

## Great from the start



Bringing a new asset online is exciting. Whether it's replacing old, troublesome equipment or adding more capacity, new equipment brings a host of benefits to your organization. The high reliability of the fresh-from-the-factory asset should also mean trouble-free operation, allowing your techs to focus attention on other issues.

But how trouble-free the new equipment runs and how productive it is depends in large part on whether you properly install and commission it. What should manufacturers, utilities and process operators consider as they plan to acquire a new asset? ABB service experts have some ideas.

"The main thing to ensure proper installation, commissioning and long, trouble-free asset life is to work as a team with the OEM," said Davor Vlaski, field service and operations team leader.

David Larsson, director of service, agreed, saying the customer/vendor relationship "...has to be collaboration. The vendor needs to understand how the equipment WILL be used, and the customer needs to understand how it CAN be used."

Aside from ensuring a smoother startup, close involvement by the customer builds relationships with the vendor that will pay off down the line. When the equipment owner has a problem or even just a question, they have someone specific to call. Their vendor contact will not only be familiar with the equipment, but the installation and the facility. That will enable them to quickly provide a knowledgeable and helpful response.

Involvement from the beginning is the other success factor when bringing on new assets.

“For large, complex assets like synchronous motors, the pre-commissioning inspection is essential,” Vlaski explained. “The vendor will send a team to make sure that everything is in order for the installation. They will review all aspects of the required infrastructure, including the electrical connections, cooling and lubrication systems, and control wiring. They will also check the physical aspects of the installation, including the location and condition of related equipment or devices.”

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Even on turnkey installations, Vlaski suggests the customer be closely involved with the pre-commissioning and installation. “The equipment owner should take advantage of those opportunities to gather inside information, beyond the user manual. When I bought a new TV, I found a salesman familiar with what I was interested in and asked for his recommendations and suggestions to get the most from my purchase. The people installing your new asset can provide a wealth of inside information that can be tremendously valuable.”

“If the equipment is going to be tested prior to delivery, think about sending one of your techs to participate,” Larsson advised. “In addition to talking with the factory experts, it’s a chance to do things with the equipment you can’t do once installed. For the power equipment I service, that includes disconnecting cables and simulating short circuits to understand the equipment’s response.”

Larsson understands that customer involvement prior to and during installation requires an investment of time, but he and Vlaski agree that “... being part of the process will provide a big payoff in the availability, reliability and life of your new equipment.”

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