

The Five Critical Reasons to Choose a Stronger Outside Partner



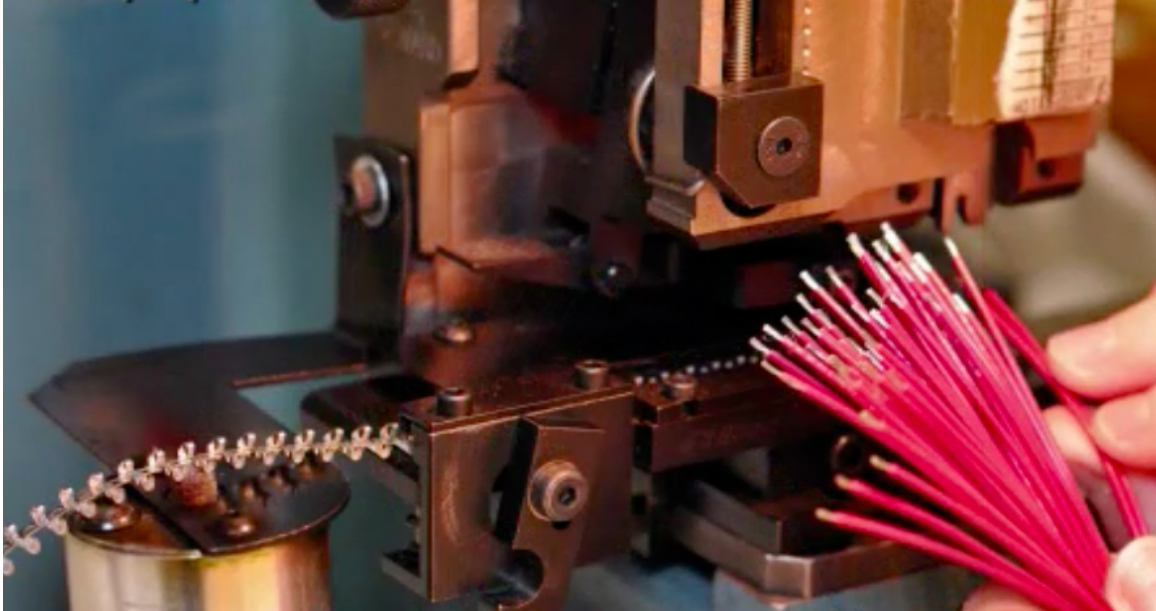
Are you overpaying for your electro-mechanical assemblies and wire harnesses? Whether you're building your wire harnesses, cable assemblies, electro-mechanical assemblies, and box build work inside your company or sending them to an outside supplier, chances are you can do better. Here are five critical reasons to choose a stronger outside partner.

1. Is Your Quality What It Should Be?

As much as anyone hates to admit it, poor quality and workmanship is far too common. In fact, it's been shown that 44% of electronic failures are the result of poor quality control. A key element to ensuring quality is assuring that your supplier has their ISO 9001:2008 certification (strong, written quality and process controls). Combine this with IPC/WHMA-A-620 training and certification (industry assembly and workmanship standards), as well as J-STD-001 training and certification (soldering workmanship standards), and you have a pretty good idea that your supplier is a true professional and takes their partnership with you very seriously. These certifications demand constant, ongoing training for the entire staff, as they maintain internal quality assurance and auditing programs and are subject to regular on-site inspections and outside audits. Superior quality should be your partner's obsession.

2. Are You Focusing On Your Core Competencies?

You are experts. Your company has expertise designing and marketing your products. Are you expert at building wire harnesses or electro-mechanical assemblies? Is this where you want your people spending their valuable time? Why would you compromise on this vital



building block? Stick to your knitting and allow a strong partner to provide these oft overlooked components.

3. Your Overall Cost To Do This Work Could/Should Be (Much) Lower.

- If you currently do this type of work in house, why? It's a low-margin activity which companies seldom analyze accurately to justify continuing to do it themselves. Have you accounted for overhead/manufacturing space required or the equipment required to build and test your sub-assemblies properly? What about the true cost of labor including burdened personnel, training, and certifications? How about quality, delivery, and troubleshooting? Again, do what you do best and farm out the rest.
- If you have decided to have this work done by an outside supplier, price is very important. However, always choosing the lowest priced supplier will often get you into trouble. What if the lowest priced company delivers a poorly built assembly . . . and it's late . . . and then they refuse to make things right, blaming you for their issues? Make sure to consider the total cost of doing business in making your decision. Do they emphasize high quality in their production processes, meeting or exceeding industry standards? Is communication timely, thorough, and knowledgeable? Are they flexible, with deliveries and dates met? Choose the lowest COST supplier and you'll be the big winner.

4. Deliveries Should Be On-Time, Flexible, and Meet YOUR Wish List.

Don't risk major delays and loss of revenue on a company that can't meet its own deadlines or work with you effectively on the inevitable spikes or changes. The best companies will bend over backwards for you but won't make superhero promises they can't live up to. When you place your order, ask for a delivery commitment via email. A strong supplier will offer Kanban options (very short turnaround for ongoing requirements), rush deliveries

when required (and if possible), “pull-ins” or “push-outs” when reasonable (without unnecessary hassles), and third party drop-ship alternatives.

5. Customer Service Should Be At The Top Of The List.

This is a tough one to judge “before the sale” because many companies are great up front only to let you down over the long haul. But customer support is near the top of the list when it comes to choosing a vendor and it’s critical to any long-term partnership. Find a supplier who understands the importance of customer service - trust your intuition, you’ll know! Look for a quick response to your inquiry. How fast can they quote on your project? Do they ask smart, intelligent questions? What’s their lead-time for delivery? Can deliveries be expedited if you’re in a pinch? Are they helpful and do they provide friendly, knowledgeable service? How are problems resolved? Sometimes the best way to see a supplier’s true colors is when something goes wrong. Does the company accept responsibility or try to make it your problem? Do they resolve the issue in a prompt and upfront way? Great customer service is available and it’s important, so make sure you receive it.

So . . . how does you or your present supplier measure up? We hope this white paper was helpful. If we can assist in any other way, please let us know (www.electroprep.com)

About Electro-Prep

Electro-Prep is a top supplier of custom electro-mechanical assemblies, box-build, wire harnesses, and cable assemblies. If you need further information, please contact Skip Sullivan at email skip@electroprep.com or call (800) 478-4578.

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