

Customer interview

SYSMEX CORPORATION

SYSMEX CORPORATION was established in 1968. Founded under the name of Toa Medical Electronics Co. Ltd., the company has been working on the development and marketing of diagnostics testing instruments and reagents under the SYSMEX brand name since 1978. In 1998, the brand name was adopted as the company name, and SYSMEX CORPORATION was born. Currently they are supplying more than 170 countries in all parts of the world with products and services for clinical laboratory instruments and reagents for blood, urine, immunology, biochemical and other analyses.



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Seeking a new partnership for a new era of business development

— How did you come to start using THK products

The rotating mechanical parts of an automated blood coagulation analyzer we put on the market recently are equipped with large-diameter bearings made by THK. It is a new product, so we were after the sort of high precision and high processing speeds we expect of the latest model. Because the space for accommodating bearings was very small in view of the unit's layout while requiring a large diameter, we wanted to keep the bearings compact, but we were unable to find any bearing on the market with the kind of performance and size that would satisfy these specific requirements.

At this point I learned that THK has a development department that handles specialty and customized products, so I got in touch with them right away. After having contacted component manufacturers around the world and having been unable to locate products that matched our requirements, THK made a sincere and thorough effort to customize bearings for us, even advising us in areas where we had encountered problems. Thanks to their efforts, we were able to complete the project successfully, and at the same time established a very good relationship with THK.

— What do you require from your suppliers?

SYSMEX is a manufacturer of medical equipment and diagnostic reagents, and supplies our customers with a wide variety of medical devices and reagents. It is our responsibility to provide our customers with the necessary data in the fastest and most accurate manner. That is why we ask our partner businesses to supply us with products of the highest reliability, including long product lifespans.

Another point to remember is that the medical devices and similar equipment we handle are not produced in huge lots of tens of thousands at a time, like cars, for example. Consequently, we may have to ask THK to cooperate in matters

such as maintaining the cost balance and making production adjustments.

For our most recent project, we requested that THK provide a trial product first, but they submitted a product of such high integrity from the beginning that we got a very real sense of the high level of THK's technological capabilities. When we encountered problems in the course of continuous stress tests, THK was very quick in proposing ways to eliminate these problems. I think that the fact that they dealt with the matter in face-to-face talks instead of trying to get by with phone calls or e-mails also contributed to our forming a strong partnership built on mutual trust.

— What do you expect from THK in the future?

Many manufacturers approach us with new products, but we have not had many opportunities to discuss special needs such as customized products. This applies not only to new products but to any kind of suggestions in today's business climate in which business areas and deployments have changed or new initiatives are required. I may be wrong on this point, but I think the bigger a company gets, the less flexible it tends to be.

Another important requirement is a system to ensure prompt delivery of products even in contingencies, and I am sure many manufacturers share this concern after the Great East Japan Earthquake. SYSMEX must avoid any situation in which patients cannot receive treatment because the medical device is not available. We expect much of THK's ability to deal with such emergencies.



Automated Blood Coagulation Analyzer CS-5100