

THE WHOLESALE

News of Plumbing • Heating • Cooling • Industrial Piping Distribution



When the colossal new Cowboys Stadium opened this summer, two Texas-based companies — All-Tex Pipe & Supply and Tyler Pipe — took special pride in the roles they played during construction. Nearly 8 million manhours went into building the 3-million-square-foot stadium. Turn to page 18 for a behind-the-scenes glimpse into the construction of this much-talked-about project.

Webb entities boost offerings

CRANSTON, R.I. — Webb Pump has partnered with the Dover Pump Solutions Group (www.dovercorporation.com). The Dover Pump Solutions Group (PSG) features one of the world's largest manufacturers of air-operated double-diaphragm pumps (Wilden) and a leading global provider of sliding vane and eccentric disc pumps (Blackmer).

Other members of the PSG family
(Turn to Dover... page 95.)

Simpson Dura-Vent realigns organization

PLEASANTON, CALIF. — Stephen P. Eberhard, president and CEO of Simpson Dura-Vent, announced details of the company's recent reorganization of its sales and distribution departments. According to Eberhard, two major reasons brought about these changes:

- The acquisition of ProTech Sys-
(Turn to ProTech bought... page 31.)

Six branches in Northeast

TSC Distribution Group purchases Litco Supply

WATERBURY, CONN. — TSC Distribution Group Inc., the parent company of Torrington Supply Company in Waterbury, purchased the assets of Litco Supply in Torrington, Conn., on August 31. Litco is a six-branch company with locations

in western Massachusetts, New York State and Connecticut. Litco will operate as a separate company with the name Litco Supply Company.

"We are delighted to add the Litco family to the TSC Distribution Group. We will work hard to carry on the tradition of service and qual-

(Turn to East Coast... page 95.)



INSIDE:
BRADFORD WHITE
ICON
System™
see page 31

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THE WHOLESALER

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What is RSS?

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The Front Page

The new Dallas Cowboys stadium was a massive project requiring all of its elements to be organized, delivered and installed on a tight schedule with little margin for error. All-Tex Pipe & Supply, TDIndustries and Tyler Pipe were more than up to the challenge — producing, delivering and installing some 13,000 line items including 50 miles of pipe. Read about their involvement and get an up-close look at this new stadium starting on page 18.



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Beschloss Beat

Delta Group



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Explore ways to train your customers

In one of my most recent adventures in consulting, I needed to travel from one assignment directly to another assignment. As often seems to be the case, I was running late but, since I was flying out of a nice smaller airport, I knew I could move through the travel maze that all of us travel-rats must traverse, and get to the gate in plenty of time.

The part that I hadn't anticipated was that the airline, for their own convenience, shut down its ticket counter and kiosks 30 minutes prior to flight time. (I think I was there about 26 minutes before flight time.) So as the phrase goes, I was SOL — Sadly Outta Luck. (I won't give you the airline's name but I will say that in my opinion, the last part of their name should be changed from "can" to "can't" or possibly "won't.")

Further, as I worked to quickly find a way out of my problem, the only people who were available and tried to help were from another airline that I won't name but I will tell you that their name begins with "Southwest." Frankly, there was probably some note in small type in the confirmation document that I received telling me to be there early but I have not verified that fact.

I wrongly assumed that it was like the other advisories telling me to be at the airport two hours before flight time. In the end, I spend a night in the wrong town and had to rearrange the remainder of my trip. When I mentioned it to an airline employee the response was basically a polite, "Get

here earlier in the future."

I didn't like the response, but if I had described the situation to my family, they would have responded with our family's copyrighted response: "YODF", which stands for "Your Own Darn Fault." We use this as our standard response to any situation where a set of stupid actions lead to a predictably undesirable outcome. (For those of you with teenagers or offspring who might one-day become teenagers, you may want to keep this phrase handy.)

