

Elliott Tool Technologies: Providing industry solutions for an “I need it yesterday” world

Elliott Tool Technologies has earned a reputation for effectively and efficiently solving customer pain points in reduced timeframes. With a highly skilled team dedicated to reliable and quality service, the tube tool manufacturer has become the go-to source for the heat transfer market. It was for this reason that a mining and production facility requiring urgent service on an evaporator chose to call Elliott Tool Technologies.

Heat Exchanger World had the opportunity to speak to Elliott’s Applications Specialist, Sam Deisher, Customer Experience Manager, Zarella Ochoa, Inventory and Scheduling Manager, Koko Yamashita, and Product Engineer, Ryan Tucker, concerning the company’s multifaceted approach to solving industry pain points, its extensive commitment to ensuring its customer’s satisfaction, and how its team culture allows it to continually exceed expectations.



Image of a heat exchanger.

By Sara Mathov, Heat Exchanger World

The solution for an “I need it yesterday” world

Since its inception, Elliott has strived to be the industry’s leading supplier of quality tube tools. The company’s commitment to incredibly short lead times enables the efficient delivery of maintenance and tooling services, across several industries. Its ability to provide reliable stock availability simultaneously allows its customers to reduce their costs while meeting the needs of an ‘I need it yesterday’ world. By creating products and services that are reliable, efficient, and solutions oriented, Elliott has become the go-to source for the heat transfer market.

“The two aspects that I believe elevate Elliott above other suppliers, are its in-house engineering capabilities, and its multifaceted approach to solving customer challenges,” stated Ochoa. “The ability to work directly with engineers, application specialists, a customer experience team, as well as the operations team, creates a truly comprehensive solution.”

Rising to the challenge

While Elliott is recognized for its quick turnaround on quality products, it has also earned a reputation for its ability to provide services for a variety of large-scale projects. The scope of its capabilities can be seen with its recent successful support and training on an evaporator retubing project.

The Problem

A mining and production facility in Wyoming, U.S., was facing several challenges with retubing a vessel. Due to the site’s rural location, it was becoming increasingly difficult to hire the necessary personnel to assist with the project. “In the past, the company had hired contractors to aid with the removal and re-installation of tubing. The problem with this approach, in this instance, was the amount of time required to complete the project,” explained Deisher. “The removal of each tube was expected to take between eight to ten hours, which was more time than they had.”

The delays in production, and frustration to on-site personnel, prompted the customer to look for a more viable and permanent solution; they then turned to Elliott.

“The customer approached us to see if we would be able to not only bring all the required maintenance tools and personnel on-site, but also provide thorough training to their team,” said Ochoa. “They asked us to put together a comprehensive training program to equip the team with the necessary knowledge to complete the project themselves in the future.”

Understanding the need to fix the issue effectively and efficiently, Elliott accepted the challenge and began to devise a solution. “As the customers seemed to have been grappling with this obstacle for some time, it was up to us to navigate this issue with urgency,” Ochoa said. “It was at this point that we assembled a diverse team of experts to focus exclusively on each aspect of the customers issue.”

After determining the nature of the customer’s obstacles, Elliott assembled its industry experts and meticulously curated a custom solution and training program.

