Times Are Changing!
Keep Up Or Get Left Behind

by Ira Lapides
Vice President, Replacement Parts Industries, Inc.

If there is one thing that you can rely on in the healthcare industry, it’s change. To many, this is a very disquieting thought. But the last fifteen years have seen nothing but change in healthcare, with DRG’s, the rise and fall of large hospital corporations and their reemergence the past few years (remember AMI, Humana, NME?), HMO’s, PPO’s, and a whole alphabet soup of other odds and ends.

A number of these changes have had or will have a direct effect on the equipment service business. One of the most significant is the consolidation of the healthcare providers in the industry. The past few years have seen consolidation at levels never seen before, and there is certainly more to come. On the hospital side, Columbia/HCA now owns or manages 330 hospitals spanning 36 states, while Tenet Healthcare owns or manages 127 hospitals in 22 states. Religious hospital systems such as Catholic Healthcare West are also becoming major players.

On the physician side, 34% of all physicians in the United States are members of group practices, with 10% of the total in groups of 100 or more physicians. The largest, MedPartners, has 2600 physicians in its medical groups, with another 5300 independent physicians affiliated with them through managed care contracts. In 1995, there were 126 major merger and acquisition transactions; in 1996 that figure jumped to 218. Hospitals are also buying physician practices, affording problems and opportunities for servicing these newly affiliated practices.

For the dental industry, change has not been so rapid, but it is coming. Dental HMO enrollment has nearly tripled from 7.8 million in 1990 to 20.6 million in 1995. Dentists have not formed groups in quite the same manner as physicians, as 78% still practice solo versus 25% of physicians. But a few large groups are starting to form, with at least two major players planning to go public in 1997, as reported in a recent issue of Modern Healthcare magazine. Massachusetts-based Professional Dental Associates looks to acquire 200 or more dental practices with the funds they plan to raise through a public stock offering, and Castle Dental Centers already operates 35 dental centers in Florida, Tennessee, and Texas. I am sure there is a lot more to come.

What does this all mean for the equipment service industry? Primarily, it means the erosion of the traditional customer base of physician and dentists’ offices. To maintain or even increase business, independent service organizations, no matter what size, will need to be alert to opportunities for developing relationships with these larger organizations. In some cases, this might mean subcontracting with a large ISO that has the primary contract, but does not have the service area coverage or equipment expertise that you might have. Or, it could mean affiliating, merging, or creating

(Continued on page 7)

UPDATE:
IAMER MEETING

At the beginning of April, RPI attended the IAMER (International Association of Medical Equipment Remarketers) meeting. Another eye opener for where our industry is going. This group is only four years old, yet they took the lead in working with the FDA to assure that servicers and refurbishers were not included in the new regulations. At the meeting, three members of the FDA and one member of the State Department entered into discussions on what the government is doing, where it is going, and where refurbishers and remarketers can participate. They spent all three days at the meeting assuring dialog with all who were there. IAMER’s work has opened the door to government cooperation and help.

We found out at the meeting that companies as small as four or five people are becoming ISO9000 certified; that great numbers of independents are repairing and refurbishing equipment to be sold by remarketers in international markets; that there is a possibility that new equipment sales will blossom over the next ten years, refocusing OEMs back on new equipment; that IAMER is setting ethical and professional standards for its members; and that anyone who continues to do business exactly as was done in the past may not be around to enjoy the opportunities five years from now.

If we work together, if we work like business people, we can guarantee our future. Those who have joined IAMER and ISNI have proved that already.
Opportunity!

Ever since GE won the multivendor contract from the Columbia/HCA hospital system, there has been continuous discussion and articles written about the future of the in-house bio-med and the ISOs, particularly the smaller ones. There was fear, consternation, confusion, and great concern on the part of all those potentially affected. Seminars and roundtables were conducted at professional society meetings for BMETs. Meetings were held by about 100 small ISOs in San Diego, Las Vegas, and Denver. The conclusions? None really, except to hope that when the smoke clears, all will have survived.

