



OPENING SHOT

Jack Champaigne | Editor | *The Shot Peener*

Shot Peening and Ice Cream

DURING A RECENT

summertime ritual, I found myself waiting for a response at a fast food restaurant's drive-thru order station. After several minutes of waiting, I pulled forward to the pay window and again there was no one to take my order for ice cream cones. I proceeded to the last delivery window and asked the only employee in sight what was going on. She informed me that they were short on help and after apologizing, she asked for my order. She again apologized and said that the ice cream machine was shut down for cleaning and no one knew how to clean it.



Now I know this is a stretch, but there were a couple of points in my story that relate to the shot peening industry. The first is the shortage of employable staff and the second is training.

With a strong economy and a low unemployment rate, especially in the United States, finding and keeping good staff has become difficult. It is all too common to see "help wanted" or "now hiring" signs in business windows and parking lots. Maintaining and cleaning an ice cream machine can hardly be compared to operating a million dollar shot peening system, but when maintenance is required on a routine basis, a customer cannot wait for a business to find and train new employees in either situation. The Performance Review Institute (PRI) is addressing this problem in the aerospace industry. In June 2018, PRI held a conference for suppliers, prime contractors, training providers and airlines. The goal was to develop programs for identifying and keeping qualified special process personnel and closing the skills gap in the workforce. Read more about the conference in "Shaping the Aerospace Workforce of the Future" on page 40.

The topic of training ties in with the article "Deciding Between In-House and Outsourced Peening? Seven Points to Consider" on page 10. While researching this article, our writer found that many top OEMs also offer shot peening services at their facilities. These OEMs send their machine operators to shot peening training. One OEM even pays for the training of their customers' machine operators after the purchase of one of their shot peening systems, thus ensuring that the machine will be used properly. (Another interesting point: Outsourcing is a viable option if you can't find qualified employees.)

So I guess my story has a sweet ending after all. As you read the variety of articles in this issue, you'll see that our industry is continually adapting and growing to meet the challenges and opportunities ahead. ●

THE SHOT PEENER

Editor

Jack Champaigne

Associate Editor

Kathy Levy

Publisher

Electronics Inc.

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The Shot Peener

56790 Magnetic Drive

Mishawaka, Indiana, 46545 USA

Telephone: 1-574-256-5001

www.theshotpeenermagazine.com

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