

## CASE STUDY:

### Supply Chain Heroes

*Diaphragm manufacturer delivers quality and service value, earns return of customer*



#### Takeaways:

- Superior product
- Standard delivery time is faster than others' "expedited shipping," with no extra cost
- Packaging can be done to strict customer specifications
- Collaborative relationship helps grow customer's business and market share

## Bellofram

DIAPHRAGM DIVISION

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Midwest Valve & Fitting in Joliet, Illinois, is a distributor of parts related to pressure measurement and fluid control. One of their vendor management accounts includes providing diaphragms to a major manufacturer of industrial printers.

These are nothing like the office printers you might be thinking of—or even large printing presses. These are used in manufacturing and processing environments to apply variable data such as sell-by dates, lot numbers, and bar codes to virtually every possible product, package, shipping container, or pallet. These printers—be they inkjet, laser coding systems, thermal transfer, or labeling equipment—need diaphragms to keep ink inside and to protect against any contaminants from the manufacturing environment.

#### THE PROVEN CHOICE:

Bellofram Diaphragm provided the custom diaphragms used in the printers for nearly two decades, when the manufacturer suddenly decided to try a cheaper product in 2016. The departure was short-lived; they returned to Bellofram less than a year later and have remained ever since.

Jennifer Brasfield, operations manager for Midwest Valve & Fitting explains why. "There were immediate issues with the cheaper, non-Bellofram diaphragms. There were imperfections causing the product to fail in the field, which created big headaches for the manufacturer." Brasfield says the company quickly decided to switch back.

#### SUPPORT BEYOND PRODUCTS:

Brasfield has come to rely on Bellofram Diaphragm not just as a supplier, but as a strategic partner in the vendor management services she provides to her customers. Beyond superior product reliability, she also values the company's custom options, packaging flexibility, and fast turnarounds.

Brasfield has an eye-opening example of just how fast Bellofram's shipping is. "A previous supplier was charging me \$1,500 to \$2,000 extra for 'expedited shipping'—which was eight weeks. Bellofram's typical delivery time is half that! And if I need something faster, they'll work with me."

Brasfield also appreciates Bellofram's willingness to package products to her exact specifications.

"When we're managing inventory for a customer, there are detailed packaging instructions we have to follow," said Brasfield. "Some suppliers will simply ship me a box with 5,000 individual pieces and leave the rest up to my team, but not Bellofram. If I need product packaged 100 at a time, bagged, and marked with a QC [quality control] seal, Bellofram will do it for me. Then half of my work is already done."

#### LOOKING AHEAD:

Brasfield works closely with the leadership and engineers of Bellofram Diaphragm to provide custom solutions to her customers—and has even entrusted them to talk directly to her customers at times. Through this collaborative relationship, she is able to add value to her customers and strengthen her position on the market.

#### About Bellofram Diaphragm

Critical applications call for diaphragms with precisely engineered tolerances, premium performance, and long-lasting durability. The engineers of Bellofram Diaphragm work in partnership with customers' product design engineers to develop solutions that are just right for end-user applications. Nothing is off the shelf; each product is specifically engineered and manufactured for its destination use. Products are made in the U.S.A and delivered via fast domestic shipping. In 1950, Bellofram introduced the original rolling diaphragm for a wide variety of industries and applications. Since that time, over one billion diaphragms have been used successfully throughout the world. Telephone: 304.387.1200. On the web: <https://www.belloframdiaphragm.com/>.