

PROFILE

TRANSCAT, INC.

By Russ Willcutt



This company's Wind Turbine Tools business segment provides products and services that are tailored to the wind industry.

WHEN TRANSCAT ACQUIRED Westcon in 2008, it came with a pleasant surprise: a new market direction. “We were interested in the company because it had a quality calibration service lab and a product distribution warehouse for its test and measurement instrumentation located in the Pacific Northwest,” according to Jay Woychick, vice president of wind energy commercial operations. “What we didn’t know was that they were also involved in servicing the wind industry. The owner didn’t want to mention that until he knew we were serious.”

They were quite serious, as a matter of fact. So much so that Transcat purchased Wind Turbine Tools (WTT) a mere two years later, in December of 2010. In addition to a calibration lab, WTT also brought torque and hydraulic expertise into the mix. “From my perspective, there are very few companies, if any, that can provide the depth and breadth of products that we offer in addition to the calibration services that go with it,” Woychick says. “We also have been named the factory authorized U.S. calibration and repair service center for Stahlwille tools. The whole Transcat team pulled together to earn Stahlwille’s trust, which we see as quite an endorsement.”

From an external standpoint, Transcat’s sales team is responsible for meeting with major wind companies including OEMs, utilities, and third-party providers to ascertain their needs, which are then shared with other Transcat departments. Working with calibration operations, call center staff, and the purchasing department, Transcat’s sales team makes sure each department is crystal clear on what needs to be delivered to their wind clients and how to do it. “Our calibration operations need to understand customer specific calibration requirements,” Woychick says, “and our call center personnel require training to be prepared to answer any question a wind customer might ask, while purchasing focuses on the importance of short lead times and matters of a logistical nature.”

As for sales, Transcat’s wind representatives, having over 50 years of calibration and tooling experience, are conversant not only on the calibration services provided, but also products used in customized kitting. As any wind professional knows – especially those involved in construction, tower erection, and O&M work – if you don’t have the right tools and supplies for the job, then the project stalls and you’re losing money. Transcat meets with

its clients, learns exactly which tools they require, makes suggestions when appropriate, and then adjusts inventory to allow for quick kit shipments to job sites throughout North America.

“Every customer plan we develop is different,” Woychick explains. “For instance, a lot of the companies we work with are headquartered overseas, so they’re familiar with foreign tools. One customer was experiencing long lead times for repairs. We were able to get the tools’ specifications and then embarked on a ‘form, fit, and function’ program to change them over to tools that have a network of repair facilities in the U.S., because that’s going to be a lot easier for them over the long term. We worked with one particular OEM in that way and switched out 10 different tools that are working a lot better for them. But we do this for domestic clients as well, suggesting the best tools for their application based on our years of experience. Sometimes a tool that’s more expensive to purchase actually saves money in the long run because it doesn’t require as much maintenance as a cheaper tool would.”

In addition to providing its partners with the right tools, Transcat also helps them manage inventory with its CalTrak online asset management system. The system makes it possible to check on the status or location of equipment that has been shipped to a lab for calibration. Data sheets, certificates, and asset listings are available to be viewed or downloaded 24/7. Progress can be tracked, and custom calibration intervals and maintenance schedules are posted to ensure that tools and equipment are kept current. In addition, CalTrak automatically issues a reminder when equipment is due for recalibration. Data is certified to comply with the strictest quality standards, and all data sheets are controlled, standardized documents. “And it’s CFR compliant, which means that you have electronic signatures and paperless certs,” Woychick says. “For example, if a site is being audited they can go online, and since our system is CFR compliant, the auditors will accept the fact that everything’s electronic.”

With 17 calibration centers located strategically across the country, Transcat is well-positioned to meet the demanding requirements of the wind industry. “We have grown in a very thoughtful way, making sure our acquisitions make sense and that the companies joining the Transcat family meshed well with our core competencies and philosophy,” Woychick says. “We look forward to supporting this growing industry for many years to come.”