



What do you get from your equipment repair service?

Southwest Equipment Rentals Inc.

It seems that the focus of customer demand has changed during these slow times. The days when time was more important than money are behind us for a while. Because of the financial accountability that all managers are facing, the ability to stay under budget means keeping one's job. Value should be based on today's market — not yesterday's. If new equipment is not in your budget and repairing what you have has become a larger expense, this may be the time to re-evaluate your equipment repair provider. The following factors should be considered when choosing one:

- **Experience.** No one wants to pay for on the job training. Just because somebody drives a service truck does not make him a mechanic. While there is no substitute for experience, the willingness to listen and learn is unequalled in the ability to perfect one's craft. The people behind the scenes often make the biggest difference in the cost of a job. If the parts person does not shop for the best price then the customer usually suffers. The same can be said of accounting. The bill is what customer sat-

isfaction is usually based on. Many times a precise and coherent statement will answer customer questions.

- **Support.** Does the technician have the proper support to satisfy your needs? The answer depends on the customers' needs but the following deserves consideration:

1. **Parts support.** Do you want to pay the technician to drive around town looking for parts while convenience is more of a factor than cost?

2. **Rental machinery.** Will you need a rental unit while your machine is down?

3. **Facilities.** Are facilities available when work needs to be performed off site and are there more technicians to do that work? A prolonged period of time without your machine to justify a costly bill is not acceptable.

4. **Insurance and safety.** It is surprising how many providers large and small do not comply with the requirements to perform service.

5. **Accounting.** Does your Service Report match your bill? Do you have to make a call regarding every bill?

- **Commitment.** Is the service provider committed to more than just a profit for their company? The commitment to consider the needs of the customer is what service is all about. Receiving timely service when needed should be expected, as well as professionalism on the part of the provider's employees. Proper appearance is important, but so is attitude. A friendly tech is a great asset as long as you're not getting billed for the time used in discussions with your employees. Many companies try to service every account in town. This approach can make it impossible to take care of every account in the way in which it deserves. If you feel that your account is not important, then it may be time to have a meeting with the service manager.

- **Communication.** Timely communication solves most problems in a timely manner. When considering a service provider, understanding each other's expectations is very important. First find out who is the decision maker who will be in charge if a problem occurs. The industry is full of people who will say they can solve a problem and cannot. A provider that is willing

to take the time to understand the direction in which the company is going will save a lot of time and money later on. Being told an accurate cost of repairs versus replacing the unit should be normal procedure. Many times a signed work order is considered a blank check. The thought that any unexpected charges of any magnitude will result in a problem doesn't seem to compute. This usually results in a problem in getting paid and the loss of a customer.

- **Trust.** You should be able to believe that the well-being of your company is as important to them as it is to you. After all, if you don't survive they will lose a good account.

Southwest Equipment Rentals Inc. has been serving the equipment needs of customers since 1994. It is a full service company, offering several lines of quality new and used equipment, a rental fleet and first class heavy equipment repair service. Billy McDonald is the CEO and has more than 20 years of experience in the equipment business.

For more information, visit www.swequipmentrentals.com or call (713) 451-8761.

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