



21.04.2020 / Rita Vogt

Always available for our customers at the spare parts service center

Just a few weeks ago, I wouldn't have thought it possible that we would ever work in two-shifts at the spare parts service center. However, due to the rapid spread of the coronavirus, we at Muller Martini have also taken measures to ensure that our customers continue to be supplied with urgently needed spare and wear parts.

Every day, we send about 170 parcels to customers across the world – around the clock. 90 percent of the orders are dispatched on the same day. Until a week ago, we hardly saw any fall in spare parts orders. However, since many customers are now reporting a reduced order intake and it's difficult for our service technicians to travel to customers, this is also affecting our orders. Therefore, it's now even more important for us to deliver all incoming orders quickly and for spare and wear parts needed for a machine failure to reach customers on time. Our main goal is to ensure that all customer machines can continue to produce despite the crisis. We have implemented numerous measures to this end.

What has changed at our end? At the beginning of the pandemic, the most drastic change for me was that our warehouse crew was divided into two groups. The first group worked from 6 a.m. to 2 p.m., the second group from 2 p.m. to 10 p.m. And in the office, some employees are now working from home. This meant we could ensure that if anyone did fall ill, the entire team wouldn't have to go into quarantine and we'd still be able to deliver our customers' orders.

It's important that the work in incoming goods, parts' storage, order administration, picking, packing and shipping of the parts is ensured at all times. To guarantee that orders are processed quickly and that spare parts are sent on their way to the customer as soon as possible, we work in a well-rehearsed team. Routine is an important factor here, and that's why it's also our goal to ensure that nobody drops out of the team. It's not so easy to replace the different roles from one day to the next.

We have changed shifts every week. The shift change was particularly important, as a brief alignment had to be made, so we could successfully reach the daily target. The challenge was to observe social distancing throughout, to make sure nobody got infected. That's why only the team leader or his deputy did the handover when changing shifts.

In addition to the numerous hygiene regulations prescribed by the public health office, we disinfect the door handles and the access terminal in the shipping area. We also have to wash our hands thoroughly every other hour. Since awareness has been ensured, it has become normal to spend coffee and lunch breaks separately.

Because of the current situation, reduced working hours are currently in place. In these circumstances, I wouldn't have wanted to miss the valuable experience we have gained from the two-shift model. It has shown us that we can turn the whole department and our organization around at short notice while maintaining the same high level of quality awareness. So far, we have managed to satisfy our customers despite minor delays that were communicated at all times.

I am interested to see how the situation develops. Even today, some deliveries can be delayed by one day, with express deliveries being treated as a priority. In the medium term, we expect an increase in the number of missing parts and longer delivery times, as our suppliers are also experiencing increasing difficulties in supplying parts. Despite this challenging situation, however, we are doing everything in our power to serve our customers in the best possible way.

In any case, you can always count on our team!

Best wishes,

Rita Vogt
Warehouse employee at the spare parts service center
Müller Martini