

CASE STUDY:

# KIERAN SNOW



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Kieran Snow is a NACE Level 3 inspector and a NACE Instructor, and his work depends on accuracy. He says working with Tom Swan has helped him save time and do his job more efficiently.



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Though he only gained NACE certification within the past decade, Kieran has been a part of the coatings inspection industry since 1983. Like all NACE inspectors, his work depends on finding the right tools and knowing how to use them. Both of these factors are crucial, and often surprisingly difficult to find through an objective source, he said.

Kieran met Tom through Montipower, which he first encountered at a trade show. When he later went to Texas for work, he would take the first steps toward a business relationship that has helped him professionally ever since.

Kieran says that the main issue he came to Tom with was a general one: What's the best equipment to use for NACE coatings inspections work? You can ask manufacturers for information but often they don't have the real field experience needed to answer specific questions.

Furthermore, he says, many company representatives will simply demonstrate a product without knowing how to use it. Considering the high

cost of many instruments, it can be frustrating to not know the full story about whatever it is you're buying. When you're trying to find specific testing tools that will last, getting practical information matters as much as system specs.

Fortunately, Tom managed to exceed Kieran's expectations, not just providing him with good advice but also defining his whole philosophy toward inspections, one Kieran says he sticks by to this day. As an instructor for NACE courses, he even tells his students to invest in equipment quality and look for the BEST instruments. To new inspectors, this may seem like the more expensive, tedious route, but it comes with numerous long-term benefits.

Tom helped Kieran reap these benefits, too:

- **CURRENT INFORMATION:** A NACE inspector needs to not just use the latest testing equipment but be connected. Sharing documents and reports is a time-sensitive task, and new technology, like Bluetooth connections, cut down on how long it takes to transmit, even from the field. Kieran says he learned more about the ways to use new software and hardware for professional reporting, granting him mobility that's only become available within the past few years. This helped Kieran teach others how to use it as well, spreading the value even further. When new technology comes on the market, Kieran can call Tom to help decide whether or not it's worth the investment.
- **"A RESOURCE, NOT A SALESMAN.":** That's how Kieran describes Tom, and it shows just how valuable his industry knowledge is. Unlike a company representative, Tom can answer practical use questions



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based on his own extensive experience, and knows the ins and outs of the best products for testing. At the same time, he also has connections to major brands like Defelsko.

- **GOING ABOVE AND BEYOND:** Kieran recalls that Tom is willing to go out of his way to make his clients happy and ensure that a job goes well. For one recent job in Illinois, he says, time was of the essence. “I basically was told ‘get up there as quickly as you can,’” Kieran remembers. “Tom came in on a Saturday morning and a buddy of mine met him, and he calibrated our instruments that Saturday when he’s not open.” This impressed Kieran because it was normally a time when Tom wouldn’t have been working and didn’t offer Tom any real financial gain. Instead, “he went the extra mile to come in and do the stuff.” Aside from that, Kieran also adds that it’s often easy to get ahold of Tom when he has questions.
- **VERIFICATION:** Tom’s knowledge takes on many forms, and one way it helps Kieran is through verification. When Kieran needs to double-check information he hears from someone else, Tom is there to offer his opinion. This is also another example of why responsive communication is so useful, since it means Kieran can get his answers relatively simply.
- **SPECIFICITY:** To some, Kieran said, it might seem like “going cheap” is the way to save money in the coatings inspection industry. After all, there’s always someone willing to sell instruments at a low price somewhere online. However, Kieran argues that the real benefit comes from having the exact right instruments for each job. Why do business with an uninformed seller? As Kieran says, “Would you buy a car from someone who couldn’t drive?”



KIERAN STATES THAT THE REAL BENEFIT COMES FROM HAVING THE EXACT RIGHT INSTRUMENTS FOR EACH JOB.



- **SAVING TIME:** All of this communication, advice and extra service gives Kieran an added bonus. With quick answers and lots of reliable information, he can save time and get to work more quickly. This is true when it comes to the newest equipment aswell, Kieran said, because he doesn't have to take time to research the latest offerings himself.

Overall, it's clear that Kieran is happy working with Tom. "At the end of the day, I go to Tom because if I need help to use an instrument, he's going to give it to me," he said. It's no surprise, then, that Kieran plans to keep in touch with Tom and recommends his services to others, so they don't have to simply do an internet search and have a trusted person to turn to instead.



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