

Operational Flexibility Helps Take on Pandemic Headwinds



CHIMEI
a step up

**KEY CLIENT / INDUSTRY /
APPLICATION INFO**

Leading Global Medical Device Maker

OPPORTUNITY

Deliver high volumes of critical care ventilators amid COVID-19 pandemic to save lives

CHALLENGES

- Unusually high volume of flame retardant POLYLAC ABS ordered
- Extremely quick turnaround
- Complex supply chain & logistics dynamics
- Fewer freight routes & tripled shipping costs

SOLUTION

- Prioritized POLYLAC ABS PA-765/765A production
- Coordinated response along entire supply chain
- Subsidized 50% of shipping costs

RESULTS

- Lightning-speed turnaround
- Customer able to meet soaring orders for ventilators, contributing to lives saved
- Direct relationships and processes developed

Medical Device Maker Navigates Soaring Demand & Supply Chain Crisis With CHIMEI Support

As the global pandemic placed unparalleled pressure on healthcare systems and governments around the world in early 2020, medical companies faced meteoric demand growth for life-saving equipment. The sudden increase in orders, coupled with significant supply chain and logistics disruptions due to lockdowns, left these companies stranded in a perfect storm.

In April of that year, CHIMEI's inboxes were filled with urgent requests for vast quantities of flame-retardant, POLYLAC ABS resin. But the scattered nature of the requests themselves created significant obstacles — at first no one could confirm where the demand originated.

Speedy Support, Supply, and Shipping

With time being of the essence, requests had rushed directly to CHIMEI from all layers of the opaque supply chain. At CHIMEI, we primarily serve customers through our global network of trusted distributors. Often, the companies using CHIMEI's materials do not have a direct relationship with us, as was the case with this customer. Due to the urgency of the situation, and the temporary breakdown in

the regular functioning of the global supply chain, we took on responsibility to overcome the operational challenges and expedite the entire process.

By digging deeper, we discovered that the request came from a leading global medical device manufacturer. The company had received orders from multiple governments totaling 20,000 ventilators, due in two months. We quickly established direct contact among all parties — including distributors, sourcers, the injection molding plant, assembly facility, and logistics companies across the US, Asia, and Europe — to coordinate swift action that would ensure the soaring demand for life-saving equipment would be met.

“It was when we realized it was ventilators, that’s when we decided to take the initiative and coordinate everything,” said Wayne Lin, general plastics department manager at CHIMEI. “All kinds of different departments came together to help make this happen.”

As the sole supplier of the specified ABS PA-765/765A, we made it our priority to meet the demand. We cleared an entire production line to prioritize POLYLAC ABS output. The production line was already operating at full capacity on other grades of ABS, meaning we had to clear a 3-4 day period that was fully scheduled. In addition, our existing stock of POLYLAC ABS PA-765/765A was immediately earmarked for the ventilator-maker.

This particular medical device company usually orders around 2 tons of POLYLAC a year through CHIMEI’s various distributors. The first direct order we received was for 15 tons, with a very short lead time. By the summer, the customer had ordered 50 tons in two batches.

The disintegrated logistics environment at the time also presented a major challenge. With many airlines grounding their fleets due to lockdowns, shipping slots were difficult to secure and freight prices had more than tripled. With the unclear roles and responsibilities among the various parties in the customers’ supply chain, it was uncertain who should take charge.

“We knew we had to act quickly to save lives. So we decided to organize everything. To keep things moving, we subsidized 50% of the shipping costs. That sped up the decision-making process a lot,” said Wayne.

Putting Words Into Action

By adapting to the shifting circumstances, CHIMEI could produce the first batch — 15 tons of POLYLAC ABS — within a week, and ship from our Taiwan facilities to the customers’ European injection molding site within another week. The lightning-speed turnaround helped the customer respond in a timely way to help governments and healthcare systems provide care when urgently needed, despite significant operational and logistical headwinds.

At CHIMEI, we're committed to providing stable long-term supply and support for the whole supply chain. That's especially true when our customers are facing tough times. "As we say in Taiwan, you don't close your umbrella on a rainy day," said Wayne. "In this case there was no contract, no obligation. But as a good trusted supplier, we made things as smooth as possible, so everyone can benefit. That's how we can make sure both sides' businesses keep running."

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Wayne Lin,
General Plastics Department
Manager at CHIMEI



POLYLAC ABS PA-765/765A

Highly flame retardant with
high flowability
Meets global medical safety
standards

Playing Our Part in the Global Supply Chain

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the complexity and fragility of global supply chains. If even a single link faces pressure, it creates a chain reaction. At CHIMEI, we see it as our responsibility to help support the entire supply chain, to foster healthy development across all the industries we supply.

CHIMEI