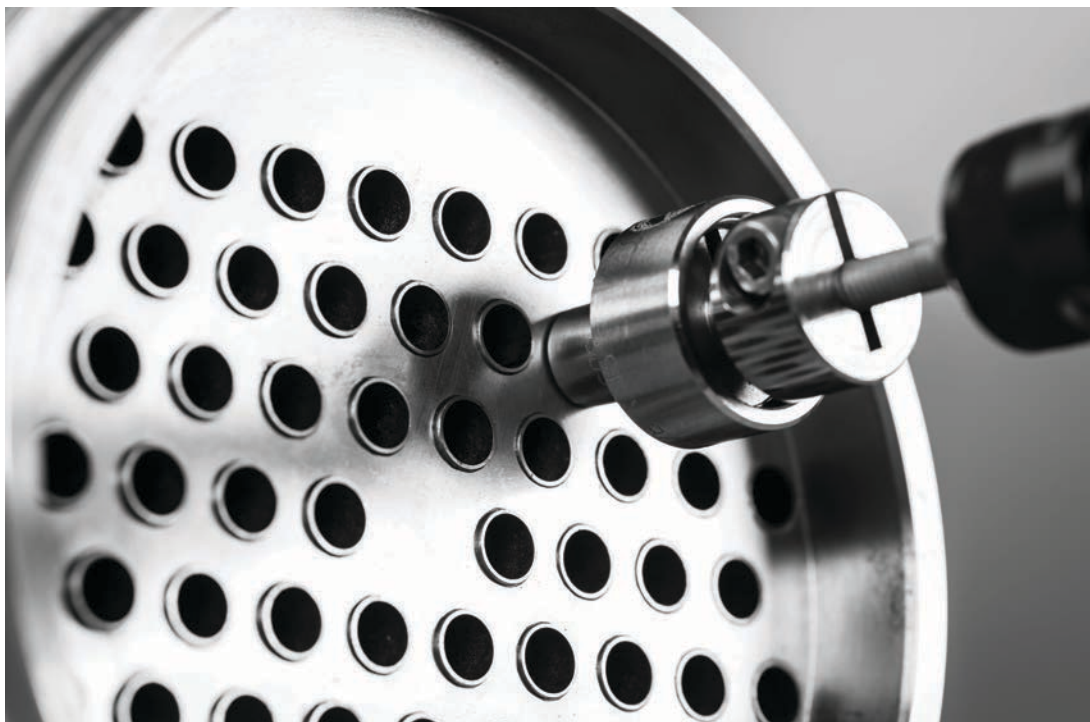
Comprehensive solutions

After conducting a qualification session with the sales manager and determining the client’s pain points, Elliott quickly determined the best solution options for the customer and set out to provide the necessary services.

Elliott Tool Technologies at a glance

Elliott was founded in 1892 by Gustav Wiedeke in Dayton, Ohio. Over the next 32 years Wiedeke designed the first tube expander, along with several other speciality tools for heat exchanger and boiler maintenance, earning a worldwide reputation for excellence. In 1916 William Elliott similarly recognized the need and opportunity in the industry for efficient tube cleaning equipment, and by the 1960s had gained a reputation for his cleaning technologies. Then, in 1969, Elliott Company acquired Wiedeke company, bringing together the collective experience and know-how required to offer truly integrated solutions.

Now, with 130 years of developmental experience, Elliott is committed to helping customers solve real-world business challenges by providing customized solutions and exceptional customer service, especially in short timeframes. Its quality tools and reputable services are upheld by 24-hour support, excellent customer service, in-house design capabilities, on-time shipping, and reliable inventory.



➤ Elliott's heat exchanger and condenser expander.

The following teams were involved: Application Specialist, Engineering, Operations, and Customer Experience.

Application Specialist

Once the project had been accepted, the application team quickly began coordinating efforts across the organization. Not only did the team determine all the necessary tooling required, they also established the training program.

"Training is something that we take pride in for providing as a service," explained Deisher. "It is something that has really taken off post COVID-19, as everyone is really trying to get in and get jobs done quickly and efficiently. In this case, our trainees were attentive and very results oriented, so we wanted to provide a very focused training with no fluff." After arriving on-site, Elliott provided the customers with an overview of the training, to ensure the information was receptive, before proceeding. Once the program had been

reviewed, the team went to work making sure no time was wasted and that everyone gained the necessary skills and knowhow to implement the maintenance practices in the future.

Deisher also had to adapt quickly, as issues with freights and delivery of products needed for training did not arrive as expected. After communicating with the team, Elliott was able to adapt and still provide a quality training program without wasting any time.