Well the smoke is clearing. It’s not a matter of surviving, but of moving ahead with a great deal of opportunity. This opportunity was best expressed at the recent annual meeting of the ISNI (Independent Service Network International) in Las Vegas. Roundtable discussions and breakout sessions identified what’s happening. First, the maintenance and repair marketplace is bigger than ever before and growing. Second, primary hospital outsourcing contacts are going to multivendor and asset management companies. Third, in-house departments are being looked at as multivendor competitors by their own institutions. And fourth, all of these primary contractors need small ISOs who specialize in specific equipment.

What does this mean to you? Opportunity. But where and how. That’s the rub. The marketplace is expanding, but it’s also changing. For the ISOs, most hospitals are or no longer will be primary customers. Multivendor companies will be the customers in most cases. But, say some of you small independents, “I service physician offices, not hospitals. Therefore, none of this affects me.” This might not be true. Doctors are forming groups. Some are already national. Many are being bought by hospitals. Won’t their buying habits change? Will the hospital owned groups come under their master multivendor agreement? Will the independent physician groups look to a single multivendor agreement just like the hospitals?

These changes represent opportunity. But only for those who identify and capitalize on it. That means that all of you need to understand that you need to be business people as well as good technicians. This holds true for those of you in biomed departments as well as independents. That means you have to keep current on what’s happening. You should be reading publica-

(Continued on page 3)
Introducing the RPI Metering Valve To Fit the MDT Chemclave®

The long awaited, much anticipated RPI metering valves to fit the MDT Chemclaves are finally here!

Wait until you see it. You'll just love it. It installs like the original. It operates like the original. But it's better because it's PM'able and it carries the RPI 100% customer satisfaction guarantee.

For details, please see the bright yellow flyer included in this newsletter.

From the Desk of the President
(Continued from page 2)

Recommendations such as 24x7, Medical Imaging, and HealthCare Technology Management, all free subscriptions from Healthtech Publications. Visit the Healthtech website at: http://www.healthtechnet.com. You should belong to professional and trade associations such as SBET, ASHE, and ISNI. You should be attending meetings such as Healthtech in San Diego in May, SBET (AAMI) in Washington D.C. in June, and ASHE later this year. Looking at membership rosters and attendance records, it is obvious that most of you do not believe you can afford the money or time for these things. You have no choice if you want to take advantage of the future. At a minimum, you should be reading informative, free, literature.

Why does RPI continue to beat the drum to get you to professionalize yourselves and your business? It is because we believe that a broad base of service support makes for a better quality and cost in maintaining medical equipment. No, we are not afraid of losing customers. We have already seen the share of our sales of those we have lost go to other customers. Yes, we really are concerned about a viable, competitive base out there. Please be part of it.

RPI Is Your BEST Source For Quality Replacement Parts!

TECH TALK

Customer Concerns Aid In Raising The Quality Level of RPI Parts
By Ron Cain, RPI Product Development Department

What does RPI do when concerns about our products are received? We take them very seriously. The following is just one example of how a few customer complaints led to an improvement in the quality of one of our motors, the IEM025.

Customer’s Concern: Lost wiring diagram sent with motor. No problem says the customer, I have a manual with a wiring diagram. But wait! None of the wire colors are the same. This particular customer called RPI and suggested that we use the same color code for our hook-up wires that the OEM uses. No problem! The IEM025 now has hook-up wires that match the colors in the diagram in the OEM manuals.

Customer’s Concern: Very difficult to attach ground wire to motor casing. No problem! The IEM025 has been redesigned so it now has an internal ground wire.

Customer’s Concern: Field wires short to motor casing and burn up. (Of all of the concerns this is the most serious.) This is a problem! It took quite a while and much hair loss to duplicate this problem. This problem was caused by two factors: 1. Vibration; and, 2. Internal stiffening rib too close to the field windings. No problem now! The internal stiffening rib has been milled down to allow a sufficient distance between the field windings and the motor casing.

Customer’s Concern: Brush holders rotate. No problem! Again vibration is the culprit here. We are now using an adhesive to secure the brush holder body in place. We are also using a threadlocking adhesive on the set screws that hold the brush holder body in place.

We appreciate your calls and we respond. Please keep calling, faxing and e-mailing. We want to hear from you!

Here Is A Quick Check
To See If You Have Wired The IEM025 Motor Correctly

Apply power and watch the direction in which the head turns. If it turns in a counterclockwise direction and your braking system works, it is wired correctly. If the head turns in a clockwise direction, you have not wired it correctly, so re-check your wiring.

