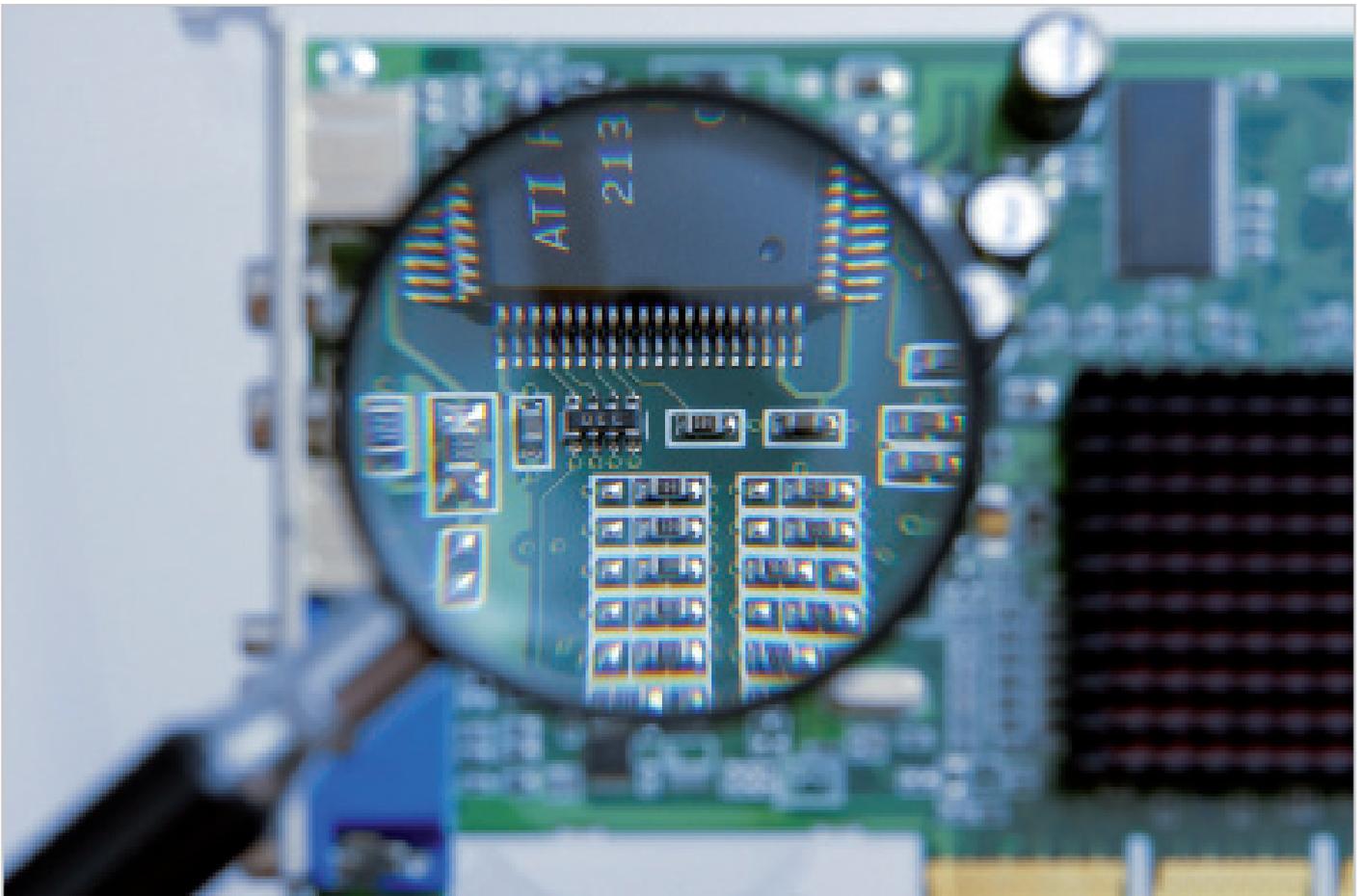


Choosing a Temperature Control Partner



8 Top Tips

1. PRODUCT OFFERING

When selecting a temperature control partner the first consideration is typically selecting the right product.

A supplier that offers a broad range of products from basic, entry level devices through to sophisticated instruments designed for complex applications will be best placed to help you during the specification and selection process, so you can find a product that fits your exact requirements rather than you having to compromise on your application's needs to fit the product.

By the same token, if a supplier is only able to offer a limited choice of instruments, you may find that to meet one specific requirement you will have to purchase a more advanced instrument with functionality above and beyond that which you require.

Top tip: Find a supplier with a comprehensive product range

2. RELIABILITY

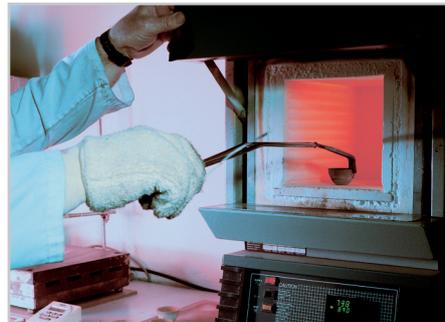
Temperature control is often a vital aspect of a machine's functionality. When specifying the temperature control component for your equipment it is essential that you select a product that will meet the on-going demands of your application. Reliability is a crucial characteristic for an efficient temperature control product. It can be extremely costly if your expectations are not met. When selecting a product it is advisable to

ask your supplier about the quality history of the product.

