

## UID CASE STUDY: MELTON SALES & SERVICE, INC.

### MELTON SALES & SERVICE INC.

Melton Sales & Service has been doing business with the government, repairing specialized military equipment, industrial engines, and power train components, since 1949. That long history of contractor excellence won Melton the prestigious DoD Quality Excellence Award. Ed Klusman, Melton's Contract Administrator, attributes the company's success as a DoD contractor to three key principles: quality, price, and delivery. "Some companies have large advertising budgets to sell their product," says Klusman, "but here our product and the quality of our work over the years speak for themselves." Since the DoD is Melton's primary customer, Ed stresses that adapting to the military's requirements in a timely manner is another essential part of establishing the best value to its customers.



When the Melton team first heard about UID, that philosophy led them to respond quickly and to become proactive in meeting UID compliance requirements, while simultaneously meeting many military and ISO standards. "What is UID and how does it apply to our operation, we wondered. It was confusing. We are not a manufacturer. We rebuild or re-manufacture equipment and diesel engines. We had many questions and needed to do some research," says Klusman, who leads the UID compliance effort.

The first step was to contact the DCMA, and they provided an informative UID slide presentation. Next he visited several web sites and reviewed additional material such as the DOD Guide to Uniquely Identifying Items, Unique Identification 101 The Basics, and a copy of MIL-STD-130L. "After reading this material we were still unclear about how UID would affect our company. Our current government forms supplier reported that UID is not supported in their software, so we decided to do some research on the Internet. We quickly found the A2B website"

Most of his team's questions were answered when they read about the UID Comply! life cycle asset management system on the A2B site. Still they were concerned about the lead-time, training and cost of the solution, so they contacted A2B and made arrangements for an onsite demonstration. "After about an hour with A2B we were able to get a complete picture of the UID system and how it would support our business," says Ed.

## A SMALLER BUSINESS SOLUTION

What the A2B representative found when he visited the Melton facility, in Bordentown, NJ, was an amazing array of heavy machinery in the process of overhaul and remanufacturing. He also found a highly professional company in need of guidance to negotiate the UID maze. Many decisions had to be made and many unique challenges addressed. Klusman wanted to continue to produce receiving reports and invoices via the WAWF Internet site. Melton was one of the first companies chosen to replace the paper DD250's in the Philadelphia region, and the process has worked well for them. The Internet version of WAWF allows a small company to work off-site or at multiple workstations without a huge mainframe or network.

"This is a typical scenario in smaller businesses," says A2B President Peter Collins. "Many companies do not have large numbers of UIDs, and therefore do not require the robust features available with the full version of UID Comply!, namely the ability to manage the complete UID life cycle by creating an audit trail for seamless integration of the entire UID compliance process. The UID Comply! asset life cycle management system is powerful enough for any manufacturer or large DOD contractor, yet due to its modular design it can be tailored to fit the needs of a small business. As a smaller business Melton chose the economical UID Comply! Validator™ module, which fit their unique needs."

"We were very pleased to find a company like A2B that has produced a 'roadmap' to total compliance and yet was able to meet the particular needs of a smaller company," reports Klusman. "Our solution was to have the UID Comply! software create, print and validate the UID labels. Using a UID Comply! report function, we generate a report of the UID data to be used during creation of the WAWF document, which then sends the data to the UID registry. This two-step process has enabled our company to attain compliance while reducing the total cost of the solution, which keeps us competitive in today's economy."

from suppliers to end customers but are not physically processed at the AP&D facility in San Diego, CA.

## THE UID "ROADMAP" AT MELTON

Creating the UID "roadmap" meant reviewing and meeting Melton's unique challenges. Their greatest challenge was the nature of their primary business. Unlike manufacturing, where large quantities of a single item are produced and assigned sequential serial numbers, Melton has to manage repair efforts for over 250 different stock numbers while juggling a mix of quantities. Instead of producing products in lots like manufactures do, Melton operates more like a job shop, with each item custom built according to a customer's purchase order. That means each vehicle and each engine has a serial number recorded in the work order, so the Melton process must have the ability to accurately mark a single item, or in some cases multiple items, in varying quantities, according to production rates. In addition, they are always faced with emergency and surge requirements that may disrupt the planned flow. "We needed a system that was flexible enough to handle producing one UID today and fifty UIDs tomorrow. The UID Comply! system provided a solution to meet our demands," says Klusman

Another challenge was deciding which UID marking to utilize (metal plate, etching, or label) and how to apply it. Of the three alternatives the label was the

best choice for flexibility, but questions arose about the UID requirement for permanence throughout the life cycle. In the automotive industry labels may come into contact with grease, oils, cleaning solvents, and high temperatures so it was a prime concern that these labels would hold up. Klusman worked closely with Charles Mara, A2B's labeling expert, who has extensive experience working with the "big three" automotive manufacturers in the application of various labels. Mara provided sample labels of different materials and ink combinations. After about a week of testing they found a label and ink combination that withstood rigorous testing to satisfy the need for permanence.

Still another challenge was identifying the items that needed to be marked and registered with the UID registry and the WAWF. Since the acquisition cost of many items Melton handles is over \$5,000, the initial process was simple. But the challenge was to determine applicability on the smaller items under \$5,000 by utilizing the DOD Decision Tree. In addition Melton has expanded its operation by selling new engines and accessory items, and many of those will require UID markings. Klusman says, "Even though there is a \$5,000 benchmark today, we believe that this number will be lowered in the future, and most all of our products will be impacted. Therefore we wanted a solution that would grow with our projections."

## UID REQUIRES TEAMWORK

We hear it again and again: UID compliance requires planning and a team effort across company departments. At Melton the packaging department, with responsibility for applying the new UID labels to finished end items, was impacted most. In addition the purchasing and contract administration departments required training on the applicability of the UID requirements. And last but not least the quality control department was tasked with establishing internal procedures and with monitoring compliance and effectiveness. Once the planning and processes were completed, Melton was UID compliant within a day of installing the UID Comply! system.

Klusman says that the teamwork required for UID compliance success at Melton's extends to A2B Tracking. "Besides having an outstanding product, technical support and service that back it up are equally important, and A2B has been there every step of the way."

## ADVICE FOR SMALLER BUSINESS CONTRACTORS

What advice does Ed Klusman offer other small business contractors? "We learned a long time ago that when the weight of the paper is equal to the weight of the product you are ready to ship. Fortunate for us those days are over, and the government has streamlined the contracting process. We find that many companies bid on government contracts without reading the 'fine print' and then they cannot deliver. They say, 'We didn't know all that was required.' Also, some companies procrastinate and wait until the last minute to comply with the contract requirements. There is a saying, When in Rome, do as the Romans. We also know that Rome wasn't built in a day. The moral here is this: UID compliance just does not happen overnight, and if you want to do business with the DoD, you must be on top of the technology today and for the days to come."

**To learn more about UID Comply!™:**

Call us at 800-733-7592 or email us at [info@a2btracking.com](mailto:info@a2btracking.com) · Visit our website: [www.uidsolutions.com](http://www.uidsolutions.com)

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