

## A Shared Philosophy Ensures Repeat Business

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When Holiday House Distributing, the largest distributor of OCS, water and vending parts in North America, needed a modification to a ball valve design, there was no question that it would ask The Specialty Manufacturing Co. (SMC) to create it. Although Holiday House could have chosen to continue to perform manual assembly of the fitting, or instead farm out the assembly, experience told them that SMC would be able to reengineer an existing part and supply all the expertise needed to do so.

### ***The Challenge***

Holiday House needed a 0.5 in. male National Pipe Thread (NPT) end for the Specialty Manufacturing 074-Series plastic ball valves that would not leak under pressure, while replacing two existing parts. The existing solution used by Holiday House required multiple operations and sub-assembly to arrive at the intended outcome.

According to Blackie Ouellette, Holiday House general manager, “We asked SMC to create a ball valve that could eliminate two existing parts and be more streamlined and easier to assemble. In this case, we looked at SMC because we knew that they had the knowledge and were already creating the required fitting. Since we’ve been a long-term customer of SMC, we knew that they readily go out of their way — just like we do for our customers.”



**Figure 1. SMC can reengineer existing ball valve designs and develop custom solutions for many valve challenges.**  
Source: The Specialty Manufacturing Co.

“We typically look at their product catalog to see what they have that’s close and then we ask if a part can be modified,” added Ouellette. “In this case, it was to remold an end and shrink it down to a half-inch in size. When SMC knocks out a solution and sends me a sample, that sample is spot on. I’ve never had to send one back to have it redone.”

### ***The Solution***

“This one was a case of changing what we currently had, eliminating the parts and having a more cost-effective unit and have a variance that would be easier when assembling the unit,” said Ouellette. “SMC saved us time and money because there were fewer things to put together.”

In the case of Holiday House, SMC provided the 0.5 in. male NPT end and eliminated the cost and use of additional fittings. Not only did SMC design a new end that met requirements, it also agreed to absorb the \$6,000 price tag for tooling costs based on volume purchasing by Holiday House, without changing their distributor pricing.

The design was completed in 17 days from original inquiry to receipt of purchase order and a 10-week lead time for tooling and production. Not only did Holiday House receive the solution it needed, SMC also had a new end configuration that it could add to its catalog.

### ***A Shared Philosophy***

When you sit down and talk to the management of both companies, there's little doubt as to why Specialty Manufacturing and Holiday House Distributing do business. Bottom-line, their business philosophies are close to identical. Both share an old-world approach to business, unafraid to create and deliver exactly what the customer wants and needs.

SMC has a 100-year history of value-added valve design and design for manufacturability. Given that the right valve saves both time and money when optimizing flow control performance is concerned, the company often customizes its standard offerings to deliver the exact part needed.

Ouellette explained that Holiday House has approximately 6,000 customers spanning large corporations to mom-and-pop shops, and each means as much to the company as the next one.

"We try to make sure that we take care of all of them equally and SMC shares this way of doing business," said Ouellette.

SMC agrees; whether it is a simple brass ball valve or mini ball valves, its customers relate what they are looking for and SMC will devise and manufacture a valve that's exactly right for the function it requires. SMC takes pride in delivering high-quality and timely valve solutions.

This experience with The Specialty Manufacturing Co. was not unique. "I've not run across a challenge that SMC didn't easily solve," he said. "They provide six to eight different types of ball valves in the black color that we use, and each is built the way that we ask for it. We have good communication with them, and we're both on the same page. I take care of my customers the way that Specialty Manufacturing takes care of me. For us, it's not just a trend, it's a way of life."