

Echo Evaluation: EPCO's Easy



Doug Maasen,
*Echo Vice President of
Sales and Marketing*

Why does Council Bluffs, Iowa-based Echo Electrical Supply buy more than 100 line items from EPCO? According to Echo Vice President of Sales and Marketing Doug Maasen, it's because:

"EPCO belongs in a category with the distributor's other top six vendors when it comes to service and being easy to do business with. Since I joined Echo in 1993, we've continued to grow our relationship with EPCO because of the company's top-notch service and marketing support.

It starts at the top with Jack Schuster. He's a terrific communicator and innovator. He's very proactive about trying to improve product performance and design as well as product presentation. EPCO's creative product promotions really dress the products up—and at no additional cost. A perfect example is the step stool promotion. Grounding products are just not exciting, but that promotion attracted a lot of attention, and our customers loved it.

It's apparent that EPCO believes in their products, too. While their no-risk (purchasing) guarantee is comforting, we've never returned a single product.

We understand your frustration over Good Products being discontinued, so...

EPCO's Got Your Temp String Lighting Covered

Underwriters Laboratory (UL) has eliminated the use of insulation piercing lampholder sockets and flat cable for temporary string lights as of March 1st. The NEC does not prevent selling any existing flat cord temporary cordlights with a UL label that have been manufactured prior to March 1st, so we produced plenty of our extremely popular flat cord Contractor Grade CordLights (catalog P/N: 16000) prior to the deadline. Plus, we revved up production of our Deluxe CordLight™ (catalog P/N: 16010).

We understand that the new regulation is forcing you to adopt a more expensive, heavier-jacket product—a product that at one point was the standard in the industry. We're narrowing the pricing gap between both models to ease your transition and make our superior Deluxe CordLight even more attractive to you and your customers.

The Deluxe CordLight has been a popular product for over 10 years because it:

- Conserves expensive, limited warehouse space—contains 48 units to a pallet vs. 24 or 32.
- Features the industry's most durable living hinge on its cage.
- Innovates temporary cord lighting with the only patented one-step, tool-less, snap-in cage-to-socket attachment.
- Resists 150-watt bulb heat with sturdy plastic socket and cages.

For more information, contact your sales representative.

Key changes to the UL standard for Temporary Lighting Strings:

11.2 "An attachment plug, cord connector, lampholder, splices, or tap shall adhere tightly to the cable or flexible cord insulation at the point where it enters the fitting so as to exclude moisture."

16.4 "A flexible cord employed in a temporary lighting string shall be suitable for outdoor use and have a serviceability rating equal to or greater than that of hard usage type cords such as SJW, SJEW, SJOW, SJEOW, SJTW, or equivalent power supply cords."

Helping EPCO Reps Help You

NEMRA's Study Points to Need for More Efficient Communication

NEMRA's Study — "Eliminating Wasteful Activities in the Representative and Manufacturer Sales and Marketing Channel Study" revealed many opportunities for manufacturers to help their representatives and distributors. Although we are pleased that the findings validate our foresight in proactively addressing many of these important issues before the study, we are continually looking for new ways to improve your customer experience.

High Performance Standards for Reps

The study cited the lack of a standard set of performance measures to evaluate manufacturers and manufacturers' representatives as one of the most important issues described by distributors. In the absence of such measures, EPCO has been using a set of performance metrics for our sales reps which is clearly and consistently communicated to our representatives.

These evaluation standards, which extend well beyond revenue, ensure a high quality customer experience for our distributors. Some of these metrics include **Distributor Promotion Participation**, **Product Mix Sold** and **New Product Sales**. Our three regional sales managers reinforce these standards on a quarterly basis. They are also available to personally coach those reps that request time with them and provide a coaching report with suggestions. In addition, EPCO recognizes our top five reps at our annual rep meeting at NEMRA.

Accountable to Our Customers

On the other side of our demand chain, we set high performance standards for EPCO and are accountable to our customers for meeting these standards. We pride ourselves on high rankings in our customers' vendor evaluations and have shared a few in the (EPCO) Edge. But we recognize the opportunity for continuous improvement, so we consciously strive to earn your business.

Communications

The survey indicated that 73 percent of manufacturer representatives waste time on communications. We respect our reps' time and would rather have them spend time sharing their knowledge and expertise with customers. That's why we don't ask them for activity reports. We assume the responsibility of tracking their performance, and share that information with them on a regular basis.

Marketing

In light of the NEMRA study citing poor product launches, inaccurate information, and narrow lead times as rep concerns, our reps (and distributors) appreciate our value-added marketing promotions that boost end-user sales. We receive high marks for our thoughtful, well-planned product launches as well, such as the TIGER 400™ HID Temp Light.



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To make sure that you receive future mailing of EPCO's Customer Newsletter let us know if there are any changes that should be made to the mailing label. Please complete the following and FAX to:

Engineered Products Company, 800-336-2801, Attention Marketing.

- Please Correct the Name, Title and/or Address.
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