The Coulter C Series
– Reliable But With A Few Idiosyncrasies
By Dennis Augur
A Service A Plus, Fulton, Missouri

The Coulter T Series units are very reliable for the most part, but like all instruments, they have a few idiosyncrasies.

If you have problems getting the PLT background down in the morning, try running a specimen one time and re-run the background a couple of times. If still too high, clean the blood sampling valve.
WHAT'S

You Asked For Them, You Got

The following new parts are now in stock, ready for immediate delivery:

CENTRIFUGES

Clay Adams – Sero-Fuge® & Sero-Fuge II

RPI PART #CB8083
OEM PART #42054129 (0541-613-000)
REPLACEMENT BRUSH
Fits: Governor Brush Assembly

RPI PART #CAC087
OEM PART #0541-604-000
COVER ASSEMBLY & HARDWARE
Fits: Guard

RPI PART #CAC089
OEM PART #42054102 (0541-600-004)
BRUSH CARRIER
Fits: Motor Base

RPI PART #CAC098
OEM PART #42055103 (0531-600-003)
CAPACITOR
Fits: Braking Resistor Assembly

RPI PART #CAC099
OEM PART #42054103 (0541-600-005)
GOVERNOR ASSEMBLY
Mounts to bottom motor shaft

RPI PART #CAL092
OEM PART #42052601 (0526-609-000)
RUBBER STRIP LINER - 6 PLACE HEAD
Fits: Head Assembly (Sero-Fuge only)

RPI PART #CAR096
OEM PART #42053102 (0531-600-002)
VOLTAGE RECTIFIER
Fits: Braking Resistor Assembly

RPI PART #CAR097
OEM PART #42055101 (0531-600-001)
BRAKING RESISTOR
Fits: Braking Resistor Assembly

RPI PART #CAS090
OEM PART #42054121 (0541-614-100)
BASE-RUBBER SEAL (NEW STYLE)
Fits: Bottom of guard (Sero-Fuge II only)

CENTRIFUGES

Clay Adams – Dynac® II

RPI PART #CAR095
OEM PART #42010325 (0103-621-100)
K-2 RELAY
Mounts to underside of control panel

RPI PART #CAT093
OEM PART #42010324 (0103-620-100)
STEPDOWN TRANSFORMER
Mounts to underside of control panel

DENTAL EQUIPMENT

Pelton Crane – LFI & LFII Series

RPI PART #PC616
OEM PART #332-104
BUSHING YOKE
Fits: Head and Yoke Assembly (LFI only)

RPI PART #PC617
OEM PART #006914
STUD - HEAD BUSHING
Fits: Head and Yoke Assembly (LFII only)

RPI PART #PCK690
OEM PART #006914
SPRING ARM SPRING & GUIDE KIT
Fits: Front Arm Assembly

RPI PART #PP093
OEM PART #007466
SPRING (ROLL) PIN (1/8 D x 3/4 L)
Fits: Drop Arm & Pivot Rod (LFCII, LFIII-D, LFII, LFII-D & LFII-LFII)

RPI PART #PCR69
OEM PART #006914 & 090412
LEVELING ROD & NUT
Fits: Front Arm Spring Guide Assembly (All LF & LF+)

RPI PART #PCS69
OEM PART #3333073 (026597)
KNUCKLE HINGE SCREW
Fits: Arm Adapter and Knuckle (LFI)

RPI PART #PR823
OEM PART #3324154
FRONT ARM COVER SCREW
Fits: Front Arm Cover (LFI & LF+)

RPI PART #PR824
OEM PART #3325284
BALANCE RETAINER SCREW
Fits: Counter Balance Spring Retainer (RPI Part #PCR673)

GENERAL SEAL

Compression

Sleeves, Nuts, Unions, Connectors
(For details, see the bright yellow section)

STERILIZATION

MDT (Harvey) – Meters

Metering Valve Assemblies – To Fit E
(For details, see the bright yellow section)

STERILIZATION

American Sterilizers – Dentsply

The parts listed above are manufactured by RPI American Sterilizers, Clay Adams, IEC, MDT, and other companies. The following parts are registered to the appropriate American Sterilizers, Steris, and other manufacturers.

