



**Premiere service
coast to coast.**

From restaurants to hospitals to hotels and universities, Ecolab's GCS Service Division provides guaranteed, state-of-the-art repair, preventive maintenance and parts service for commercial cooking, warewashing and refrigeration equipment. GCS Service customers nationwide count on the division's expertly trained technicians to respond immediately anytime and anyplace emergencies arise.

GCS Service

AT A GLANCE

Markets served:

Restaurants
Hotels
Hospitals
Nursing homes
Contract feeders
Education
Supermarkets
Convenience stores

Services provided:

Repair, parts replacement and customized maintenance for commercial food equipment, including fryers, steam equipment, ovens, ranges, conveyor ovens, dishwashers, steamers, grills, kettles, skillets, food warmers, filter machines, refrigerators/freezers and ice machines.

Strengths:

The largest parts inventory in the United States; 500 service technicians with extensive training in all aspects of kitchen equipment repair.

OVERVIEW

GCS Service strengthens Ecolab's Circle the Customer strategy by providing around-the-clock parts and repair service for commercial cooking, refrigeration and warewashing equipment – an almost universal need among Ecolab's customers in the U.S. foodservice and hospitality industries. A “one-stop-shop” for equipment repair and preventive maintenance, GCS Service sets itself apart from the competition by providing service and parts on a nationwide basis for all major brands of commercial kitchen equipment. This extensive network allows Ecolab customers, particularly multi-unit “chain” accounts, to consolidate the number of service providers they deal with, gaining far more consistent, reliable service.



THE MARKET AND ITS NEEDS

Restaurants and other foodservice operations today must offer rapid service and diversified menu items utilizing a broad range of highly sophisticated commercial food preparation and storage equipment. Downtime due to equipment failure can paralyze an establishment. If a kitchen with hundreds of meals to serve has an inoperable oven, dishmachine or refrigerator for an extended period of time, thousands of dollars in revenue and spoiled food could be lost – along with the establishment's reputation.

To keep customers' operations running smoothly, Ecolab's GCS Service technicians are on call 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and they respond immediately whenever and wherever an emergency may arise. Response time is a key feature of GCS Service's offering, while the wide-ranging expertise of its technicians is another. GCS Service technicians are extensively trained on a full array of equipment including fryers, steamers, ovens, ranges, conveyor ovens, dishwashers, steam tables, grills, kettles, skillets, food warmers, filter machines, refrigerators/freezers and ice machines. This differentiates GCS Service from traditional local and regional providers, whose service personnel are typically limited by a specific equipment specialty.

PARTS AND PREVENTATIVE MAINTENANCE

To fix equipment and get busy kitchens back up and running as quickly as possible, fast access to the right parts is a necessity. GCS Service stocks more food equipment parts than any other independent distributor in the world, and each service vehicle carries its own parts supply. Should a more unique part be needed, GCS' state-of-the-art computer system will track it down and ship it immediately through the division's network of regional parts locations – another advantage of a nationwide service network.



GCS also boasts a nationwide parts distribution network with more than 30 warehouse locations across the country. About a third of the division's business is generated by sales of replacement parts directly to customers that employ their own in-house maintenance personnel, as well as to other service companies, without technician involvement.

In addition to repairing equipment, GCS Service associates also take a proactive approach to helping customers avoid costly downtime and protect their equipment investments. By providing regular consultation through a customized maintenance plan and schedule, problems can be prevented before they occur. This not only extends equipment life, it aids in the reduction of energy consumption and helps eliminate unnecessary food waste.

Reaching the Customer



Prior to its 1998 acquisition by Ecolab, GCS Service built its business by providing warranty, repair and parts replacement service for major food equipment manufacturers serving the restaurant, hotel, hospital, nursing home, contract feeder, school and university foodservice markets. Today, GCS continues to expand its customer base by partnering with other Ecolab divisions that serve the foodservice and hospitality industries, including Institutional, Kay and Pest Elimination. These partnerships enhance GCS' understanding of the customer's business and allow for integrated solutions where applicable.