The airline's standard response was designed to "train" me to get to their flights earlier. Instead the whole process trained me to, whenever hu-

manly possible, use another airline. The other airline's help trained me to use them, whenever humanly possible, because when the chips are down, they are going to try to help me — even when another airline or I created the problem.

So let's talk about customer training in our industry. There are lots of kinds of training that wholesalers can provide to their trade customers.

- **Product training** — Of course, trade customers expect their wholesalers to provide product training. This is one of the highest-ranked services that is expected by trade cus-

tomers. They expect their wholesaler to train them about the products, how to install and service the products and, ideally, how to sell the product.

- **Business training** — Most trade customers don't expect wholesalers to provide training related to operating a contracting business. So some of the best wholesaler/contractor relationships have been developed when the wholesaler provides training and recommendations that help the contractor to improve his business' operation. We have observed that some contractors will use and appreciate wholesalers who offer business training, software tools and even handheld devices that help the contractor do a better job of

Whenever you create a problem for a customer, whether it's your fault or his fault, you are probably training him to do business elsewhere... [but] whenever you step up and help solve a problem, you are training your customer to buy from you.

running their business.

Now I want to describe some of the less obvious "training" that wholesalers provide to their trade customers. There are two training methods that are often employed in training animals of any species:

- **Reward** — Where the right behaviors result in something good happening
- **Punishment** — Where the wrong behaviors result in something bad happening.

Price objection training

In some instances, we actually train our trade customers to concoct price objections. A group of ways that we do it:

- Dropping the price whenever a customer simply asks for a price. Many wholesalers are so insecure about their computer pricing that the innocent question, "How much is it?" results in a defensive price concession. Sometimes the contractor isn't even inferring that he is comparing your pricing against the competition — he just needs to know the price so he can quote the job. Since the customer gets rewarded for asking what his price is, we should expect him to ask for every product's price... forever.

- Responding to every pricing objection with a price reduction. When every objection is answered with a price reduction, the customer is trained to continue his objections until the wholesaler finally says no. Unfortunately, some wholesalers don't say no until the price has reached an obscenely low gross margin with a price that is well below what is being offered by other whole-



BY RICH SCHMITT
Management specialist

salers in the market. The solution is to have market-based pricing that your people know is fair and competitive. Knowing your price is fair allows them to say no before the profits are completely gone.

- Offering ridiculous computer pricing when the customer asks for a price. Sometimes the first problem results from the price-shock that can happen when the customer is given an unmanaged price. (By unmanaged, I mean that the product price is embarrassingly high or that the customer was not properly configured in the computer.) In either case, when the customer hears the list price for a particular item, he will probably object to or challenge the price. Since that item might be one of his "benchmark" products (products that he uses for price comparisons with other wholesalers), you may have just trained him to distrust all of your pricing. This results in ongoing relentless price objections.

Price acceptance training

In other instances, we actually train our trade customers to accept our pricing by presenting competitive computer pricing when the customer asks for a price. By offering a properly managed, market-based, competitive price to the customer, you decrease the odds that the customer will object to the price. This is especially true of pricing for benchmark products. When the customer hears a price at or below the market price he was expecting, you have trained him to trust your pricing. While some contractors' DNA forces them to object to every price, proper pricing and not dropping the price just because they asked (as described above) can improve your margins.

Stocking out of 'Never Be Out Of' items

When you routinely stock out of bread and butter items, it trains your customers to make their first stop at a competitor's counter. They just don't think they should have to call ahead to see if you are out of closet-bolts. On the other hand, when they can count on you to have their normal (Turn to Customer... page 64.)

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Allied Supply opens new Cincinnati facility

CINCINNATI — Tom Homan, president of Allied Supply Co., announced the grand opening of a new downtown Cincinnati location at 707 Carr St., Cincinnati, OH 45203. The new HVACR wholesale distribution facility began operating on October 12.

