

# Partners In Propylene

**F**orget about the latest filler metal to hit the market. And that fancy, new piece of technology? It will be obsolete tomorrow. How about a 27-inch bevel cut with one flame, one pass and no additional cleanup. And did I mention no preheat? That ought to get your customers' attention. "Fuel gas has traditionally never been a sexy sell," says Ashley Madray, a principal at Gas Innovations. "We are changing that with propylene." By using fuel gas as a lead, Madray

A broad range of applications allows for efficient cutting, heating, brazing, gouging, spraying and more. When burning propylene, the only residual outputs are moisture and carbon dioxide, meaning less clean up and a cleaner finish for end-users.

From a cost perspective, propylene comes with a low investment barrier for distributors. Filling the gas requires only a liquefied petroleum (LP) gas tank, a pump, a motor and a scale. The tank itself is not required to be installed on an



After switching from propane to propylene, the user increased cut speeds on this 32-inch steel coil from 4 inches per minute to 10, while realizing a 60 percent improvement in production and costs.

says that distributors can make an impression on both existing and potential customers. And by partnering with the La-Porte, Texas, company for their propylene needs, distributors can leverage fuel gas to win the entire industrial gas business at those accounts.

While propylene can be used to pierce 17-inch steel, it is not all about show. The gas is safer than acetylene, with a flammability range less than 15 percent of that of acetylene in air.

engineered pad. Distributors also save on disposal costs, as cylinders can be sold for scrap steel value rather than be disposed, as with acetylene cylinders.

### **MAKING AN ADJUSTMENT**

Distributors can promote successful conversion to propylene by making sure end-users switching from acetylene have the proper accessories. Gas Innovations' specially designed



With Gas Innovations and propylene, the distributor helped the end-user achieve a 27-inch, 75-degree bevel cut on 5 $\frac{3}{4}$ -inch 516 grade steel. At bottom left, the finished, clean bevel, ready to weld.

cutting tips, heating tips, gouging tips and brazing tips for propylene will help end-users achieve efficiency and productivity in their applications. "There can be no one-size-fits-all tip, given the differences between propylene and acetylene or other fuel gases in BTU, temperature and pressure setting. Users that value efficiency, performance rating and fuel costs learn and appreciate the value of having the right equipment." Once the user has the proper tip, Madray offers the following advice: "There are three things the end-user must do: set the torch flame, set the torch flame and set the torch flame."

For end-users who are familiar with using acetylene, Gas Innovations makes the transition to propylene an easy one. To offer a suitable replacement, the company developed the MC Solution, a 14.1-ounce disposable or 2-pound refillable cylinder, and the B Solution, a 6-pound aluminum or 8-pound steel cylinder. These solutions are ideal for mechanical contractors, HVAC contractors and plumbers. For users who require larger capacity, Gas Innovations has that covered with a full line of cylinders, horizontal and vertical bulk tanks, all the way up to railcar distribution at 130,000 pounds.

Gas Innovations' most common bulk installation is a combination of two to three interconnected 1,000-gallon tanks. Where space is a concern, vertical bulk tanks offer a smaller footprint for distributors or end-users. In addition to space savings, Gas Innovations' vertical tanks were designed with compliance in mind. At 1,200 gallons and up, tanks have greater distance requirements. To simplify compliance, Gas Innovations designed a 1,190-gallon tank. Where reporting and permitting issues come into play at 2,000 gallons, the company offers a 1,900-gallon tank. Similarly, a 3,900-gallon tank avoids installation and barrier requirements that apply to 4,000-gallon tanks.

### TRUE PARTNERS

From its specialized tips to its smartly designed vertical tanks, Gas Innovations draws on a wealth of experience to develop products and services that are nothing short of innovative. "Together, our employees have several hundred years in the development of propylene as an alternative fuel

gas and the equipment needed to make it perform at the most efficient level," says Madray. In all, 28 employees at Gas Innovations hold LP gas licenses that allow them to install, fill and maintain propylene tanks and equipment. The company knows compliance issues inside and out, having worked with organizations such as the Compressed Gas Association, the National Fire Protection Association and the Texas Railroad Commission to partner in writing compliance standards and procedures and performing incident review.

More than a commodity supplier, Gas Innovations looks at the relationship with the distributor as a true partnership. "Many distributors have expertise in cryogenic and high pressure products. We can be their operations department for LP gases." As part of this partnership, Gas Innovations offers four-hour training "boot camp" sessions for inside and outside sales reps, as well as on-site equipment and safety training, at the distributor's site for distributor sales reps and at the end-user's sites for the distributor's customers. Additional resources and videos are available at [www.GasInnovations.com](http://www.GasInnovations.com).

One of the unique services Gas Innovations offers distributor partners is its sales and target marketing program. Working from a database of 14 million businesses, the company matches distributors to prospective end-users. "Our target marketing program combines data from Standard Industrial Classification (SIC) and Dun & Bradstreet and breaks prospective customers down by geography, industry sector and company size," says Madray. "If a distributor has a sweet spot of supply, we can hone in on his ideal customer and identify similar accounts in his area." Gas Innovations' will also conduct target marketing for other lines that its distributor partners carry, including specialty gas, bulk gas and welding wire.

The partnership does not stop there. Once an opportunity is identified, Gas Innovations teams up with the distributor on direct sales calls. After identifying the end-user's application, Gas Innovations prepares appropriate tanks, pumping systems, vaporization systems, pad designs and compliance information. "We go with the distributor for the product introduction, the application demonstration and the safety training. We want to do the whole job." True to its partner designation, Gas Innovations does not compete with distributors.

Distributors have many reasons for offering propylene to their end-users, from its performance in heavy applications to the cost savings it can provide. Madray sums it up well: "Propylene offers many advantages over acetylene and other fuel gases. If a distributor is not marketing propylene to his customers, his competitors will." With Gas Innovations at their side, distributors can add propylene to their offering with confidence in a partnership backed by innovation and experience. 