Also driving the division's growth are partnerships with equipment manufacturers to provide warranty services. An ever-growing number of manufacturers are leveraging Ecolab's expertise and nationwide reach by designating GCS Service as their factory-authorized warranty service

provider. These partnerships allow GCS to build solid relationships with customers during the warranty period – relationships that often continue long after the warranty has expired. Being named an authorized warranty provider in a specific geographic market also makes GCS the manufacturer's factory-authorized parts distributor in that market. This arrangement provides Ecolab a further opportunity to forge customer relationships.

TRAINING

Since the ability of its technicians to fully understand the operation of all types of commercial kitchen equipment – encompassing many different models built by a multitude of manufacturers – is central to GCS's service offering, comprehensive training and continuing education comprise the foundation upon which the division's field organization is built. GCS technicians must possess a thorough base knowledge of the physics of electricity, gas, heating and cooling. They receive specific technical instruction in two ways: directly from equipment manufacturers themselves and through GCS University, the division's own training facility. GCS University provides service associates consistent, ongoing training on a broad range of equipment. The programs in place at GCS University are also designed to establish and sharpen each associate's interpersonal skills. This training gives the technician the ability to work more effectively with their customers.

In addition to the in-house training, GCS sales and service associates are also certified through the Commercial Food Equipment Service Association (CFESA) and adhere to governing industry standards, such as local codes and manufacturer specifications.



A GCS Service Call

GCS service calls are a blend of regular maintenance, prospective customer visits and on-demand calls. Each service call can involve a variety of equipment types. Technicians start their days as early as 4 a.m., depending on customer needs. Service vehicles hold a full range of commonly needed parts and repair tools, and GCS Service technicians are fully prepared for almost anything. For example, one location might have a maintenance contract and may only need the thermostat calibrated on a refrigeration unit. The next visit could require the rewiring of a dishmachine's control panel, while a subsequent site's fryer needs to be completely rebuilt.

Whatever the customer's needs, the responding technician is trained to utilize whatever resources are necessary to troubleshoot the problem and then correct it as quickly as possible. This entails tapping into the technician's own base of knowledge, which is vast and always expanding, as well as using the appropriate diagnostic equipment. The technician also has access to parts experts and GCS' own Technical Assistance Group, which ensures up-to-date knowledge and high quality control standards. Preparation is key to the successful GCS service call. This not only requires the technician to ascertain the problem by effectively communicating with the customer, but also to have the correct equipment specifications and replacement parts on hand, and provide the customer with a realistic estimate of the time it will take to complete the repair. In this regard, GCS technicians have to leverage their technical know-how and interpersonal savvy on every call.

During a regular preventative maintenance service call, the GCS Service technician evaluates every component of the equipment. For a fryer, as an example, the technician inspects the fry tank and drain valve for leaks, calibrates thermostats, tests safety valves, inspects or cleans burners, checks pilot control, tests the automatic basket lift, inspects the gas flex hose for leaks, and inspects all electrical components. Steam cookers with boilers, meanwhile, are cleaned to reduce scale buildup and corrosion that would waste energy and shorten the useful life of the equipment. Every piece of equipment – from ovens to dishwashers to grills – receives this same comprehensive treatment to ensure smooth, efficient operation and no downtime. All work is done to meet local codes, and is guaranteed to operate according to manufacturer specifications. In fact, GCS has parts and/or authorization from more than 400 kitchen equipment manufacturers to perform regular maintenance and repair work on their items.

GCS technicians are also in constant contact with their branch dispatcher who tells them of any non-scheduled visits they need to make. Before leaving any customer site, the GCS technician completes and leaves behind a written service report and reviews with the manager every aspect of the visit, noting any areas for improvement and any maintenance or repair completed. Then it's on to the next call.