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Sterling/Perlin & Crane Co Sub Siemens/Medicallink
## Equipment for All Purposes

- [Image of equipment]

## New Products

**Sterilizers**

- **Midmark M7**
- **Ritter 7 & 777**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Part</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCB088</td>
<td>T-Bolt Fits: Door assembly (7, 777 &amp; M7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCB089</td>
<td>OEM PART #014-0193-00 AIR VENT BELLOWS ASSEMBLY (1/4&quot; compression fittings - both ends) Mounts to Tubing between Temperature Gauge and Reservoir (M7 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCC095</td>
<td>OEM PART #H98009 FILL COVER Fits: Reservoir (7 &amp; M7 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCB096</td>
<td>OEM PART #15074500 BUZZER Fits: Machine Base (M7 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCG065</td>
<td>OEM PART #H002-0242-00 TEMPERATURE GAUGE Mounts to front panel (7 &amp; M7 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCG097</td>
<td>OEM PART #H98135 RESERVOIR GASKET Fits: Reservoir (7 &amp; M7 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCC092</td>
<td>OEM PART #H98062 TIMER KNOB Fits: Timer Shaft (7, 777 &amp; M7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCC093</td>
<td>OEM PART #H98063 CONTROL KNOB Fits: Thermostat Control (7, 777 &amp; M7)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCM008</td>
<td>OEM PART #H98036 PILOT LIGHT Fits: Front Panel (7 &amp; M7 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RCC096</td>
<td>OEM PART #H98155 SLEEVE Fits: Temperature Gauge (7 &amp; M7 only)</td>
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**Reservoir**

- **Reservoir Filter Kit**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCK102</td>
<td>OEM PART #P263565 VENT PLUNGER KIT Fits: Valve Operator - Vent Assembly (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCK106</td>
<td>OEM PART #P263593 DUMP PLUNGER KIT Fits: Valve Operator - Dump Assembly (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCK110</td>
<td>OEM PART #P263577 FILL PLUNGER KIT Fits: Valve Operator - Fill Assembly (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
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**Controls**

- **Controller**

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<tr>
<th>Part</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCK111</td>
<td>OEM PART #P92580 AIR RELEASE VALVE SEAT KIT Fits: Air Release Section of Control Valve Body (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCK125</td>
<td>OEM PART #A1503449 COUPLING-VENT/CONDENSER KIT Fits: Reservoir (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCK167</td>
<td>OEM PART #H432311 RESERVOIR FILTER KIT Fits: Front Panel (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCK171</td>
<td>OEM PART #P92580 COUPLING-VENT/CONDENSER KIT Fits: Reservoir (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RPT092</td>
<td>OEM PART #P92605 VALVE SEAT &amp; BODY Fits: Air Release Section of Control Valve Body (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RPT096</td>
<td>OEM PART #P019922 PRESSURE SENSOR TUBE Fits: Between Valve Block &amp; Pressure Transducer (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #RPT098</td>
<td>OEM PART #P92606 VALVE SEAT WRENCH Fits: Slot in valve seat (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
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**Sterilizers**

- **Pelton & Crane**

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<tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCA004</td>
<td>OEM PART #019779 TRIAC ASSEMBLY Fits: Fits Power Supply Board (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PCC106</td>
<td>OEM PART #019551 TEMPERATURE MODULE CABLE Fits: Temp/Press Board to Power Supply Board (8 &amp; 10 only)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RPI PART #PFC009</td>
<td>OEM PART #1881031 (004326) FILTER - FILTER Fits: Fill Chamber Tube (8 &amp; 10 and Plus 8 &amp; 10)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Hello. My name is Chris Stout and I'm the person responsible for making sure all of the parts in our catalog are in stock and ready to ship to you.

I started in purchasing about 25 years ago as a Product Development Assistant. I purchased the parts the engineers wanted to use and wired the "bread board" (prototype) so they could test their designs. I enjoyed the purchasing-end of the business so much that I decided to pursue a career in it. Later I worked for a company called Spacelabs but when they relocated to Washington state, I decided to stay in sunny California.

I have lived in southern California since I was five years old. In my spare time I love to sew, make quilts and do crafts when I'm not playing with my nine grandchildren (who are the light of my life) or taking my husband, Bill, to the L.A. Dodgers baseball games.

