



## CASE STUDY: MARINE FASTENERS

In the 1980s, stainless steel fasteners were sometimes difficult to come by. Except for a few major importers that supplied distributors, inventory was not readily available. Carl Brantley realized stainless steel would never gain widespread acceptance in the US marketplace as long as this system kept the pricing out of reach for the average consumer. His plan – to invest heavily in imported stainless steel and sell directly to the OEM. In 1984, he opened Marine Fasteners, based in Sanford, FL.

At that time, boat builders across the US were the

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**Brian Meskill**  
Quality Manager,  
Marine Fasteners

single, largest users of stainless steel fasteners. This market recognized the advantages of stainless steel, and immediately jumped at the new competitive prices Marine offered. Within four short years, Marine was recognized as the premier supplier of stainless steel fasteners to the marine industry.

In 1987, Marine opened its second branch in Elkhart, IN to better serve the midwest and northeast US market. In 2001, a third stocking location was added in Springfield, MO. In recent years, Marine has opened stocking facilities in Phoenixville, PA; Phoenix, AZ; Houston, TX, and soon TN, allowing service to the entire US.

In 2008, Marine Fasteners was acquired by The Wurth Group to function as their primary stainless steel supplier in North America. Since then, Marine has continued to use their expertise in stainless steel and the marine industry to grow into new markets, including servicing the solar, curtain wall, and sporting equipment.

As business grew, Marine Fasteners adopted technological advances to make it a more valuable partner for their suppliers' needs. Their adoption of The Wurth Group's C-Parts Solutions (CPS) system has allowed them to take vendor-managed inventory programs to the next level.



Before purchasing the Rigaku KT-100S handheld laser induced breakdown spectroscopy (LIBS) metal analyzer, Marine Fasteners had no way to verify their 18-8 SS, 316SS, and 410SS material. They relied on the material certs from their vendors or would need to send out to a third party testing agency. This process could take weeks to get results and cost several hundred dollars.

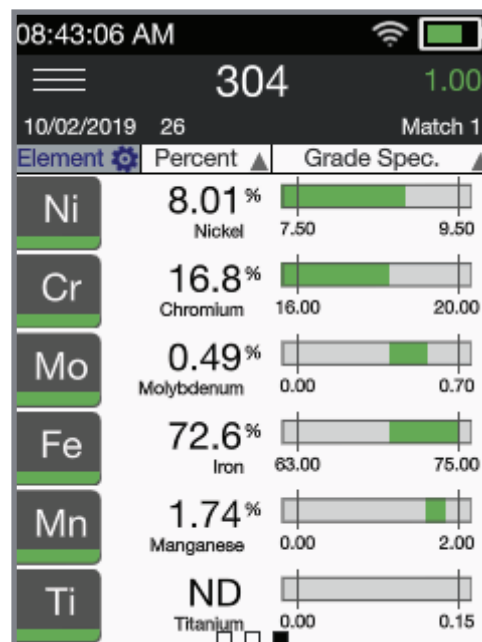
After seeing a handheld analyzer demonstration at their parent company, Brian Meskill, Quality Manager, started investigating available options to bring their metal verification process on-site.



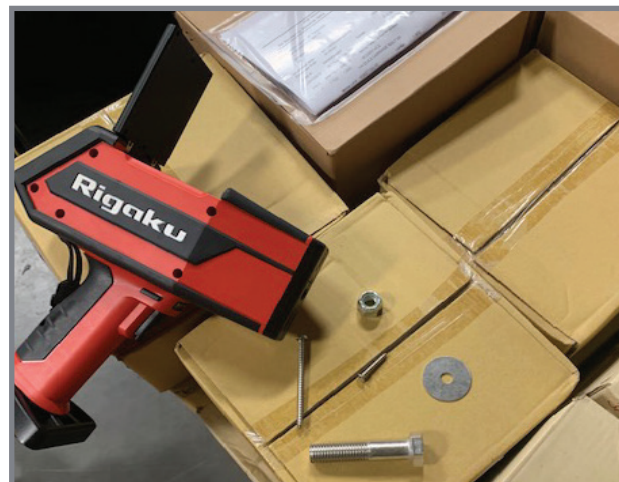
After evaluating several handheld x-ray fluorescence (XRF) and LIBS manufacturers, the Rigaku KT-100S analyzer was chosen. This was based on its simplicity to use, ruggedness, and costs. *"A must for us is a device that was easy to use, built tough, provided easy to read reports, and great customer service,"* said Brian.

Once Marine received the analyzer delivery, they were up and running within 15 minutes - including connecting to WiFi for even easier report generation. *"The Rigaku team was able to complete operational training for our entire team in less than a day, and has been readily available to answer any questions since,"* Brian added.

Marine Fasteners is now able to confirm their shipments have the correct chemical composition at time of receipt. This provides them with the ability to address customer complaints immediately and provide a verification of the analysis. In addition, Marine Fasteners has been able to visit customers and provide an analysis in person at their facility! *"This has been a huge tool for our sales team and saved us on shipping and testing costs,"* said Brian.



Marine Fasteners purchased their first Rigaku KT-100S handheld LIBS metal analyzer for their Florida location last year and just added a second unit to their Indiana location.



#### Resources:

Marine Fasteners. "About Us." *Marine Fasteners*, 2019, [www.marfas.com/Home/About#](http://www.marfas.com/Home/About#).



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