“The new Cincinnati location of Allied Supply Co. allows us to de-



liver exceptional quality service and bring more innovative products to more HVACR customers in the Cincinnati and northern Kentucky areas,” said Homan. “It also provides a better workplace for our Cincinnati employees.”

The new 16,000-square-foot facility includes 4,000 square feet of counter and office space and 12,000 square feet of warehouse and storage space.

“With more efficient work space and a better location, Allied Supply Co. is making it easier for our customers to get the products they need, when they need them,” said David Koepke, vice president-sales and

marketing of the new facility. “And in addition to the growth of space, Allied Supply expects to continue to grow the business and, therefore, contribute to the economic growth of Cincinnati.”

The company hosted a grand opening event October 29. An official ribbon cutting ceremony was held, with customers and industry professionals, city officials and employees invited to attend. Attendees enjoyed a pig roast-style barbeque, door prizes and drawings, as well as product demonstrations from leading manufacturers.

“The grand opening event is really just a kick-off to our upcoming 75th year anniversary,” concluded Homan. Allied Supply will be celebrating 75 years in business in 2010.

Allied Supply Co. is a full service wholesale distributor of heating, air conditioning, refrigeration, air filtration, controls and industrial supplies and equipment. With five wholesale distribution facilities located throughout Ohio, Allied Supply Co. serves the Ohio, eastern Indiana, southern Michigan and northern Kentucky markets.

For more information visit www.alliedsupply.com.

McJunkin Red Man acquires Transmark

HOUSTON — McJunkin Red Man Corporation announced that they have entered into an agreement to acquire Transmark Fcx Group B.V. (Transmark), a leading international distributor of specialty valves and flow control equipment.

MRC president and CEO Andrew Lane said, “The purchase of Transmark will strengthen MRC’s global position as a leading distributor of pipe, valves and fittings for the energy and industrial markets. This acquisition is yet another step in the transformation of MRS, which began in 2007 with the merger of McJunkin Corporation and Red Man Pipe and Supply Company to form McJunkin Red Man Corporation.”

Since that time, MRC has acquired the remaining ownership of Midfield Supply in Canada and acquired St. Louis, Mo.-based LaBarge Pipe and Steel. Transmark, headquartered in Bradford, U.K., has a network of 45 distribution and service facilities in the U.K., Europe, the Middle East, Australia, New Zealand and Southeast Asia. The company has a proven track record in the selection, supply, service, support and delivery of the world’s leading brand names in flow

control equipment, serving major international companies in the petrochemical and refining, chemical, power and energy industries.

Lane added, “Through the purchase of Transmark, we will expand our product and service offering, pro-



vide access to more of the world’s leading brand names, and expand our industrial distribution channel. The acquisition will also grow our customer base in existing sectors and strengthen our relationship with customers doing business in the global marketplace.”

Additional terms of the transaction were not disclosed.

Headquartered in Houston, with corporate offices in Tulsa, Okla., and Charleston, W.Va., MRC is one of the largest North American distributors of pipe, valves and fittings and related products and services to the energy industry, and serves this industry across each of the upstream, midstream and downstream and industrial sectors. Additional information can be found at www.mrcpvf.com.

Murray Supply hosts Field Marketing Summit



A group of Murray Supply Company associates meet with Ron Peters from Cambridge Lee during the 2009 Field Marketing Summit.

WINSTON-SALEM, N.C. — Murray Supply Company held a Field Marketing Summit on September 19. A number of Murray Supply’s sales personnel and 12 suppliers participated in the event.

Murray Supply Company is a member of Affiliated Distributors, a nationally recognized buying and marketing group that serves the independent distributors of plumbing, PVF, HVAC, electrical and industrial suppliers. Affiliated Distributors strongly encourages their members to participate in Field Marketing Summits to strengthen relationships between suppliers and distributors.

Murray Supply Company held a day-long strategic planning session with 12 suppliers at the Hawthorne Inn and Conference Center. All of the

inside and outside sales associates, branch managers, purchasing agents, showroom consultants and corporate personnel from Murray Supply participated in the event. The suppliers had booth sessions, where they met with all of the Murray Supply sales associates to discuss sales, marketing and training goals.

