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While the current economic downturn has caused a considerable business challenge for many companies, we need to make sure those near-term issues don't alter the work that needs to be done to establish and build a strong long-term future. As Sir Winston Churchill once said, "A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."

While many companies are focused on survival—*or just getting through the downturn*—others are taking advantage of the situation to make real changes that allow them to compete successfully in the global marketplace. For the last 125 years, the A. W. Chesterton Company has worked with our customers to help them operate more reliably, efficiently and economically. Today, as always, we're helping them increase their competitiveness by continuously improving their plant performance and, most importantly, supplying additional knowledge that will help them not only survive, but also build strong future performance.

Expertise and best practices

What are some specific ways we can help? They start with providing expertise and sharing best practices that we've learned or developed by working in many different process industry plants—*that's where outside suppliers like Chesterton can add real value*. Through an understanding of the key process steps and problem areas, as well as the real cost drivers, programs that incorporate tailored products and services can be applied. A good example could be a plant bearing reliability program, where the root causes of failure can be determined (such as hydrolysis breakdown of the lubricants), and tailored products can be applied to address those issues (like best in class Chesterton QBT lubrication products). Additionally, the solutions can be automated (with automated dispensers in this case) to make the fix easy to manage over the long term.

"A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty."Plant rotating equipment reliability programs can also make a big impact on improved plant performance— *if they are managed right*. This requires expertise in both laying

out the program and in implementation and documentation. Proprietary tools, like Chesterton RMS, can help with the implementation and documentation, but the detailed knowledge of which products to appropriately apply in different situations is what really determines the overall program success. That knowledge is where companies like Chesterton can add significant value— *with extensive history, experience and process knowledge and a detailed understanding of the underlying issues and problems* .

Energy efficiency and emissions reduction are also key areas where substantial plant improvements can be made to decrease costs and business risk. Here, too, knowledge of underlying problem areas and the right products and programs to apply can result in large cost savings.

Leveraging our knowledge

Certainly, the most effective way to help companies improve their plant performance is for them to understand the opportunities that exist for improvement, and to bring in suppliers with the knowledge to help them develop and implement the right solutions. That knowledge and those actions are key—*not only to survivability, but to building a sustainable future*. **MT**

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