


SOME OF THE WAYS MANUFACTURERS PROVIDE CROSS REFERENCE INFORMATION


PROS


CONS

PRINTED IN CATALOGS

 Customers and distributors possessing a catalog have access to the manufacturer's cross reference information.




 Expensive to produce and distribute print catalogs.


 Competitors can usually obtain a catalog.


 Catalogs must be stored; a catalog may not be at hand when cross reference information is needed.

HARD COPIES CIRCULATED


 Customers and distributors possessing a "hard copy," have access to the manufacturer's cross reference information.




 Distributors and customers must keep track of where the information is filed; a "hard copy" may not be at hand when cross reference information is needed.


 Competitors can usually obtain a "hard copy".

ELECTRONIC FORMAT (.PDF, ETC.)


 Customers and distributors possessing the electronic file have access to the manufacturer's cross reference information.




 Distributors and customers must keep track of where the information is electronically filed; access to the file may not be available when cross reference information is needed.


 Competitors can usually obtain an electronic file.

SALES REPRESENTATIVE PROVIDES ANSWER


 Usually provides the customer with the best solution for their application.




 Decreases selling time.

 If sales representative is not immediately available, it may take an extended amount of time to obtain an answer.


TECHNICAL SUPPORT PROVIDES ANSWER

 Most assuredly provides the customer with the best solution for their application.




 If Technical Support is not immediately available, it may take an extended amount of time to obtain an answer.

CUSTOMER SERVICE PROVIDES ANSWER

 If Customer Service has the necessary expertise or access to information, can provide the end-customer with the best solution for their application.



 If Customer Service is not immediately available, or lacks the necessary expertise, it may take an extended amount of time to obtain an answer.

CROSS REFERENCE TOOL ON MFR. WEBSITE

 Self-service for customers and distributors.


Yet, according to NAED's 2015 Electrical Contractor's Benchmarking Survey,


94% of respondents use Search Engines, such as

Google, Bing, YAHOO!


to search for electrical products on-line.








 Customers (& distributors) may have to sign out of current application in their ERP system to access the Internet.

 Once on the Internet, customers must know: (a. How to locate the manufacturer's website; and (b. How to locate the cross reference tool on the manufacturer's website.

NOTE: Some distributors provide links to manufacturers' websites, but the customer will still need to know where to look for the information on the distributor's website.

 Most manufacturer's cross reference tools usually require a manufacturer catalog number.

HERE'S WHAT CONTRACTORS SAID ABOUT USING SEARCH ENGINES TO FIND ELECTRICAL PRODUCTS:

-  "The search engines are good for helping to identify manufacturers and often we do not have the information. Also, the search engines are a great place for identifying other sources or similar products."
-  "We often don't have a manufacturer, just a part number and Google finds numerous options which we can work through to find the correct item."
-  "It's easier just to type in what you want than hunt for a particular website. You can also compare prices."
-  "Intuitive search. Manufacturers require "their" name or catalog # used and we don't always have that information."
-  "It is not brand specific and shows all the different brands available."
-  "You can find what you are looking for faster."
-  "It allows me to use one tool to search many places."



BUT while search engines (Google, Bing, and Yahoo!) can provide cross reference information within seconds 24/7/365...

...they can also provide links to gray market providers and counterfeit products.



WE NEED TO FIND A MORE EFFICIENT WAY TO PROVIDE THIS INFORMATION!!!

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