Murray Supply Company is a family owned and operated company that was founded in 1965 by C.V. Murray in Charlotte. The company is engaged in the wholesale distribution of residential and commercial plumbing, PVF, HVAC, industrial along with maintenance, repair and operations products. Murray Supply Company serves their customers from one showroom and six locations in North Carolina.

Selkirk adds to online tools offering

RICHARDSON, TEXAS — Selkirk has developed an Online Product Selector as the latest addition to the expanding menu of Online Tools at www.selkirkcorp.com.

This convenient Online Tool creates a new avenue for residential contractors, dealers or consumers to find the recommended Selkirk product for their application.

The Product Selector offers a wide variety of appliance/fuel combinations to cover almost any possible venting situation. It supports both Canadian and U.S. markets.

For additional help, or to recommend improvements to the Product Selector, an e-mail link to technical support is available.

Selkirk Corporation is a leading manufacturer of chimney, venting

and air distribution products for the commercial and residential HVAC and hearth industries.

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T&S Brass Shanghai facility is now Chinese sales, support HQ

TRAVELERS REST, S.C. — T&S Brass announced that its Shanghai facility, located in the Pudong region, will now operate as the sales headquarters and customer service center for China.

Effective immediately, customers in China will be able to order and receive shipments directly from the Shanghai facility. Top items in the market will be stocked at the facility, such as pre-rinse units, faucets and components, and glass fillers, as well as hose reels, waste valves and more. Keith Lyerly will serve as general manager, overseeing daily operations in Shanghai. Lyerly has more than 25 years of international management experience.

“This new offering will enable us to provide our customers in China with shorter lead times and specialized service,” said Claude Theisen, T&S Brass president. “At T&S Brass,

we continuously strive to provide the best service and the greatest value to our customers throughout the world.”

The toll-free number for Shanghai sales is 400/820-0229. For questions



related to this change, contact Ella Ge, Shanghai customer service rep.

The Shanghai facility recently received ISO 14001 Certification. Utilizing this approach can lead to various benefits, including reduced waste management cost, savings in consumption of energy and materials, and a guideline for continuous improvement of environmental performance.

For more information, visit www.tsbrass.com. You can also follow the company on Twitter at @tsbrass.

Activant offers real-time CRM solution

YARDLEY, PA. — For many distributors, using a customer relationship management solution in unison with their ERP system requires maintaining two databases and a lot of toggling back and forth between programs.

For Andrew Wright, COO of Mercedes Medical Inc., and other distrib-



utors using Prophet 21®, part of the Activant Distribution Suite™, sales reps use only one database and one screen. The difference? Prophet 21 includes a fully integrated CRM solution.

“The real-time CRM functionality in Prophet 21 allows me to coordinate my sales and marketing efforts,” said Wright. “There is synergy there that would be impossible with a two database system.”

Wright especially values how the CRM tools help his inside sales team: “The system allows them to drive through calls and schedule tasks faster because they have easy access to all the available information. After one year, my inside sales representatives are more productive and making more outbound calls. That equals increased sales.”

Activant® takes a three-prong ap-

proach to CRM:

- The first is sales force automation where a distributor’s sales representatives have the lead generation tools to manage their pipelines and up-sell to customers. Distributors can track lead/sales progress by defining opportunities and reporting on their sales reps’ pipelines.

- The second part of Activant’s CRM approach is contact management. This goes beyond maintaining customer addresses and phone numbers to actually tracking customers’ buying habits that enable you to anticipate their needs.

