

## Steve Morgan on: Advantages of a Turnkey Approach to Service



The word 'turnkey' has really made its rounds in business jargon. Some purists may even say it has been overused—and they wouldn't be wrong. Businesses throw the word around like confetti, meant to impress and distract, with the implication that it means something important and desirable. But what does turnkey, as a business concept, actually mean?

Well, if you've ever found yourself puzzling over this intriguing question, you've come to the right place. The dictionary offers some basic definitions of turnkey as an adjective (for the sake of brevity, we'll assume the noun version meaning 'jailer' is probably not applicable to your current business model). Turnkey (the adjective) means fully-equipped, or ready-to-go, as in the case of a product that is meant to be a full-package deal.

This is a decent place to start, but it applies more to the concept of a *turnkey product*. A turnkey product tends to be off-the-shelf ready for use with minimal, if any, customization. This allows the end user to save on costs and get a product they know is tried, tested, and true.

Turnkey service is a more complex matter. When people talk about turnkey in business and manufacturing, what they are really talking about is a business practice—an

attitude, if you will, that influences not only the construction and sale of a particular product, but also shapes the company behind it, its overriding culture and its approach to the client experience.

A company that claims to provide turnkey *service* has broad scope and follow-through, one that recognises a client's needs and goes the extra mile in meeting them. It's the idea of a one-stop shop, where a company addresses the client's issue as a whole, not only in parts, so the client doesn't have to deal with the hassle of coordinating an array of (frequently disparate) trades and equipment just to get a problem resolved.

In the area of noise control, a non-turnkey company may provide a muffler (maybe even a turnkey muffler) but a turnkey *company* not only provides that muffler, but also the acoustical testing to make sure you need it in the first place, as well as the installation and follow-up and everything else needed to get you from point A (the problem) to Z (an effective and guaranteed solution). They'll address every aspect of a problem comprehensively and ensure that the solution reached is the most efficient and effective for the application.

### The Blueprint

A turnkey company goes in with a plan—or a blueprint—for success. The simplified version of this blueprint in acoustics can be applied to almost any sector of industry.

#### 1. Analyse

The first step is to analyse the problem. This can involve a detailed risk assessment, such as a noise impact assessment, or any

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other tool meant to discern the nature of a problem so as to address it intelligently and in full.

### 2. Engineer and Design

Step two: engineer and design. Based on the information uncovered in step one, the turnkey company can now draw up a solution that works for their client.

### 3. Manufacturing

Step three: manufacturing. Like it says on the tin, this stage is where the solution is made reality and crafted to fit the client's exact needs, preferably in such a manner that every aspect of the solution and its implementation is taken care of by the turnkey company (e.g., providing everything from acquisition of materials and handling, to building the product, to shipping and delivery of the product).

### 4. Installation

The fourth and final step in this process is installation. The turnkey company doesn't merely ship the product off and hope for the best—they monitor and coordinate the installation to ensure proper implementation of the solution. It doesn't stop there, however. Key to this final stage are follow-through and follow-up. Not only installing the product, but making sure it works and does the job intended, making sure that the client's expectations are met to the best of the company's ability—or, when possible, exceeded.

### Conclusion

The advantage of the turnkey product is that it isn't custom-made—it's easy to mass produce and ship out, and both sides save on costs this way. But the turnkey company, the business culture of the full-service package and going-the-extra-mile, sometimes this does involve customization.



It isn't always the easy option. It requires integrity and follow-through and accountability and a level of customer service that, unfortunately, has become all too uncommon in our mass-produced, straight-off-the-conveyor-belt world. But becoming a turnkey company and encouraging the development and growth of that company culture is a laudable goal that sets companies apart.

At the end of the day, it's a matter of client excellence. You have to ask yourself, do you want your clients to be satisfied with your service, or do you want them to be *electrified* by the quality and scope of your commitment to client satisfaction?