

With Customers

## Minimizing "Product Returns and Servicing"

### Based on Brother's Unique Concept from the Viewpoint of Customers

#### Efforts to minimize the number of returns after shipment

At the Brother Group, the percentage of products returned from customers for repair or return is defined as "product returns and servicing rate". We believe that the time and effort suffered by customers due to trouble with the products, no matter how small, is an inconvenience for them. The Brother Group believes that reducing the number of returned products close to zero should be placed above all others to achieve greater customer satisfaction. And together with all departments from development design, manufacture, logistics, sales to services, we promote the across-the-board activity to pursue improvement of products quality.

### Visiting Customers to Reduce the Product Returns and Servicing Rate of Machine Tools

#### Holding meetings with users and dealers to prevent troubles

CNC Tapping Centers are main products manufactured by the Machine Tools Business. Many of our customers run these computer-controlled machine tools 24/7 to mass-produce automotive and other metal precision parts, and so any trouble during the nighttime would cause great inconvenience to customers. For example, a machine trouble could stop the production line for many hours until it can be repaired the next day, production schedules might be delayed, and defects might arise.

Many of these troubles can be prevented, however, by simple day-to-day maintenance by customers. Relatively minor troubles (such as loose contact of switches) can be handled by customers to minimize downtime.

As part of efforts to reduce the product returns and servicing rate, employees of the Machinery and Solution (M&S) Company (a division of Brother Industries, Ltd.) visit customers and dealers to give guidance on appropriate maintenance to help them prevent troubles and reduce downtime on their own. The M&S Company also handles inquiries from customers and invites requests for product improvements.

In FY 2010, the M&S Company hosted "meetings with users" in Japan, and "meetings with dealers" in China, a major market for CNC Tapping Centers. In the meetings with users, employees visited customers, while the meetings with dealers targeted engineers in charge of maintenance services at dealers that sell CNC Tapping Centers. These meetings explained the major causes of troubles, key points of daily inspections, and major steps for restoring operations.

These meetings have helped many customers prevent troubles and reduce downtime, as well as provided opportunities to meet customers face to face and build mutual trust.

By continuing to improve these activities, the M&S Company will further reduce the product returns and servicing rate.



TC-S2DN, a new model of CNC Tapping Center



Explaining the key points of product maintenance at a customer's factory