



A Rising Star of the Fastener Industry **CHRIS CHEN**

“ The Pious Believer of Consequentialism and the Key Man Guiding Pro Power to Continuous Success ”

Once working for a leading Taiwanese fastener old brand in Management of both Sales and Marketing sectors for over 25 years, the founder of Pro Power Co., Ltd., Chris Chen, experienced the surging period of the growing scale from NTD 0.1 billion revenue to NTD 2.7 billion. Chen has always differentiated himself from others with his unique corporate management philosophy. Although he is the 2nd generation of fastener industry in Taiwan, he still has an aggressive DNA in his blood as of his predecessors. In addition, his characters of “being never fully satisfied and having no fear of taking on any challenges” later made him determined to depart from the umbrella of his family’s business and establish his new territory- Pro Power, which has been overwhelmingly increasing its presence in the global market with fierce competition.

Getting Rid of the “Stability” Tenet Worshipped in Conventional Industries and Taking the Offensive in Competition

This past 25-year career life not only enabled Chen to be more sensible but accumulate experience and knowledge in various fields ranging from corporate management, strategies & methods, and international sales & marketing. According to Chen, those brands with a long history usually have had a stable customer base, thus, most of the times they’d rather play safe and hold a rather conventional point of view. However, the deeply rooted ambition and his challenge-loving personality urged him to move to next milestone. As a result, Pro Power, with an aim at business transformation and developing more customers, was established. “I won’t say that I established Pro Power due to how much determination I’ve made, but I’d rather say that I was then convinced that I could do a better job in the shortest possible time,” says Chen.

As far as Chen is concerned, the goal of Pro Power is not only to maintain existing business, but most importantly, to create a bright future, as Taiwan is a small market, which must rely on imports after all. Take a few large manufacturers in Europe or USA for example, their annual export volume is even more than the total of Taiwan. If Taiwan wants to increase its share in the global fastener



market, taking the offensive in competition is the only way. If Zyh Yin, his family's business, is like a shield, then Pro Power will be like a sword, helping Taiwan compete for orders in the global fastener market. Both companies operate independently, but also collaborate with each other.

Taking the Initiative to Win Customers' Orders

Distinguished from the management of general SMEs, who prefer putting their salespersons as the front line in customer interaction, Chen is even pleased to get himself involved in direct communication with customers. He even flew to the headquarters of his customers for times, in order to win their trust and orders. Why? "As I have confidence in getting customers' recognition," says Chen. Such words fully reveal his boldness and aggressiveness.

According to Chen, if one would like to win customers' orders, he should not be passive. It's an era abundant in published information and data, so some ways have been outdated and cannot be applicable to all scenarios. Chen specifically added that the maintenance of customer relationship must be based upon "reciprocation" rather than "friendship." He noted that although friendship may make one enjoy the benefit of priority under the same conditions, however, it can be also useless if the same conditions do not exist. Chen once told one of his customers, "If you're able to find a vendor whose price is 1% cheaper than mine, then go buy from him! As if you buy my product at a higher price only due to our friendship, forcing the vendor to sell his products to others, who then turn to compete with you, you and I will both lose our future orders in the end." On the other hand, when it comes to helping customers solve their problems, Chen said the key point is whether a "responsible attitude" can be fully held or not, which means one should always stand in customers' shoes, and which is the reason that Pro Power under Chen's leadership can be admired by customers at all times.

100% Authorization to His Team Except for "Giving up"

As the head of Pro Power, Chen said that he never trains his team, but the other way around, the team trains him. Such complete trust allows the Sales, R&D and manufacturing teams of Pro Power to carry out their strategies and plans with a free hand. With a goal being clearly set, all employees of Pro Power have full authorization to do anything. Although they may face challenges and frustration, it is worth it as long as they achieve the goal in the end. Chen also addressed that the employees of Pro Power are those who have higher expectations of their lives, who don't take things as they are, and who embrace changes every day. Chen states that he believes experience can be accumulated and expertise can be cultivated, but whether one can be successful depends on how great an ambition he's got. "Just do it and never give up easily," says he.

Get the Capacity Ready Before Customers Have Their Demands

Customers of Pro Power are mostly from the retailing industries requesting for medium-to-low end fasteners. However, Chen continues to introduce advanced fastener manufacturing equipments from Italian SACMA and Korean Hyodong. Chen explained that manufacturing low-end products particularly requires the use of efficiently operating machines, as when the price is low, any quality issue may possibly result in a great cost-relevant loss. In other words, when the price climbs high, manufacturers can still have doubled or tripled profit margin after losing some pieces of products. Moreover, introducing advanced machines not only boosts the efficiency in manufacturing, but also can increase the technical capabilities for processing high-end products in the future. The new SACMA machine model Chen introduced for Pro Power will be ready to manufacture for customers' orders in 2020. Chen also optimistically forecasts that Pro Power's capacity will double by the end of 2020.

Considering the serious talent gap of Taiwan fastener industry, Chen believes that the introduction of highly automated machines will effectively prevent Taiwan fastener industry from relying heavily upon "veterans." In this way, he does not need to spend many years for cultivating a veteran but only needs simple trainings for a novice to operate machines. Most importantly, it greatly reduces the labor training costs and enhances manufacturing efficiency.

Price Cutting? Only Losers will Say So

In Chen's opinion, only losers on the market take "price cutting" for granted. He used to hear that someone was complaining about prices being too low or someone was selling products at prices lower than his cost, but he noted that they are definitely not competitors, as they are not even willing to quote. Actually, they are merely calculating others' costs on the basis of theirs. According to Chen, one may not be successful by selling products at low prices, but if he could be successful by doing so, he must have had something extraordinary. Under such conditions, if one is able to do it, he will almost have no rivals.

Small Companies will Inevitably Go Toward Economy of Scale

The capacity of Pro Power is increasing rapidly. "Small companies will grow bigger, and big companies will also get larger. The final winner will always be the one who reaches the economy of scale first." He pointed out that not only Pro Power should continue to invest, but also other Taiwanese companies should continue to invest in manufacturing fasteners of any kind. If one can make the most of Taiwan's comparatively lower fastener manufacturing cost and highly efficient labor resource, he is definitely able to compete with other market players around the world. Chen's objective in the next couple of years is to continue the factory expansion and new plant establishment of Pro Power, show the remarkable strengths of Taiwan fastener industry to the world, and establish an impeccable team that deserves the name of "Pro Power." ■

