



Maxwell Systems, Inc.
1000 First Avenue, Suite 200
King of Prussia, PA 19406
P: 800.688.8226
F: 610.277.2081
www.maxwellsystems.com

Managing Your Materials: Using a Vendor Survey Form to Evaluate Suppliers

Materials suppliers can have a significant impact on your productivity and profitability. As a conscientious buyer, you know the importance of choosing a supplier that offers the best price and the best quality with the best terms. Unless supplies are coming from your own warehouse, quarry, or plant, finding a dependable and cost-effective vendor requires some homework.

The following checklist is a starting point for an onsite audit of a potential materials supplier. This list is not exhaustive, and it includes many general requirements that apply across all Maxwell Systems software solutions.

Materials Supplier Profile

- **Company Profile:**
 - Company name, address, telephone, fax
 - Number of employees
 - Years in business
 - Age, type, and square footage of building(s)
- **Business Profile**
 - What are the vendor's annual sales in dollars?
 - Does this vendor specialize in my area of business?
 - Who are the supplier's major customers?
 - Has a D&B report been obtained?

Onsite Quality Control Facility

- Is the equipment calibrated? Are calibration tags visible?
- Does the facility have an ISO or military rating?

Personnel Met during Onsite Visit

- CEO/President
- Sales manager/contact
- Quality Control manager
- Production manager

Production Area

- Is the production area organized? Is it clean?
- If a company is operating at 50% capacity, why?
(Conversely, if a company operates at 100% capacity, scheduling problems may arise.)
- Are safety devices in place?
- Rate the facility's general safety condition (for example, good/average/poor).
- Rate the general demeanor of the employees (for example, good/average/poor).





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- Describe the condition of the equipment (for example, good/average/poor).
- Can you determine that regular maintenance schedules are followed?
- Does the facility appear busy? How busy is it in relation to overall size?
- Is the equipment running?
- Are there stock piles of raw material? Stock piles of finished goods?

Summary

- Provide an overall impression of the vendor.
- How does the vendor intend to meet your requirements?
- Should your company do business with this company?

Finally, determine the workflow of your vendor survey checklist. Consider scanning the form and using your Maxwell Systems solution to route it to purchasing, quality control, operations, and finance.

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