A Memorable Experience Hosting and Closing a Deal with a Client in Mali

In the fast-paced world of industrial machinery, building trust across continents requires more than just a technical manual; it requires a commitment to understanding a client's unique vision. At Shandong Loyal Industrial Co., Ltd., we view every inquiry as the start of a potential lifelong partnership. This philosophy was recently put into practice when we had the distinct pleasure of hosting a determined entrepreneur from Mali.

As an international trade representative, every client visit is both a challenge and an opportunity for growth. My recent experience working with a client from Mali has made me deeply appreciate the importance of thorough preparation and adaptability. Shandong Loyal Industrial Co., Ltd. ultimately reached a cooperation agreement with the client.

First Contact: From Made-in-China.com to WhatsApp

The client, based in Mali, West Africa, initially found our company through Made-in-China.com. After receiving the inquiry, I immediately sent an email. Soon after, the client replied with his WhatsApp number, and we switched to communicating via instant messaging.

Right at the start of our conversation, the client directly requested a 500kg/h macaroni production line. Out of habit, I first wanted to understand the client’s background, so I asked if he owned his own factory. He replied that he did not; this was a new business venture. Hearing this, I formed a rough judgment—this client likely didn’t have a clear concept of production capacity. After all, 500kg/h is a large scale for a business just starting out.

So instead of quoting a price right away, I tentatively suggested a figure of $300,000. Sure enough, the client said it was over budget. After several rounds of discussion, he eventually lowered his production requirement to 200 kg/h. This confirmed my initial assessment: the client was indeed unfamiliar with the industry and needed more guidance and explanation from me.

Preparations Before the Visit

Once it was confirmed that the client would be visiting the factory, I began making intensive preparations. There were three visitors in total: two of them were Malian nationals currently attending university in Guangzhou, China, who would serve as interpreters; the other was a French-speaking client, who was likely the actual decision-maker.

The Day of the Visit: From the Hotel to the Factory

On the agreed-upon day, I first went to the hotel to pick up the three clients. On the way from the hotel to the factory, I chatted with my two Malian friends who were studying in China; the atmosphere was very relaxed. Their Chinese was quite good, which made communication between me and the French-speaking client much smoother.

Upon arriving at the factory, we went straight to the workshop to test the macaroni extruder. The clients had a specific request for this visit—they wanted to produce Curvi macaroni. I had confirmed in advance that we happened to have a set of molds suitable for this shape, which was practically tailor-made for them.

Once the machine was started, the entire process—from feeding the dough to extruding the product—went very smoothly. When the curved macaroni began emerging from the machine, the clients' eyes lit up. They picked up the products to examine them closely, felt the texture with their hands, and broke into satisfied smiles. The two student interpreters were also thrilled; they

described the process to the French-speaking clients while giving a thumbs-up. The test results were nothing short of perfect.

Office Meeting

After the test, we returned to the office and sat down to discuss the machine’s configuration details in depth. The client asked many questions, but most of them revolved around the basic parameters I had anticipated. Since I was well-prepared, I answered fluently and explained every item on the quote clearly. The client nodded frequently, and the two interpreters were a great help in ensuring the information was conveyed accurately.

When the conversation turned to pricing, the client expressed a desire for a discount. Considering that this was a new client and that they had shown genuine interest in their visit, I offered a reasonable discount within my authority. The customer finalized the order for a complete 200 kg/h macaroni and spaghetti production line, including:

- Dough mixer
- Macaroni vacuum Extruder
- Pre-dryer
- Static Drying Oven
- Packaging machine

Closing the Deal: Proforma Invoice Sent the Next Day

After seeing the client off, I didn’t let up. Early the next morning, based on the final proposal discussed the previous day, I compiled all the documents the client needed, prepared a proforma invoice, and emailed it to them.

Shortly thereafter, the client replied to confirm acceptance of the quote. And just like that, the order for this 200kg/h macaroni production line was officially closed. We will continue to provide after-sales support to our customers and look forward to a long-term partnership.

This successful collaboration underscores our belief that the best deals are founded on transparency and expert guidance. By helping our Malian partner scale their ambitions to a sustainable production level, we have ensured a stronger foundation for their new venture. At Shandong Loyal Industrial Co., Ltd., we don't just sell machines; we manufacture success stories for clients around the globe.