

## Meet Matt Ware, customer service manager and “head firefighter”?

Skarda employee Matt Ware first joined the company in 1998 as a customer service representative and two years ago he became the Customer Service Manager, or head firefighter as he calls it.

On any day, eighty issues might cross his desk. He has to “find the ones that need the most help. Put out the fires, the hottest problems; that is a great way to look at it. I’m the head fireman.”

The type of “fires” varies on a day-to-day basis as Ware serves as an intermediary between the inside and outside sales departments of Skarda Equipment Company. He supervises the customer service department at Skarda’s Omaha office, which involves helping the sales people meet their customers’ needs.

Ware said, “My job is to make their job easier, to give insides sales the tools they need, the resources they need, to allow them to do their job better and faster. We don’t want to make any mistakes.”

The attitude of better and faster served one Skarda customer particularly well, as Ware explained.

“We had a customer who on a Tuesday afternoon called us to get a prototype of a frame built out of 80/20. Wednesday morning the prototype was delivered. By Thursday, we finalized the design, and on Friday the factory had shipped 12 complete units to the customer. In less than two weeks, they had shipped a total of 123 of these complete frames. It is just phenomenal,” he said.

The customer had bought a different product from another distributor the week before, but it had proven to be too flimsy. Skarda, working closely with 80/20, met the customer’s needs and delivered 80/20’s single largest kit order of quick frame ever. The order involved 2.5 miles of one inch aluminum tubing, cut into 7,800 pieces.

When Ware isn’t putting out “fires”, he is spending time with his family, which is actually the reason he came to Skarda. Previously in retail management, Ware missed spending time with his family and desired an eight to five, Monday to Friday job. He and his wife Roxy have an eight-year-old son and four-year-old daughter.

In his free time, he also likes playing pool, shooting darts, and bike riding. Recently he has taken on several home improvement projects with skills he has learned from his father-in-law. He just finished helping build a deck for his mother and plans to build one for his family next.

Ware is a certified fluid power pneumatic specialist and has attended eight factory schools. He is also Skarda’s unofficial “chief firefighter.”



# New sales manager promises availability and service

Lynn Nordquist has moved for Skarda Equipment Company before, but this fall he is making two major moves. Nordquist, formerly the outside salesperson for the Wichita area, is now the Sales Manager for Skarda, operating from the Omaha office.

Nordquist and his wife Kim moved to Kansas City in 1988 so Lynn could become outside sales for the Kansas City area. In 1989 they moved to Wichita, where he has been the outside salesman for that area until October 1, 2004. Their children Derek and Koryn continue attending school; Derek plays baseball

“My customers knew they could count on me.”

at Lincoln University in Missouri, and Koryn is starting her freshmen year at Fort Hays State College in Kansas. Lynn explained that having his children in college has actually made the transition to Omaha more viable than it might have been previously.

After serving as salesman for sixteen years, Nordquist is looking forward to his new duties as Sales Manager and has identified ways to use skills he developed as a sales representative to manage Skarda’s sales force.

Describing his sales approach as product and application based, Nordquist sees his approachability as a useful tool for management. As a salesman, Nordquist, “always made myself approachable. If clients were really in trouble they knew they could reach me. My customers knew they could count on me.”

That same attitude of being available is what Nordquist hopes to do with Skarda’s sales representatives. “When I started with Skarda, I had a great mentor who was always there for me. I owe my success to that relationship and I want to do the same for our salesmen.”

In his new job Nordquist will work with all of Skarda’s outside salesmen to help ensure their success in serving Skarda’s customers. He will help train, guide, and support the sales staff. Nordquist is well equipped



to lead the salesmen. He has an associate’s degree in fluid power and has attended numerous product schools including Tolomatic, Balluff, Schroeder, Deublin, Gast, Enidine, and STI.

As a salesman, Nordquist enjoyed the problem-solving aspect of his job. “My greatest satisfaction comes from system selling, putting products Skarda represents in a package suited for the customer’s needs and being there when the project is completed.” These systems currently service numerous existing applications in Nordquist’s former Wichita territory.

Nordquist sees fluid power as continuing to be important for industry. He said, “I have heard a lot of talk that fluid power is outdated. I don’t share that view. It’s changed. Fluid power manufacturers have had to improve their products to compete with electrical motion products. There will always be a need for fluid power, a cost-effective means for motion control. The biggest advantage Skarda has to offer its customers is having three options for motion control from one source; pneumatic, hydraulic, and electric.”



## Success Stories from Skarda Employees

From outside sales:

A manufacturer of heavy duty transmissions needed to equip a new production line, which was a multi-million investment for the plant. Chad Hansen, territory manager, followed up on the lead from 80/20 in early 2004. Chad was able to help the customer meet its needs winning out over Skarda's top competitors. With an order of \$70,000 the customer purchased custom made mobile racks, stands, and tables to outfit its state of the art production facility. Skarda's outside salesman's knowledge, along with handling a great product, allowed for a successful application from factory through Skarda to customer in a timely manner.



Sandy Barnett helped a customer with an unusual need. The customer had trucks with tail lights that kept getting covered with snow during winter service. Skarda assisted in solving the problem by helping with a product that delivered a puff of air to clear the tail lights. The problem solver involved a timer and valves to shoot the air to the tail light. The customer continues to outfit trucks with this product.



From inside customer service:

Roger Lowe worked with a customer, a concrete plant, whose current valves consistently clogged up. He worked to help identify the correct size of valve in the AAA product line. The customer appreciated the specially patented designed valves that lasted three times as long than the previous line of valves they had used. The customer continues to use Skarda for its valve needs.



Kevin Redlinger assisted a customer who called on a Thursday afternoon looking for a cylinder so they could replace one that was failing and would probably go out over the weekend. Their supplier could not provide the part for over a week. Kevin took the cylinder information and cross-referenced it to a Sheffer cylinder. Under Sheffer's 24 hour break down expedite plan, the plant got the cylinder in time for the weekend maintenance.



### Announcing . . . Skarda now distributes Continental Hydraulics

Skarda is now an authorized distributor for Continental Hydraulics product line. Continental carries a complete line of hydraulic components from directional control valves to pumps and power units. Ted T. and Chuck K. will be attending a product training at Continental's headquarters in Savage, Minnesota this fall. Also the regional manager from Continental, Jeff Brandt, will be visiting Omaha in late October to provide the Skarda sales team with training. Continental has a standard three-year warranty on their products. Contact a sales person for more information.

*For any comments, questions, or suggestions on our new Skarda Equipment newsletter, please email [skarda@skarda.com](mailto:skarda@skarda.com)*

