

Partnership Forums an instant success

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Launched in late 2003, Partnership Forum has already proved its worth as a regular means for Wärtsilä India and its clients to air matters of mutual and topical interest. The Forums have led to effective action, better practices and new products. Their future is assured.

Wärtsilä India's purpose in launching its Partnership Forums is to facilitate and enhance 'customer delight' through frequent interaction, commitment to action and sharing of best operating practices. This objective complies closely with Wärtsilä Service's mission to support its customers' business by optimizing their operations and product lifecycle in partnership with its highly committed organization.

The forums are held every six months at nine locations around the country. They are also supported by a bulletin circulated to customers every three months.

Partnership Forum focuses on:

- Identifying customer needs and getting feedback on areas of improvement
- Formulating Wärtsilä and customer teams to work on improvement areas related to plant efficiency, maintenance and operation
- Sharing actions taken by Wärtsilä on customer feedback gathered in the earlier rounds of the forum

- Sharing the best practices adopted by Wärtsilä and customers; success stories and case studies.

Each Forum generally comprises a small group of participants to ensure focused discussion. The participation of the process owners from Wärtsilä India is encouraged to enhance the level of internal communication.

Turning queries into action

A key feature of the Forum is registering customer queries as action points in the customer's presence. These are then published in the next quarterly bulletin with information on the completion status of the action points as well as information on new products launched by Wärtsilä India.

Two Partnership Forums have been held and four bulletins published so far. Although just one year old, this valuable form of interaction has already generated several new products. These include

overhaul options, extended inspection agreements, a governor workshop, a heat recovery system, a fuel optimizer product, and an energy optimizer product.

Trophy for excellence

A more recent initiative is a trophy to reward excellence in power plant performance. The Forum has also addressed the long-standing demand for benchmark data on specific fuel consumption and specific lube oil consumption; data on these issues has since been collected from customers through a questionnaire included with the last bulletin. The power plant with the best performance in these parameters is awarded the trophy during the forum.

Partnership Forum is of course an evolving concept. A process guide has been circulated to help the organizers plan, arrange and execute the Forums and cross-functional teams have been formed to maximize their effectiveness.

The response from customers has been encouraging and Partnership Forum has firmly established itself as a way of building and deepening steadfast and mutually beneficial relationships. That can only lead to growth – for Wärtsilä India and its customers. ■

