



e-advantage



Finding performance, value in China

As a distributor, you've probably handled parts made in China. In fact, some of them may have come via Red Dot: we've been buying expansion valves and receiver dryers from Chinese suppliers for many years. Sourcing these and other components from China are part of our effort to deliver the best value in terms of cost, quality, and fit.

Stanley Chen manages Red Dot's business development in China. He splits his time between Shanghai and Seattle.

"Like anywhere else, there are suppliers in China who are conscientious about producing a quality product at a low price and there are others where price is the only priority," Stanley says. "The thing is, both types are finding customers. You have to be careful who you work with."

Stanley's job is to find heavy-duty parts suppliers who mirror Red Dot's standards for product quality and good business practices. He says the timing is right because after 10 years of joint ventures with auto companies, more Chinese suppliers understand why the bal-

ance of cost and quality is important to long-term success.

"They know that Red Dot wants the highest quality, most cost-competitive components both for OE products and for our aftermarket catalog," says Stanley. "For example, we have two Chinese compressors in our test facility. These same compressors are available



now through other suppliers in North America, but we're doing our own testing here in Seattle. We take nothing for granted."

Stanley is also in China to establish ties with OEMs with assembly operations there.

"If you want to be a supplier to elite global equipment manufacturers, you simply have to support their efforts in China," he says. "The country not only is a center of low-cost manufacturing, it's an important market for selling heavy equipment given the way China is expanding and improving infrastructure. Today, most of the air-conditioning demand comes from export markets but we know that's going to change in China. We're laying the groundwork so we're ready when that domestic demand picks up."

Here at home, you'll no doubt continue to find products from China in our units and in our catalog. But when we say we offer components that are OEM-quality or better, we know we have to be true to our word regardless of where they're made.

Stanley Chen develops business for Red Dot in China.

RED DOT NEWS

INVOICES BY eMAIL

To reduce paper and be more environmentally friendly, Red Dot is developing the capability to send invoices to you electronically. The rollout is scheduled for mid-August. If you would like to receive your invoices via email, send your Accounts Payable email address to LeahSattler@reddotcorp.com, or call 206-575-3840 x3338.

WELCOME BACK, TAMMY

Longtime Red Dot customers will hear a familiar voice in aftermarket customer service: Tammy Obermeit, who rejoined Red Dot in April after an eight-year absence. "A lot of the questions are the same. The biggest difference is how the catalog has grown," Tammy says. "Our team has really helped me get up to speed." Tammy brings enthusiasm and product experience to the job: prior to leaving Red Dot in 2000, she worked in customer service and warranty.



HFO-1234yf: the global alternate refrigerant?

A leading candidate to replace R-134a emerged at the SAE Alternate Refrigerant Systems Symposium in Scottsdale, Ariz., last month: HFO-1234yf, jointly developed by DuPont and Honeywell.

HFO-1234yf would appeal to on- and off-highway markets alike because it delivers similar performance to 134a and can be used as a direct substitute.

"Tests show that 1234yf has 5% less cooling capacity in a drop-in state, but with some simple modifications we can optimize the system," says Gary Hansen, Red Dot's vice president of engineering. "The big advantage to 1234yf is that A/C components wouldn't require radical component changes." In most cases, the only noticeable difference would be a distinct charge port.

To reduce emissions that can harm the atmosphere, the European Commission decided to ban R-134a in new car models starting in 2011. Although no similar timetable exists in North America, a standard alternative refrigerant



would allow global automakers to use one A/C system to address the world market.

"From our standpoint, we want the best combination of performance and cost for heavy-duty applications," Gary says. "Ideally, we'll have one refrigerant that can be used all over the world for many different types of vehicles."

Another option is R-152a. Last month, the EPA ruled that 152a is an acceptable alternative to 134a in mobile A/C systems starting Aug. 11. The EPA deferred a ruling on CO2. "We know that CO2 isn't a solution for our markets," Gary says.

The next step for 1234yf is additional toxicity and flammability tests. A consensus is needed by the end of the year so automakers have time to gear up for the EC deadline.

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All times are in the Pacific Time Zone

A QUESTION...

How often do you use the corporate plug attached to motors located on pages 318–324? Would you be willing to apply your own plug if plugs were available?

Let us know! Contact Robert Gardiner at robertgardiner@red-dot.com
Folks who answer will be put in a drawing for a \$100 gift certificate!