Force (TDF), a software program that offers a variety of ways to stay in touch,” said Gordon Weiler, Sales Manager. “The name itself literally means ‘feat of strength,’ and that's what it provides: strong communication performance.”

It's not too late to update your data in our system.

Weiler said that, thanks to a 30 percent response to an appeal in a previous newsletter, Daman has been able to clean up its contact information, making customer service more efficient and proactive. (Numbers vary, but an often-quoted response rate* to direct mail is 2-3 percent, making Daman customers far above average. If you did not receive a form or have not yet responded, please contact us.)

“The beauty of TDF is that, when we're on the road, we have access to all information we need in one place. If I type in an email address, I can see a log of all outgoing and incoming email. I can also see quotes and RFQs, see if we sent a quote or already have a purchase order. Then when I talk to the customer, I'm prepared with up-to-the-minute data,” said Weiler.

The TDF is integrated into Microsoft Office and Outlook 2007, so users simply click a toolbar for access to features such as account management, support management, task management, contact management, expense management, project management and template management.

The Sales Department has been the pilot group, but plans call for other Daman departments to begin using TDF. Feedback has been extremely positive.

**See www.marketingprof.com for more statistics.*

The sales group has embraced a tool that eliminates databases and streamlines communications between Daman and its customers. No more looking here, there and everywhere when someone calls the office. Software makes responses fast – and easy.



Relying on ourselves

By Larry M. Davis

Wouldn't it be nice if, within our lifetime, our government would find the fortitude to develop a focused sense of purpose, learn to truly collaborate, and come to some long-term agreement as to what is in the best interest of our nation?

When an organizational culture emerges that expects to make major improvements through the effective use of collaboration – and with focused business purpose – remarkable, sustainable things happen. Our markets tend to be savvy and more demanding of quality product, support and service. Our markets expect more value for less investment. Yet, we as consumers of government tolerate ineptness, greed, and incompetency.

The private sector will do the heavy lifting and will be the engine that will right our economic ship. If only the government were the deep, calm waters in which to sail, instead of the submerged rocks and mines, and unpredictable typhoons.

As always, there is more to do.




Paring down is more than a New Year's resolution.

We don't mean "paring down" as in "going on a diet." Our resolution relates to budget. As you have read throughout this newsletter, we are committed to using our resources well, gaining efficiencies where we can and adding people in areas of growth. As for paring down, we have gone from 15 servers to just two that now run at 98% efficiency. See page 8 for more information.

We're looking for video footage or still shots of hydraulic applications

to use in our training programs as we educate employees about the end use of our manifolds. We've also found that our employees are fascinated and excited when they see the results of their labor. We would like to be able to loop video for them.

The second time around.

A "Did You Know?" tidbit in our newsletter issue 31 chronicled Tom Weinkauff's disappointment at having his October 2007 run in the Chicago Marathon cut short by organizers because of extreme heat. He vowed to try again in October 2008. We're happy to report that Tom and fellow designer Julie Alexander and her husband, Mark, all finished the race. "The weather was extremely hot again last October, but the city was prepared this time with plenty of water and cooling stations." As he did before, he ran as part of a charity run for the American Liver Foundation. He is considering running in the South Bend, Indiana, Sunburst Marathon this spring.

Spotlight on Scott Austin

If you're ever a contestant on TV's "Who Wants to Be a Millionaire," make sure you have Scott as a "lifeline." He's a rock 'n roll enthusiast whom some have called "a walking encyclopedia of facts."

"Before I started working at Daman, I spent time in Dallas. I spent five years with Daman the first time, and a few years later, was rehired and have been here for the last 11 years, 16 in total."

Scott has always been intrigued by music. As a kid, he fascinated his parents by learning the complete lyrics to songs on the radio. He has music in his genes, as his dad was a musician. Scott has played in a garage band and has spent many nights practicing until dawn.

While in Dallas, he was a roadie for "Destiny," a rock 'n roll band that played in the Dallas-Fort Worth area. Throughout his life, he estimates he has seen upward of 100 concerts, ranging from Johnny Cash to Metallica.

His 500 albums include Frank Sinatra, Clapton, and the Beatles. His playing days are behind him now, but his passion is still apparent, as he reads about music in books and magazines, and has recently finished an article about the history of ZZ Top.

If a question comes up in the genre of music, Scott is your guy.



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Resources on demand are part of cost-saving plan

IF YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT VIRTUALIZATION IS OR CAN'T EXPLAIN HOW IT LETS COMPANIES RESPOND TO MARKET dynamics, that's okay. All you need to know is that IT specialists at Daman understand every word.

What you do need to know is this: It's a customer resource and it saves money by providing resources on demand.

While most companies have a large number of computer servers running around the clock using only 10 percent of their capacity, it is now possible for Daman to run its servers at 98 percent efficiency.

Multiple operating systems run concurrently on a single physical computer and share hardware resources with each other. It's called a "virtual server environment" that eliminates hardware dependencies; i.e., it's "in a cloud" that can be accessed from anywhere.

Saving money and going green at the same time.

Using virtualization technology means that Daman can go from having 15 physical servers to just two. And by eliminating large amounts of aging software and hardware, and allowing server additions and modifications at the click of a mouse, it becomes part of the Lean philosophy used throughout the business.

"There's always a learning curve for our users, but there is no resistance because they're used to upgrades that make their jobs easier," said Matt Henkler, IT Manager. "And Mark Pettifor, Systems Administrator, has spent time fixing code, making the programs faster than ever."

Customers benefit because their data is always current and readily available, and Daman employees can concentrate on innovative solutions instead of computer infrastructure.



In-house computer expertise at Daman is nothing new. Upgrades are expected – and appreciated – and employees receive quick response from someone right on the premises. There's no waiting for a mega-software company to respond at a later date.



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