The new and improved RPI motor kit (RPI Part #AIK005) that fits the Air Shields C86 infant incubator and the motor kit (RPI Part #AIK007) that fits the C100/C200 infant incubator have some special changes and modifications. The new features help improve performance and extend motor life.

The body of the motor now has vent holes throughout and an internal impeller to ensure self cooling. This helps alleviate any problems with overheating and resulting air flow alarms.

There is now a step machined on the motor shaft. This will ensure proper installation and positioning of the impeller on the shaft. The result will be correct air flow and minimization of mechanical noise due to vibration.

The motor is a permanent split capacitor (PSC) design. PSC motors have lower starting currents and are much quieter than other designs. This type of design will not only extend the life of the motor; but also meets or exceeds noise level requirements.

Connectors, wiring and mounting hardware are compatible with the OEM controllers. This makes replacement quick and easy.
SPOTLIGHT
On New RPI Parts
To Fit The P&C Light Fantastic

by Jim Wisniewski
RPI Product Development

If the light head droops or drifts, it's a good indication that the bushings are damaged or broken. RPI can help! RPI now carries the bushings to fit the LF-I (RPI Part #PCB616) and for the LF-C (RPI Part #PCB617).

And, here's a helpful hint to minimize customer "call-backs". When replacing the bushings, be sure to inspect the light socket wiring. If the wires have become frayed or kinked or have worn insulation, replace the light sockets at the same time you replace the bushings. By replacing both the bushings and light sockets at the same time, you might just save yourself a call-back. (RPI also carries the Light Socket - RPI Part #PCS607.)

By the way, if the front arm drifts down or up, here's a quick and easy way to adjust it. Remove the Front Arm Upper Cover and Counter Balance Spring. To adjust for down drift, turn the adjustment nut counter clockwise to increase tension. To adjust for up drift, turn the adjustment nut clockwise to decrease tension.

RPI is helping you keep your customers’ LF units in good shape with the many replacement parts we have in stock and ready to be shipped. In fact, RPI now has the Spring Arm Spring & Guide Assembly (RPI Part #PCK690), and the Leveling Rod and Nut (RPI Part #PCR699) with even more parts to come.

Times Are Changing
(Continued from front page)

alliances with some of your competitors in your own service area or outside of it to handle a larger account.

Now, I am not predicting that all hospitals, physicians, and dentists will become part of a few mega-corporations, but a majority of them probably will. This might seem like the sky is falling, but with change of this nature, there is always opportunity, and in this case, significant opportunity. It is vital to be able to be aware of and recognize those opportunities and be prepared to take advantage of them, because as your customers evolve, like it or not, so must you.

There are several ways to keep abreast of opportunities. First, talk to your customers. Find out what is impacting their business and how you can help them by modifying your services. Second, network with your colleagues and competitors through industry trade organizations, seminars, conventions, phone calls, and meetings. Find out what they are doing and how you might be able to work together. Third, read the trade journals. Fourth, talk to your employees. Many will have ideas and insights that could be quite valuable.

Once you have identified new opportunities to pursue, or even prior to that, you must have a plan in place for your business (or department or division if part of a larger organization) to make sure you get it prepared and moving in the right direction. In the next issue of "The Alternate Source", I will provide a recap of a presentation I made at the March ISNI meeting in Las Vegas on a basic process of preparing a business plan. Until then, keep alert and get involved!

OUR BEST WISHES TO...

In Celebration of Your 30th Anniversary

Congratulations and best wishes to Robert Bender, owner of Diversified Medical, for his 30 years in business of servicing healthcare equipment.

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"Great job on your new (web) site. Keep up the good work as usual."
- Dennis Breda
Breda Instrumentation

"Just a brief note to confirm receipt and to congratulate you for the excellent technical quality of your package of information which we received recently. Most specially we congratulate you for the warmth and sense of humor so rare and so necessary in these times, specially in our profession. Thanks again."
- Manuel Gakneras O.
TECNOMED

RPI's WEBSITE

Next time you're surfing the web, take a moment to check out RPI's website at:

http://www.rpiparts.com

Searching for a part has never been easier than on RPI's website. See for yourself in the "RPI Part Search" where all you need to do is type in the name of the part or the OEM part number or the RPI part number or the make or model of the equipment or a combination of the above, click on the "Search" icon and you are in business. That's all there is to it.

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