- Finally, CRM includes marketing capabilities. Tools that allow users to fax and e-mail from the solution, generate lead generation call lists, and,

60 years in business for Sussex County P&H Supply



In November 1949, James Mitchell opened the doors of Sussex County Plumbing and Heating Supply in Newton, N.J., along with partners Paul Francke and Isodor Fierstien. The business has been at the same location for all 60 years, serving both retail and wholesale customers. Mitchell was joined in the business by his son, Gary Mitchell, who became the manager in the summer of 1970 and the president of the corporation after his father’s retirement. The employees of Sussex County P&H Supply want to extend a special thank you to all the company’s customers for supporting them over the years, as well as to president Gary Mitchell, with whom they share their best wishes for many more years to come!

most importantly, manage call center activity, enabling distributors to increase their customer base at a minimal cost.

“In today’s market it is absolutely critical that distributors are aware of what is in their sales channel and what will have an impact on their business,” said Kevin Roach, executive vice president and general manager of Activant. “Effective CRM tools help distributors capitalize on what they have in their pipeline.

“In the past, many distributors relied on the knowledge their sales force had of the customers and

prospects they served. An effective salesperson would proactively give customers information on a product before they even knew they needed it, but visibility into this and other efforts were not there for the executive team of a company. Today, much of that proprietary knowledge is readily available in a distributor’s database and recapturing that positive customer-distributor relationship requires a strong CRM tool. That was Activant’s goal in developing CRM functionality for Prophet 21.”

For more information, visit distribution.activant.com.

Grohe expands in Latin America

BLOOMINGDALE, ILL. — Grohe has announced the opening of its first sales office in Latin America thus strengthening its presence in the global sanitary market. Almost simultaneously, Grohe also launched its first Galleria in Brazil at Vallvé, the largest network of bathroom showrooms in the country.

“Establishing the Grohe brand in Brazil is a key strategic move in Grohe’s global expansion plans. We are entering the Brazilian market with an innovative product lineup designed to deliver the ultimate in design, technology and quality,” said Jeffrey

Ackerberg, president and chief executive officer for Grohe Americas.

Brazil is Latin America’s largest market for sanitary fittings and is at the center of Grohe AG’s expansion plans in Latin America. The new branch in São Paulo will allow Grohe and its distribution partners to respond better to the needs of commerce, trade and end users in Brazil and throughout the region. With a local base, Grohe services will be optimized and regional requirements given even greater emphasis.

“With the opening of our São Paulo office, Grohe is being unmistakably

clear about its commitment to meeting the needs of the Latin American market with a trained and experienced local Grohe team,” said Luis Diego Rodriguez, vice president of new business development for Grohe Americas. “Grohe is continuing to extend the global reach of its brand with expert service and quality products.”

The new sales structure in Latin America additionally offers support in customer service, logistics and technical matters in English, Portuguese and Spanish. Sergio Alarcon, commercial director of Grohe South America, has been named to lead the dedicated Grohe team in São Paulo.



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Grand opening for new Birdsall luxury showroom

NORTH PLAINFIELD, N.J. — Birdsall Bath Design (BBD), a subsidiary of W.A. Birdsall & Co., hosted the official grand opening of their 6,500-square-foot luxury bath showroom located at 993 Route 22 West in North Plainfield, N.J. on September 24. The event included a 45-minute presentation entitled “Connections: Design and the New Consumer.” In addition to cocktails, passed hors d’oeuvres, music and tours of the new impressive showroom.

The presentation included notable designer, Ellen Cheever, CMKBD, ASID, the visionary behind the design of Birdsall Bath Design’s new showroom, as well as industry trend watcher, Leslie Hart, executive vice president of Fry Communications, as speakers. Together they profiled the “new high-end customer” and demonstrated with “real-life” examples how

they were able to engage their clients during the design, presentation and installation of different phases of various kitchen and bath projects.

Cheever and Hart covered the following:

- How the affluent client’s values and priorities are changing
- What motivates the client to undertake a project
- Product attributes that mean the most to clients
- The growing importance of green and sustainable products
- The role of brands today
- Why authenticity is so important
- How to appeal to the new affluent customer
- How to serve the new customer.