Top tip: Ask for references from other customers using the temperature control instrument

3. APPLICATION KNOWLEDGE

Wherever possible it is advisable to work with an established temperature control partner that is dedicated to working with your industry.



A specialist partner will work with you on your product specification, providing another layer of expertise to ensure that your solution will capture and meet all considerations. This additional support during the specification stage can pay dividends in ensuring the project runs to schedule and stays within budget.

For OEMs, the ability to call on specialist knowledge and skills can play an important role in enhancing the functionality, performance and reliability of your end product.

Top tip: Look for a partner that has proven experience in your industry

Application Knowledge

Mini Case Study - OEM Producing Laboratory Ovens

A machine builder was facing issues with the reliability of the temperature controller used in their laboratory ovens. As a result they were looking for a direct product replacement.

During probing conversations with engineers from a specialist supplier, it became apparent that there was also an issue with the performance of the oven. Considerable temperature fluctuations were being caused every time the oven door was opened and closed, with a subsequent overshoot as the controller sought to bring the oven back up to operating temperature. This cycle of oven cooling and heating was a major inconvenience for the end users, wasting time while temperature within the oven stabilises and consuming unnecessary amounts of energy.

By monitoring the way in which the ovens were used and then defining the characteristics of each temperature cycle, engineers were able to customize a standard controller, programming it to ensure that optimum temperature was restored as quickly as possible, with a far smoother operating curve that had previously been possible.

This specialist understanding from their temperature control partner enabled the equipment manufacturer to build a far superior machine to that of their competition enabling them to gain a true competitive advantage.

4. TESTING AND COMPLIANCE

All applications involving temperature control will have different levels of testing and compliance required.

Considerations must include which countries and regions the end product will be sold into. It is also necessary to understand the environment where the temperature control instrument will be used as the panel sealing on products vary considerably in terms of durability and resistance to challenging environmental factors such as dust, water resistance, excessive electrical noise or other environmental stress.

Make sure that the product offering has been tested and is compliant with your application's specific industry standards and meets all of the necessary regulations. Your temperature control partner should be able to advise you on which products are suitable, providing an extra level of reassurance that the product you choose is fit for purpose.

It is reasonable to expect your chosen temperature control partner to be aware of changing standards relating to your specific application, they should also be able to work with you on life cycle management. A specialized temperature control partner will have a long term product plan to safeguard against component obsolescence.

Top tip: Verify that your temperature control supplier tests products to meet relevant standards such as CE and UL

5. TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Do you have temperature control expertise in-house? If so are you able to cover annual leave, sickness and staff turnover?

When selecting a temperature control partner the on-going technical support provided should be a key consideration. It is worth thinking about the type of support that you might need as well, be it remote support by telephone or on-site technical support. Another question should be which languages you may require technical support in?

Technical advice and support may be required at the outset during set up and configuration but it should also

want to have complete peace of mind that should a problem arise then you have the technical support in place to ensure process downtime will be minimal.

It is advisable to look into the support options offered by potential temperature control partners; is it a complimentary service or is technical support chargeable? What is the service level agreement for response and resolution of issues?

These are all questions to consider when looking at the support service provided with the product.

Top Tip: Ask to see a copy of the Service Level Agreement

6. CUSTOMIZATION

Some suppliers of temperature control instrumentation provide custom designed products,

specifically to meet an individual customer's requirements. Does your potential temperature control partner offer a customization service?

Customization at the component level is not something that many OEMs naturally consider when developing new equipment; however, by moving the focus further down the production chain

it is possible to create strong product differentiators, in terms of form, function and aesthetics.



be available at any point during the process and your relationship with your temperature control partner. You

Working with a partner that has a broad standard product offering enables them to use a standard or previously customized product as the foundation for the new bespoke component. By doing this a supplier is often able to keep the costs of customization affordable.

Custom designs can be used to enhance equipment in many forms, from simple changes of colour and branding to improve machine aesthetics, or changing menu structure to optimize operation for improved efficiency, right through to the manufacture of total bespoke hardware mechanics and user interfaces.

Top tip: Consider whether your machine and competitive offering could be improved by using a customised temperature control component

7. SCALABILITY

Do you know exactly how many temperature control products you require and how frequently you will need them? Is it possible that your demand might increase above

your forecast? These are questions that should be considered during the selection process for selecting your temperature control supplier. It is crucial to choose a partner who has the flexibility and capability to future proof your needs. Look at both the production and delivery capabilities of your temperature control partner in case your unit demand will increase.

Top tip: Ask for lead times on production and delivery at various quantity break points

8. STABILITY AND LONGEVITY

As with any supplier that you choose to work with, it is essential to carry out due diligence into the financial stability of the company.

When specifying a temperature control product as a component in your machine it is even more important that you choose a partner who will be able to provide a long and stable relationship. In the ever challenging economic climate it



is essential to make sure that the components you specify for your machine will be available long term and that you minimize the potential risks of a supplier suffering financial failure. As well as the immediate costs incurred through component shortages the challenge of having to alter the overall specification of your machine to incorporate a new component is an expensive one and one which would place significant pressure on your resources.

Top tip: Check out how long the company has been in operation and if it is financially stable

West Control Solutions is a global specialist in temperature and process control instrumentation. Through its four leading product brands, CAL, West, PMA and Partlow, it has been supplying the industrial and scientific industries with reliable, easy-to-use temperature control equipment for over 100 years. For more information on the temperature control product range from West Control Solutions please visit www.west-cs.com.

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