



QAI LABORATORIES: A PARTNER FOR TESTING, INSPECTION, AND CERTIFICATION SERVICES

A good testimonial from a client bespeaks the credibility and key benefits of collaborating with an organization. Through a testimonial, a client is not only expressing the trust from a business perspective, but is also demonstrating the expertise and the quality of work of a particular organization. And if one testimonial reads, “QAI Laboratories places the client’s service first; the responsiveness of the staff and commitment to excellence exceeds expectations” nothing more needs to be said about the customer-centric culture and the real-time benefits provided by the organization.

The story of QAI Laboratories dates back to 1995 when Steve Harris, the founder of QAI Laboratories, noticed clients were often not provided the services they expected or deserved from third-party agencies. Also, he observed many products being held up in the regulatory approval process before they could be brought to the market, owing to the gap between third-party agencies and

clients. Being an industry veteran in the testing, inspection, and certification field, Steve wanted to address this gap between third-party agencies and clients by providing customer-centric solutions that specifically meet client’s compliance needs. This eventually led him to inception QAI Laboratories, a company that provides testing, inspection, and certification services.

In the initial stages of the journey, the company capitalized on providing compliance services to niche industries where clients were underserved. After gaining significant market share from these niche industries, QAI Laboratories reinvested into new markets where they could provide a complete service offering. “The client remains the focus of our business right from the inception,

and we feel this client centric culture is a large reason for our continued success,” says Steve Harris, Founder and CEO, QAI Laboratories.

Many manufacturers engage with their third-party compliance agencies when they are ready to bring their products to market. But, in many cases, as the third-party agencies are not involved in the process at the beginning, clients are not aware of the potential regulatory issues with related to their products, often making them grapple with necessary regulatory approvals. Unlike the third-party agencies that follow this approach and make clients resubmit for regulatory approvals, QAI Laboratories understands clients’ requirements and attempts to educate and helps them plan with clients for

Steve Harris
is the Founder and
CEO of QAI Laboratories

regulatory approvals in advance.

“Standards for product compliance are being developed and revised on a continual basis but generally lag behind the market by a few years,” states Steve. As a testing and certification agency, Steve adds, “We feel it is important to be involved with the standard development process in our core areas of business. This information is invaluable and allows us to make the client aware of new requirements and trends that affect their products”. Also, it helps the company to guide its clients on how to get standards updated to include technology in their product development process.

Today, QAI Laboratories is recognized as a one-stop-shop for all of the testing, inspection, and certification compliance needs. “Whether the product involves electrical safety, electromagnetic compatibility (EMC), environmental durability, structural or fire-resistance evaluations, QAI takes a holistic approach to ensure your product meets all regulatory requirements,” affirms Steve. By focusing on clients’ needs and taking time to understand their market plans and product offering, the company outlines customer’s requirements and creates strategies, which in turn, help them to get the product to the market on time.

Every manufacturer faces different types of challenges and pressures when taking a product to market. But only a few service

providers’ can relate to clients’ concerns despite the competition and rapid changes in the market. With the deep industry knowledge, QAI Laboratories closely communicates with its clients, understands their objectives, and tailors a compliance plan that enables clients to launch their products in the targeted market.

In one instance, a manufacturer facing challenges with a pile of test data relating to various products approached QAI Laboratories. It was clear that the manufacturer had invested a lot of time, effort, and resources on compliance but still was not able to get the necessary regulatory approval for products launch. Many third party service providers were blindly offering different test programs without understanding client’s product requirements and intended market plans. Inevitably the client ended up with a lot of redundant tests that did not fully encompass the product requirements. By taking time to review the data that was available and discussing intended uses and installations of the product, QAI Laboratories helped the client successfully launch its products in the targeted market.

“Our core competency is our knowledge base and deep understanding of regulatory requirements and test methods for a vast array of products both in North American and International markets,” explains Steve. Keeping a relatively flat organizational structure has also helped the company to quickly respond to client’s needs and market trends as they arise.

In the coming years, QAI Laboratories intends to invest heavily in capital equipment to expand its testing capabilities to offer a “one-stop-shop” for a greater variety of electrical technologies, building materials, gas appliances, and plumbing components. One such example is the development of a new, state of the art, fire test lab with close to 40,000 square feet of testing space. “We are also investing in operations on different continents to provide localized services in a more customer friendly and cost-effective manner,” concludes Steve. **TTH**



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