

Case study

TOMAL® AB (Sweden) identifies certification as a key business strategy during major economic changes.



TOMAL® AB (Sweden) has identified certification as a key element of business strategy, delivering competitive advantage and ensuring success during major changes to the business and the global economic climate.

Quality and LRQA Business Assurance at TOMAL® AB

Quality assurance is a strategic task within TOMAL®, representing one of the key policies that drive the long-term success of the business. Responsibility lies with every employee to continuously seek ways to improve working practices, product quality and customer service. Teddy Eriksson, Managing Director, explains: "Over the years, company ownership has changed and the balance of market sectors that we address has also changed, however, our focus on quality has remained consistent throughout, which is a major reason behind our continued success."

Certification - driven by customer demand

Since the company's foundation, the management of TOMAL® has been focused on customer satisfaction and has recognised the importance of a quality management system (QMS) in continually achieving that goal. With customers all over the world, TOMAL® recognised at an early stage that certification by a globally recognised body was key to the successful recruitment of new customers.

The benefits of ISO 9001

As a result of the logistics review process, TOMAL® has established a database for chemicals and metering systems. This enables TOMAL® staff to quickly identify the most appropriate technology for new customer requirements, based on previous experience. The benefits of this are: faster response to customers; consistent reliable product proposals and better pricing. As part of the assessment process, LRQA's

themed surveillance approach identified customer surveys as an area of potential improvement. The resulting formal customer satisfaction survey involves the distribution of a questionnaire followed by a telephone call from one of the TOMAL® sales engineers. The surveys have been conducted over a number of years and Anders Carlsson, Quality/Technical Manager, reports a continual trend of improvement in customer satisfaction levels.

TOMAL® has also implemented a rigorous product quality control programme as part of the overall QMS and monitoring data also indicates a trend of continuous improvement. Around 40% of TOMAL®'s costs are purchased goods so the quality and timeliness of purchases is vitally important.

TOMAL® has therefore established a quality-driven contract review process with key suppliers to focus on performance, quality, delivery and price. Shortened lead times have also improved efficiency and lowered operational costs.

TOMAL®'s training procedures have been standardised which has reduced the time required for training new staff and improved quality. This has also contributed to the training of staff from sister companies in the ProMinent Group.

As a result of the QMS TOMAL® has been able to respond to customer needs faster and more efficiently. Furthermore LRQA certification has helped to secure new business, particularly with those sectors that demand demonstrable high quality within their procurement process. Additionally, the establishment of the QMS has made it easier for TOMAL® to respond quickly to enquiries from export customers with complex contractual demands, which has provided TOMAL® with a clear advantage over its competitors.

About TOMAL®

Founded in the late 1950's TOMAL® is one of the world's leading companies specialising in the design and manufacture of custom made dosing equipment for solid materials.

Located near the south west coast of Sweden, TOMAL® manufactures mechanical metering equipment for distribution worldwide to a range of industries including water, paper, chemical, energy, food and others.

The numbers

- Employs over 55 people.
- More than 80% of sales are for export.
- Ownership: ProMinent Dosiertechnik GmbH from early 2009



Website

www.tomal.se

Standards achieved

- ISO 9001:2008 Quality Management System (QMS)



QMS at TOMAL®

TOMAL® uses the certification process to help standardise and streamline business processes. For example: templates for drawings, costing exercises and quotations have been created; internal and external training processes have been formalised; checklists for contract reviews and design reviews have been standardised and standardised manuals have been designed for all products.

LRQA's Business Assurance approach to TOMAL®'s QMS has delivered tangible benefits to the company; comparative analysis of areas that deliver added value has revealed those targets for improvement that will have the greatest effect on the business.



Using QMS as a tool for improvement, Anders Carlsson says, "The latest improvement project is designed to reduce the time between an order and payment. This will involve every department within the company and further improve customer satisfaction and overall profitability."

Why LRQA

In recognition of LRQA's reputation, TOMAL® began work on its QMS in partnership with LRQA in the early 1990's.

ISO 9001 certification was achieved in 1995 and TOMAL® is now one of LRQA Sweden's longest standing clients.

The TOMAL® brand is built upon on many years of experience in delivering high quality solutions to customers' solids metering needs. It was therefore logical for TOMAL® to partner with a certification body such as LRQA that would reinforce the trust and reliability that customers associate with the TOMAL® brand.

Anders Carlsson who is responsible for TOMAL®'s QMS describes the relationship with LRQA as a "tight co-operation" adding, "We regard LRQA as a catalyst for our improvement work; the LRQA staff know our business process very well which led to them identifying potential areas of improvement, that have resulted in a positive value to TOMAL® customers."

Working with LRQA

Summarising the benefits of working with LRQA to continuously improve the company's QMS, Teddy Eriksson says, "Despite considerable shifts in the market and changes in ownership and management, the QMS has helped to ensure that the company operates efficiently with a clear focus on customer satisfaction. Without LRQA participation in the ongoing development of the QMS and ISO 9001 certification, the improvements that we have made would have been much slower."

"We recognise that every product we deliver is an opportunity for repeat business or a customer recommendation and we are happy to acknowledge the work that LRQA has undertaken in helping us to ensure that our processes are all aimed at achieving that goal."



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Anders Carlsson, TOMAL Quality/Technical Manager