

The value of experience: Why expertise matters in compressor overhauls and revamps

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It is no exaggeration to say that without compressors, countless industries ranging from petrochemicals to brewing would grind to an almost instant halt. As such, for the companies working in these sectors it's critical that they ensure their equipment is working efficiently and reliably.

Yet, over time, many businesses face challenges when working with the original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of their compressors. Whether due to poor service, the age of the equipment, or a loss of connection with the OEM, companies often seek alternatives for repair and maintenance. However, this move can come with risks of its own, as there is no guarantee that a third party will be able to offer the same level of performance.

Fortunately, there is a third option: working with a partner that is capable of handling third-party compressors but also brings extensive experience and comprehensive engineering expertise to the table.

These companies' expertise in compressors, whether their own or those from other brands, positions them as an invaluable partner for complex overhauls and revamps. Using their in-depth understanding of compressor systems and decades of engineering experience, these businesses can often deliver solutions that go beyond what a compressor's actual OEM can offer.

The need for an experienced partner

There are many potential reasons why businesses find themselves unable or unwilling to continue working with the original manufacturer of their compressors.

In some cases, a particular OEM might not provide the level of service or support the customer needs. In others, the compressor may be so old that the original manufacturer no longer holds the necessary documentation or replacement parts. Occasionally, the issue is that working with the OEM is simply impossible, as the business that manufactured the compressor no longer exists.

Regardless of the motivation, this situation can leave operators in a difficult position, facing costly downtime or equipment replacement when they encounter issues with the compressor.

Experience and engineering expertise comes into play here. A partner with comprehensive engineering expertise can step in to offer comprehensive maintenance, repair, and revamp services. Even when the compressor was built by another manufacturer, a highly skilled, highly experienced engineering team can almost always find a way to deliver a solution that restores the equipment to peak performance. Often, they can even exceed the quality of service the original manufacturer provides.

Burckhardt Compression is more than capable of taking on the challenge of working with other brands' equipment, having extensive experience with these kinds of projects.

Example one: Overhauling a compressor for better service

At a Swiss refinery, a compressor that was essential to operations was experiencing reduced efficiency and reliability. The refinery needed a service provider that could address these issues and ensure ongoing reliability. While the compressor was not one of Burckhardt Compression's own, the company was engaged to assess and restore the equipment.

The engineering team conducted a detailed analysis of the compressor, identifying areas where previous repairs had fallen short. Through a systematic overhaul, the

compressor was brought back to full operational status, ensuring that the refinery could continue its operations with minimal disruption. The revamp process included replacing worn components, restoring tolerances, and re-establishing performance levels that met operational requirements.

Example two: Reviving a 27-year-old compressor at an Indian refinery

In India, a refinery had been using compressors that were over 27 years old. These compressors had long since been unsupported by the original manufacturer, and the lack of available technical documentation or OEM guidance posed a significant challenge. Despite these obstacles, the compressors were critical to the refinery's operations, and a revamp was necessary to ensure continued performance.

Burckhardt Compression engineers used their expertise to reverse-engineer the compressors. With no original blueprints, they recreated the necessary tolerances and specifications. This process included measuring and assessing each part of the compressors to develop new technical drawings and ensure the revamp would meet performance standards. The compressors were then thoroughly refurbished to extend their operational life and reliability.

Example three: Zero-hour revamp of a US gas plant's second-hand compressors

A gas processing company in the United States faced the challenge of high rental costs for compressors at a remote location. To reduce expenses, the company acquired two second-hand compressor packages, each from different manufacturers, with the goal of revamping them to zero-hour standards.

Burckhardt Compression managed the full scope of the project, addressing logistical challenges posed by the remote location and overseeing every aspect of the revamp process. This included coordinating the transport of the equipment, setting up cranes for heavy lifting, and conducting a complete overhaul of the compressors and their engines. The compressors were brought back to zero-hour standards,

ensuring they would operate as efficiently and reliably as new units. The overhaul involved not only the restoration of the core mechanical components but also the integration of upgraded parts to improve performance and reduce the need for future maintenance.

The value of experience

The ability to overhaul and revamp compressors shows the tangible value of comprehensive engineering expertise. It brings an in-depth understanding of equipment design, access to high-quality replacement parts, and the ability to apply advanced engineering techniques to complex machinery. This combination ensures that even older or non-standard compressors can be restored to optimal performance.

For industries where compressor reliability is critical to maintaining productivity, working with a partner that has decades of in-depth engineering knowledge is invaluable. Whether the issue stems from aging equipment, inadequate support, or a complete lack of documentation, a qualified engineering partner can step in to deliver tailored solutions. These experts can navigate challenges like reverse engineering parts, diagnosing performance issues, and restoring equipment to zero-hour standards.

A proven track-record of successful overhauls and revamps demonstrates the tangible benefits of this expertise. By minimizing downtime, extending the lifespan of equipment, and ensuring efficiency, this world-class experience plays a critical role in keeping industrial operations running smoothly. Companies that prioritize working with experienced providers can avoid costly disruptions, improve the reliability of their assets, and extend the life of key equipment—ultimately improving the long-term success of their operations.

Image captions:



Image 1: On-site technical expertise is crucial to successful maintenance.



Image 2: Compressors in more remote locations provide additional challenges.



Image 3: Diagnosing performance issues is key to restoring optimum output.

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About Burckhardt Compression

Burckhardt Compression is the worldwide market leader for reciprocating compressor systems and the only manufacturer and service provider that covers a full range of reciprocating compressor technologies and services. Its customized compressor systems are used in the gas gathering and processing, gas transport and storage, refinery, chemical, petrochemical as well as in the industrial gas and hydrogen mobility and energy sectors. Burckhardt Compression's leading technology, broad portfolio of compressor components and the full range of services help customers around the world to find the optimized solution for their reciprocating compressor systems. Since 1844, its highly skilled workforce has crafted superior solutions and set the benchmark in the gas compression industry.

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