

# “My customers want to know I care about them. That when they call at 6, 7, or 8 at night, you are going to answer the phone.”

- ERIC GOSSMAN  
REGIONAL SALES MANAGER

## PUTTING CUSTOMERS FIRST

Eric Gossman credits Yaskawa's success working with customers in the Pacific Northwest to one of the company's core principles: putting customer relationships ahead of the sale.

“My customers up here, they want to know who you are,” Eric said. “They want to know the kind of person you are. They want to see you in person when you're working on a project. They want to know you care about them. That when they call at 6, 7 or 8 at night, you are going to answer that phone. Fortunately for me, Yaskawa recognizes there's more to a relationship than pushing the price of a product.”

Eric mostly deals in applications related to thermoplastics, printing and converting as well as aerospace. His territory as a Senior Sales Engineer covers a lot of ground. It runs from Oregon, Washington, Montana and Idaho all the way to Alaska. So being there for his customers takes some kind of effort.

“Yeah, I can have some crazy days. If I'm heading to Kalispell, Montana, I'm flying in the night before because it's hard to get to, and I want to be sure I'm at the customer first thing in the morning,” he said. “I'm having a coffee with the company president at 7am. He's the guy I want to see before anyone else. We will meet for as long as it takes. I want to get his perspective on what's important to him in the moment because that's going to drive my agenda with his team the rest of the day.”

“Establishing what's important to the owner, well, that sets expectations for the day. Everyone

knows what we're about during my visit. Then I meet with the controls people and the mechanical engineers and production folks to hear about their challenges. We will spend four to six hours together.”

“Then I'll go to another customer later in the day. I'll visit the main contact there before walking the halls to see who else has a 'see me before you leave' request. Once people know you're there, they all want to see you. That's just one day visiting customers in Kalispell, Montana.”

That recognition of what Yaskawa offers customers starts at the top of the companies he works with, Eric said.

“You can't overstate the importance of connecting to the top guy,” he said. “You want to have a relationship with the decision maker. We're all humans. We need to connect. When you've got a guy that is ostensibly the most passionate person about what they do, you want to understand their vision and how you can help them execute that vision.”

“It's inherent to how we work with customers at Yaskawa. And it's very important for two reasons: one, it tells them I'm a good listener. Two, it helps me prove I know them, and I know my stuff. That I have good ideas and that I can help that company evolve.”

“That's what we're here for, right?”

