

# STRAIGHT to the POINT



## For Construction Giant Degussa, It's the Little Things that Add Up to Big Value.

In dynamic times like these, companies grow by adapting to change. Degussa Admixtures of Cleveland, Ohio knows this well. Years ago, like most large companies, Degussa, provided its own railroad spur for the delivery of materials. Now, however, the process of breaking up trains and maintaining single rail tracks is simply not cost-effective. Therefore, transloading—the complex process of transferring materials between some combination of truck, sea and rail transportation—became a priority for Degussa.



### SITUATION

Degussa needed a company to provide the efficient transloading of liquid and solid bulk construction materials from rail cars to tank trucks, for delivery to their Phoenix plant. To John Casto, Distribution Manager of Degussa, the first priority was to find a full-service company that was geographically close to the facility. VTC fit that bill perfectly.

### The value of **THE EXTRA MILE**

*When complex logistics made it impossible for Degussa to provide its own product shipping in a cost-effective manner, they turned to VTC, where transloading and superior service were both just "business as usual."*

See *The Extra Mile* inside>



***If left unchecked, the potentially dangerous silica fume could disperse quickly over a wide area***

Casto also wanted more than mere convenience. He wanted a company known for its dedication to service, a customer-first attitude that would drive them to go the extra mile and find ways to make the transloading process more effective and economical. VTC won on that score too.

### **A GO-THE-EXTRA-MILE ATTITUDE**

One task VTC handled early in its relationship with Degussa was the transloading of Super Sacks® of silica fume, a filler used in the making of concrete, which is shipped in the form of a fine grey powder. The process required emptying the Super Sacks into a large hopper. VTC knew that this unloading would require special handling, because the particle size of the silica fume is 100 times smaller than the average cement particle, and certain ingredients found in silica fume—TLV and PEL—are rated as environmentally hazardous. If left unchecked, the potentially dangerous silica fume could disperse quickly over a wide area.

John Casto hoped his chosen transloading company would be alert enough to take precautions to mitigate the environmental hazards. He was not disappointed. As VTC's Greg Clifford tells the story: "The Super Sacks had to be emptied into a square oversized bin that traversed to the bottom at a sharp angle. This created enough motion in the material so that scatter was bound to occur. So first we put a tent above that traverse to contain to powder, and then we made sure our handlers wore the proper breathing filtration gear throughout the process."

***"VTC solved a giant customer service issue, while also saving Degussa a tremendous amount of money."***

Casto was pleasantly surprised that VTC thought of this. "We didn't tell them to do this, they came up with it themselves!"

As Greg Clifford remembers it, "It never dawned on us that we had done anything exceptional.



*The value of*  
**THE EXTRA MILE**

### **EXTRA CAPABILITIES**

**The ability to expertly handle both dry and liquid transloading operations with ease keeps administrative costs to a minimum**

It was all just part of the service.” That service will mean something different for each VTC customer, but for all of them, it means going the extra mile.

On another occasion, Degussa needed quick response on securing a tank truck with a product discharge meter. The truck had to make multiple stops, discharging its liquid cargo at various points along the way. Without a meter, getting an accurate measure of just how much liquid had been dispensed, stop after stop, would have forced the driver to go to out of the way to a weigh station between stops, causing considerable delays and additional cost.

VTC provided timely response in the form of an attached meter that allowed accurate measurement during transfer—without time-consuming detours.

To Greg Clifford, taking these extra steps is a natural reaction. “Covering all the bases is just something we do day after day, job after job.” The reasoning behind such an attitude has as much to do with practicality as it does with professionalism. As he puts it, “We go out of our

way to help our customers, because it’s really the only way a company can build customer loyalty—they don’t need us if we don’t meet their needs.”

***“VTC is a strategic transportation partner for Degussa in the West”***

### **A NATURAL EVOLUTION**

For Degussa’s John Casto, the choice of VTC was a logical move, part of a relationship long in the making. “They are a strategic transportation partner for Degussa in the West,” he says.

“Ventura Transfer Company has been our container link to the port for years. We depend on them to deliver our ISO containers both to the port and back to the plant,” he says. “A couple of years ago, when our supplier closed their plant in the West, we were dependant on having to ship dry bulk across the country, which was very expensive. That’s what led to



### **EXTRA SERVICE**

On-board flow meter supplied with the tanker truck saves valuable weigh-in and drive time while providing accurate measurement of the dispensed product.



### **EXTRA VALUE**

Having VTC as a full-service transloading solution means not having to spend time and resources worrying about the product getting from port to customer.



our naming VTC for the silica fume transloading task. It solved a giant customer service issue, while also saving Degussa a tremendous amount of money.”

### **EXPERTISE THAT HAS BEEN EARNED**

Paying attention to the “little things,” the details that can spell the difference between profit and loss, is nothing new for VTC. It’s a quality upon which they’ve built a reputation for competence, professionalism and efficiency— one that has lasted more than 130 years. And, while the modalities of transportation have certainly changed in that time, VTC’s can-do, go-the-extra-mile attitude has remained the same. Customers in the 21st Century know, just as their counterparts in the 20th and 19th centuries knew, that assignment after assignment, simple tasks or tough jobs, VTC does it right.



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