

ANALYTICAL ANSWERS, INC.

Solving Million Dollar Micro Problems

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Analytical Answers investigates. Analytical Answers cracks cases. Their distinguished collection of scientific sleuths can tell you what's wrong with your product. Or how to improve it. Or perhaps why your competitor's product has an edge in the marketplace. How?

AAI analyses the surfaces of nearly anything - from snowflakes to bumper chrome. By using sophisticated techniques and imaging lab equipment, they can literally "crack" the composition or the chemistry of almost any product you have questions about. Not only that, they can provide you with "pictures" or images of your sample - with detailed explanations printed right on the image - to help you explain the problems or findings back at the office.

Today, surface science is *critical* to companies who design, manufacture and market products whose micro-chemistry or microscopy determines their physical performance or function. The performance of a product is often determined by factors that can't be seen by the naked eye. And when those factors need to be studied for whatever reason, the AAI "micro" private-eye comes to the rescue.

When you walk through their doors at 4 Arrow Drive in Woburn, you enter a whole different world. A myriad of rooms or "stations" are filled with scientists testing samples. Their intricate, far out equipment brings to mind 007 James Bond - complete with the "electronic guns" and perplexing images glowing on their video screens.

John A. Buono, Ph.D, Analytical Answers President - noting the investigative nature of their work said, "We play a lot of Sherlock Holmes here." The enthusiasm and expertise these specialists bring to their work can potentially save companies millions of dollars. They can help determine why semiconductors fail, why polymers break down, why photocopiers glitch, or bumper chrome peels, why pipes rupture or why silverware tarnishes. As such, labs like AAI become vital to the health and growth of many companies where one mistake could cost them their solvency.

The staff examines and evaluates specimens by clients from companies of all sizes in microelectronics, ceramics, glass, polymers, metals and chemicals. "We get so many different kinds of materials," said Buono. "The job is interesting because you're dealing with different people and problems each day. You're always learning. Just when you think you've seen it all, something new comes along to challenge you all over again."

Results can be ambiguous, even disturbing. And since not all analyses provide clearcut answers, judgements must be made - clearly an uncomfortable position for the client. "Sometimes we act as referees," Buono explained. "you get conflicting information. This information often represents thousands of dollars in the design or manufacturing process and the discussion gets heated. " While AAI acts as the consultant, the client must make the ultimate decision about the product under fire.

In order to help their clients better understand micro-analysis and how it can help them make these tough decisions, AAI offers an on-going series of seminars in the major cities around the country, including Boston. The series instructs its clients how and when to use surface science techniques to find solutions for their individual problems. Since each technique has its own advantages and shortcomings, a client can save valuable time and money by knowing what techniques are capable of telling him - what they can and cannot do.

And that's just the tip of the micro-berg.

Over 85% of the past 1500 attendees felt that their training made them more effective at their jobs. The programs remain a cost effective way for companies to get a handle on the increasingly competitive world of micro-analysis. It's a fairly esoteric business - an on-going educational type of business.

Investigative. Esoteric. People intensive. It's fairly safe to say if Sherlock Holmes were alive today, he'd be working at Analytical Answers.