

Customer survey results: We're listening

It's all very well to refocus and restructure our company because we think it's what our customers will want, but there's no point doing anything unless we know what they want.

Which is why in March and April last year, more than 600 S&T customers from across eight business divisions around New Zealand were interviewed and asked about price, product, sales service, delivery and relationships.

Here's what we discovered:

- › Across the board, customer expectations were:
 - 16% exceeded
 - 38% fully met
 - 44% not fully met
 - 1% not met at all.
- › S&T still out-performed its competitors.
- › The main influence of a customer's expectations was 'relationships' (44%).
- › Our key strength and the one we perform best at is 'relationships'.
- › You told us you'd like to see us be more innovative, but our range and the fact that we deliver products that met expectations was highlighted as a strength.
- › In terms of in-person service, you told us we're great at providing answers and solutions when asked, but could do better by adding more value to our clients businesses.
- › Our delivery strength was rectifying delivery problems.
- › We demonstrate that nothing is 'too much trouble' and you told us this was a strength, but we're not always seen to be 'striving to improve our business'.

One Company in action: Building a giant Meccano set

Wellington-based heating and ventilation specialist, HotChilly have been talking temperature and fresh air since 1987. Formerly called CES (Controlled Environment Systems), HotChilly has a built a strong reputation within their industry and throughout New Zealand.

HotChilly's highly qualified and experienced team of around 65 staff carry out a wide variety of mechanical service installations ranging from multi-story building air conditioning systems, process cooling systems, through to installing heat pumps and ventilation systems in residential homes.

The mind boggles when you think about how much ducting, piping and fittings passes through HotChilly's doors each year, so it's not hard to see why they've had a long-standing relationship with S&T for many years.

Craig Gadsby, is the founder and managing director of HotChilly. He's been a S&T customer since he started the business, and is pleased to see the various divisions of S&T coming together to provide a more streamlined procurement process for his staff.

iCare

iCare: Because we care

iCare is our new Health and Safety programme at S&T. Safety underpins everything we're trying to achieve with the new One Company operating model and it's meant an increase in the focus on safety across our business.

Here in the Health and Safety team, the One Company changes are significant, which is a good thing for both our staff and our customers.

We've expanded our Health and Safety team significantly and it's important to understand is the positive impact our bigger team will make around the country at all the depots and stores you or your drivers visit.

This will mean that the management and staff at each site S&T operates will have a lot more support for Health and Safety projects and compliance. We'll be rolling up our sleeves and working hard alongside managers to make real improvements across the board.

I appreciate it seems a little strange to be talking about internal Health and Safety practices in an external customer newsletter, but we believe it's important that all our customers understand the increased importance we're placing on safety. But it makes sense: if our staff are safe, our customers are safe. Simple, but true.

Alan Downes
Manager, Health and Safety

"The relationship I have with S&T has been solid for many years. We use a wide range of their products – steel sheet is a major component in the ducting systems we manufacture and more recently, we've started to purchase piping systems like Aquatherm and Sikla as well. It's been good to see S&T's product lines expand significantly over the past few years," explains Craig.

"From a customer relationship perspective, S&T has always been pretty responsive. They don't always get it right, but when things go wrong, they're able to set things straight quickly. Their afterhours service is superb."

Craig and his team at HotChilly have been heavily involved in the new Willis Central development (incorporating Telecom Towers) in central Wellington. It's due to be completed shortly and, thanks to the significant size of the project, HotChilly were only allowed a small window of opportunity to install the ducting control room before the building was closed in and they'd lose access for installing framing and piping.

"We were very constrained in terms of time, and we were looking for a product that would be fast and efficient to install. Generally, we pre-fabricate our supports to specifications, but S&T recommended Sikla's Framo 80 box section, and it has made a real difference to us in terms of meeting our deadlines," says Mike Renn, HotChilly's Project Manager.

Sikla's Framo 80, is a box section support system that is commonly used as a secondary structural support for ducting and piping. It's commonly referred to as big boys Meccano as its self forming screwed connection eliminates the need to weld. The box section is finished with a hot dipped galvanised coating and is fully adjustable, giving you room for error. Its assembly does not require qualified staff, offering a reduction in labour costs; anyone can put this product together, these are just some of the benefits enjoyed.

"It's a very robust product and it's amazing to see how quick it actually is to install," says Jared Cottle, National Specialist – Piping Supports (Sikla) at S&T. "Sikla offers a fantastic product range and we believe there's real scope for use in commercial projects of all sizes, here in New Zealand. Sikla's products are designed to dramatically reduced installation time of which has been invaluable on the Willis Central project."

"S&T is pleased to have been able to work with HotChilly on this project, especially because it's the first time HotChilly have used Sikla," says Jared.

"This is a good example of how the new One Company model for S&T can benefit our customers – we had a strong relationship with them for the supply of steel sheet in the past, but now we are able to work with them across the business divisions to provide a more practical and convenient service."

