

Ingenuity is the Key to Powering Through Tough Times (and Normal Times, Too)

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It seems the need for fresh thinking and innovative ideas has never been more pronounced than in 2020.

One of the biggest requirements for success right now is being able to adapt to the world as it changes around us—and that often feels like a moving target. We obviously cannot control every situation brought before us, so we must respond

accordingly and push ourselves to grow within those areas of opportunity. Finding creative solutions to the myriad of challenges we encounter is critical.

This spring, without much warning we were thrust into a more virtual way of doing business. That presents unique challenges when you work in a plant environment or are accustomed to being onsite walking the plant floor. With travel drastically reduced Corporate Project Services has had far fewer opportunities to be onsite with clients, so we have been researching ways to provide services remotely. Wenger's service team works with clients using

cameras to show live footage of equipment and uses specialized software to identify and troubleshoot issues. This is one example of how virtual solutions are now shaping the industry.



The fallout from the pandemic has forced us to rethink everything we do in business and in life, finding new ways to handle tasks as routine as standing in a checkout line or, for CPS,

conducting equipment audits or designing a new plant for an aquafeed client.

Never before has innovation and ingenuity been so crucial to success in our industries—being inventive is the only way we can rewire our processes and operations to work within the parameters of the new reality.

Pushing Beyond the Limits

Ingenuity is about looking at an impossible situation and asking, “How can we do this better?” Instead of accepting “good enough” as a solution, the organizations

excelling are those who look at all angles, craft an approach, and push right on through.

COVID-19 has brought on many changes—some reactionary and temporary, but others that I believe could be permanent—and in many cases these different times are provoking companies to be even more creative and develop solutions that are going to help clients meet their goals.

Ongoing innovation trends in plant layout and design continue to hold steady despite current events—sanitization always has been a big focus but now is an even more important factor for keeping workers safe and healthy. Isolation of the equipment throughout the process, identifying zones, setting up a plan for employee movement to prevent cross-contamination, reducing flat surfaces on equipment to eliminate dust collection—all of these elements go into our plans even during normal times, and we're always searching for better ways to meet the goals.

Two other trends COVID-19 did not derail are related to the focus on environmental stewardship and improving efficiency. Companies want to accomplish more in less time, using fewer resources, and do it with the least environmental impact possible. In fact, one could argue the pandemic made this even more important.

We're continually researching new ways to make factories more efficient and find innovative, creative ways to balance rising costs while being friendly to our environment. Companies want to improve their sustainability profile, so how can we pursue carbon neutrality in plant design?

What role can renewable energy sources like solar and wind play in building a zero carbon factory? The balance of all of this is the challenge that requires innovation—we must figure out how to implement big changes while still mitigating risks and keeping costs contained.

Doing Better

The kind of pivoting we've been forced to do over the past several months requires innovative thinking—and with so many new variables at work, how do you create a food safe culture that is easy to manage and prevents losses from widespread downtime, or worse, a complete shutdown?

Advancements in our industries require sophisticated factory designs and processes fine-tuned for efficiency and precision. No matter what your extrusion project is, whether it's pet food, aquafeed, or human food, manufacturers need a partner with the experience and expertise to help navigate an always-evolving industry.

A spirit of innovation and ingenuity is what drives us at CPS and always has, and that is supported through our relentless focus as a team on continuous improvement. We're constantly learning and pushing ourselves to get better at what we do and further enhance our toolbox to give clients what they need most.

We approach every challenge and interaction with critical thinking and scrutiny to make sure the solution fits the problem. We stay current on trends so when we design a plant or counsel clients on a process, we're ahead of the curve and ready to address what they need the most.

We're always moving forward to find innovative ways to mitigate risks for all scenarios that could arise in a factory environment—navigating everything from the complexities of food safety standards to enhancing health and sanitization, to automating processes to scale-up production to meet growing demand.

Whether in normal times or during a pandemic, you can't get very far without innovation. Doing things the same old way might get you *somewhere*, but only ingenuity and innovation can help you overcome unprecedented challenges and be on a road toward improvement.

If you have questions for CPS or want to learn more about how our consulting services and resources can help you reach your goals, please [reach out to our team](#).

Corporate Project Services, a division of Wenger Manufacturing, is a dynamic group of planning specialists backed by Wenger's more than 80 years of process system supply to the industry. Our knowledge base and breadth of experience in extrusion processing and facilities construction is unsurpassed – and our commitment to excellence is recognized around the world.