Product Engineering

To resolve the customers pain points with the tube sheet specifically, Elliott turned to its product engineers. Following the initial assessment and specifications from the application specialist, the team began the design and engineering process. As the company did not have any readily available, the engineers had to replicate the customer's tubing and adapter model, to ensure that the maintenance they were expected to conduct would be completed efficiently.

"The tube sheet hurdle was solved by combining two materials in one. It was impressive to witness the team's ability to modify in-house products to fit customer specific needs," Tucker explained. "The product engineers put together a demo vessel that was configured to respond similarly to the one on-site and we used that to not only source the materials in a short timeframe, but also for training purposes." "The second pain point we had to address was cutting the actual tube," added Deisher. Elliott engineers had a cutter that was typically used on thick boiler tubes. As the client's application mimicked a boiler tube, but was in fact a heat exchanger and evaporator, it would not work as expected. As a result, the product engineers had to determine how their tooling could be used on the customer's application. "We knew that given the size, the handheld tooling used on stainless steel material would be much slower, and provide cumbersome results," Tucker revealed. "Using previous prints, the team therefore adapted the tool which



➤ One of Elliott's products going through the assembly process.

allowed them to quickly resolve the issue and save tremendous amounts of time. This small tweak made a significant difference."

Operations

Upon reviewing designs from the engineering department, it became clear that the exact materials were not on-hand to meet customer expectations. To solve this challenge, the operations team did three things. "First, we combed through our inventory and found materials that we could modify to meet engineering's designs. Then, we rearranged our schedule and shifted work between work centers to increase capacity," said Yamashita. "Finally, we decreased our production time by improving our communication with our associates, so everyone was aware of the critical nature of each job. As a result, components traveled through the shop from work center to work center with minimum queue time."

The company was successful as everyone is working towards a common goal: "Quality specialty tools for an 'I need it yesterday' world. As a result, we can quickly pivot for our customers to innovate and drive continuous improvement," continued Yamashita.

Customer Experience

"We put customer service at the forefront of everything we do, which is why our customer experience department is an essential member of the team," said Ochoa. In addition to customer support, the customer experience team acts as a mediator between both the departments within the company, as well as between Elliott and the client. "To ensure we provide each of our customers with the attention they deserve, we work with a ticket system that provides organized strategies to represent the urgency of the inquiries being placed; it also dictates the internal support needed to proceed in the right direction," explained Ochoa. "This way we can connect all the dots and provide support in a friendly and speedy manner."

For the high priority level of the Wyoming project, Ochoa and the team made certain that the engineers had the details required to provide high quality service and complete the project on time. "While not all projects we undertake are urgent situations, when they are critical, we do a really good job of sounding that alarm, if you will," added Ochoa. "We work closely as a team to identify what is urgent, and what is not, which has a significant impact on how effectively the solution can be implemented."

If unforeseen complications arise, Elliott is dedicated to doing whatever it takes to ensure that the customers' expectations are exceeded.

Results and satisfaction guaranteed

The manner in which Elliott is able to adapt to complications on-site and provide reliable services is a testament to its dedication to putting the customer first. Regardless of the issue, and the pressing time frame, the operators at the production facility and Elliott were able to cut and pull out a tube within one hour – compared to the eight to ten hours previously mentioned.

"Despite some of the setbacks that we had, we successfully completed the a project, which was a big win not only for the customer, but for Elliott as well," said Tucker. "We also had an effective training that deepened our relationship with a very successful company that will continually come to us for advice, and tooling orders. The customers see the value in the service we offer, whether it is through installation, removal, cleaning, testing, or plugging." Elliott does a great job in working effectively to solve customer pain points in reduced timeframes. "Giving clients the ability to utilize their own resources and contractors through the training initiative also makes us a lot different than others in the industry," Deisher explained. "This success story was a product of Elliott's teamwork to satisfy the customers needs, and we cannot be happier with the result," he concluded.



➤ Elliott products are manufactured on site in Dayton, OH.