



WALTER

Global Community News



“Sharing the Collective Experience”

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Walter Canada preparing for e-business!

The environment we live in is quickly changing and typical to Walter, we want to be leaders of our industry. This is why Walter Canada is in the start-up phase of a project to go e-Business.

Our Changing Environment

Picture this... You are on your way to visit a customer in your new Ford Taurus and everything is working as it should. It's a beautiful day and the car is purring like a kitten. All of a sudden, something is wrong. Things are not as they should be! What is your Taurus doing in the Daytona 500? Your environment has changed dramatically, but not your business vehicle. Something is seriously wrong!

In these fast-changing times, it is becoming more difficult to adapt to our technological environment. With the increasing popularity of the Internet, E-Commerce, Business-to-Business and the like, business methods are evolving rapidly. The real question is: "How do these trends affect business methods in our industry —Metalworking?"



We have recently polled our customers on their use of new technology and their attitudes toward it. I think you'll find the results interesting:

- Although most customers realize that these market changes present opportunities, they are generally more concerned about how these trends will affect their business in the medium term.
- The majority of our customers use these high-tech tools at home
- Only about 10% of customers use them in business (opting for conventional communication methods such as telephone, face-to-face contact, fax, EDI,...)
- The lion's share of customers plans to use this technology in their business within the next 12 - 24 months.
- Most do not have much knowledge of how they will bridge the gap from business methods used "today" to those of "tomorrow".

So you can see that you are not alone in your deliberation about all that “dot-com” talk. One thing is clear: this is not a flavor-of-the-month craze. Business methods and communication are changing our world — quickly, and permanently.

At Walter, we see the challenge as, "How can we embrace the advantages brought about by technological changes while maintaining the pillars of our business philosophy?" We are reluctant to let go of the values that have made Walter number one in the Canadian market. We plan to adapt our business to the new technology while maintaining our key values of going to market.

Does this mean that we won't modify or change some of those values? No. There will be some changes. But values such as our relationships with our distribution partners; a personal approach to our customers' problems; offering differentiated, high-quality products; and educating our customers on increasing productivity and safety will remain a strong part of our culture.

We plan to develop our on-line approach with two objectives in mind:

1. To give our end-user customers on-line problem-solving information at their fingertips, and to select products and distributors that will provide a level of service that is difficult to visualize today.
2. To develop an on-line offer to all our distribution partners, making us easier and faster to deal with.

In summary, we see the goal as being to adapt our business methods and daily processes to those of the future, just as many successful businesses are doing. But the challenge is making sure to do it with our business partners. Our intention is to work closely with customers and distributors to ensure that Walter is not “going it alone”. It is critical that we share our technology, systems, software, ... so that the evolution improves our performance, that of our customers and of our distributors.

So, get ready to upgrade your Taurus for the new environment. Your new car may still have four wheels, but those wheels will not resemble anything we see today.
Stay tuned!

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If you have an experience that you wish to share with the Walter Global Community, please submit your comments at any time to csiregar@walter-net.com.