SEAL FAILURE APP: FLOWSERVE

THE SETUP

Ask anyone who works in an industrial plant about common causes of equipment downtime and they'll surely include mechanical seals on their short list. That's because mechanical seals are just about anywhere you find a rotating shaft—which is just about everywhere in an industrial environment.

Many are designed to isolate all types of fluids and gases under extreme conditions, so they wear out and fail from time to time. And figuring out why a seal fails and correcting that problem is often equal parts science, experience and guesswork.

Flowserve engineers and scientists set out to end the frustrations caused by repeated seal failures through an ambitious project that consolidated the knowledge, experience and science available within the company into a single resource. The resultant guide documented 61 failure modes and provided tips for identifying causes, options for prevention and a library of high-quality photos for reference. The guide was unprecedented in the industry. Only one problem—it was a printed guide, which greatly limited their ability to leverage this invaluable resource.

IT'S GOT TO BE AN APP

Flowserve and TriComB2B discussed the need for a better solution—one that could use this subject matter as a means of enhancing the company's reputation as the industry's foremost expert on mechanical seal technology while driving demand for its aftermarket business. In summary, we saw an opportunity to build the industry's first seal failure analysis app.

You can find the end result at www.SealFailureApp.com: the industry's only digital guide to identifying and preventing the major causes of seal failure. Registered users gain access to a dynamic resource set that includes:
- A seal failure diagnostics tool
- Corrective action and prevention options based on failure mode
- An Ask the Expert utility that allows users to upload photos and seek guidance on a repair or maintenance issue—automatically directed to the geographically appropriate response center
- Videos and other technical resources
- A user-friendly experience on PC, tablet or smartphone

CASE STUDIES OF DISTINCTION

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THE CAMPAIGN

The next question was user adoption, and promoting the app on a limited budget required creativity and efficient utilization of existing assets. First, the client's sales force was briefed through training webinars and subsequently encouraged to share the app with their customers.

To start getting the word out, a special campaign was integrated into the client's marketing automation platform where customers and prospects were sent special announcements and video content about the app. We also leveraged the client's extensive social media following with an ongoing blitz of tips, video clips and announcements pertaining to the app (#SealFailureAnalysis). Finally, a digital media campaign—focused on audience-specific outlets, technical forums, blogs, targeted email and web page sponsorships—continuously promotes the app.

Future plans include expanded search marketing and content marketing techniques to place longer-form, seal failure content in front of target audiences via videos, speaking engagements, webinars and public relations efforts.

The app has seen excellent user engagement; registered users approached 1,000 after only weeks of promotion and adoption continues to be strong. Very importantly, the app provides a platform for strengthening the company's position as a thought leader in this space while providing a powerful means of attracting prospects and customers who can be nurtured over time.

CASE STUDIES