“This event allowed designers and architects the opportunity to visit our new showroom while learning about design and today’s affluent con-

sumer,” said Patricia Whelan, director at Birdsall Bath Design. “Birdsall Bath Design, known for having the latest in bath products and technologies, is committed to being a place where consumers and professionals can visit and enjoy an educational and interactive shopping experience. BBD is also committed to helping the environment, its employees, customers and local community, which is why this showroom will include a focus on sustainable design.”

Birdsall Bath Design is a member of the United States Green Building Council and is enrolled in the LEED for Commercial Interiors (CI) Retail Pilot Program. They anticipate being certified at the Silver level, allowing the showroom to be one of the first LEED-certified retail spaces of its kind. Additionally, the space will be utilized as an educational center for professionals and consumers interested in learning about green products. LEED certification is awarded by achieving performance in key areas of human and environmental health such as water savings, energy effi-

ciency, materials selection and indoor air quality.

A subsidiary of W.A. Birdsall & Co., Birdsall Bath Design is a luxury bath showroom with the latest in bath products and technologies. More importantly, BBD will have one of the first Silver LEED-certified retail spaces of its kind and will make sustainability a top focus as it is important for the health and well-being of its staff, clients and the overall environment. Additionally, the showroom will also be utilized as an educational center for professionals and consumers interested in learning about green products. For details, visit www.birdsallbath.com.

W.A. Birdsall & Co. has been leading the introduction of innovative plumbing and heating products and technologies ever since it was founded by William Adams Birdsall in 1911. The company has thrived for almost 100 years by embracing and de-mystifying new technologies as they did with central heating and indoor plumbing in the early 20th Century. Birdsall is also proud of its part in helping improve the American standard of living in home comfort and hopes to continue this by offering less wasteful heating, cooling and sanitary products.

Haws introduces new discount product website

SPARKS, NEV. — Haws Corporation® launched a new discount product website at www.HawsCloseouts.com. The Closeout Store features



bargain-priced cancelled special orders, obsolete, returned and/or slightly scratched or dented drinking fountains, electric water coolers, eye-wash and eye/face wash stations, drench showers and more.

Haws Corporation offers product solutions for commercial buildings, offices, industry, education, municipalities and government applications. In honor of the launch, all products are discounted an additional 15% through the month of November. The new website is designed to complement the current product lines at the company’s main corporate website, www.Hawsco.com, which will also be undergoing redesign and a new launch this fall. Both sites have streamlined site navigation, making them more user-friendly and while providing the user with updated product information, spec sheets, operating manuals and prices.

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*Based on DOE test procedure and comparison of a 50-gallon standard-tank electric water heater using 4881 kWh per year vs. the GE Hybrid water heater using 1856 kWh per year.
**Compared to a standard 50-gallon-tank gas model, based on 2007 fuel costs and testing conducted by the DOE.

See contact information on page 98

Northeastern Supply wows over 300 customers at NASCAR race

DOVER, DEL. — For the 15th consecutive year of Nationwide Series sponsorship (formerly the Busch Series), Northeastern Supply threw an overwhelmingly successful hospitality event at the NASCAR Nationwide Series race weekend in Dover that was held at the end of September.

While greeting a crowd of 150 on-lookers Friday night under a brightly lit tent in sort of a “pep rally” for the upcoming Nationwide series race, Jason Leffler, Northeastern Supply’s sponsored driver, said “It’s a privilege to be racing for such a great company such as Northeastern Supply. You can tell by this specific event that they care about their customers and the relationships that they have with all of you and I’m proud to be a part of it!”

He then shared some pretty entertaining race stories, posed for photo-

graphs, signed autographs and made some time to just “hang-out” with customers.

Leffler addressed another crowd of 250 race fans on Saturday once he cleared the track after qualifying 15th in the Nationwide Series Race. Northeastern then gave all 250 customers tickets into what turned out to be a very exciting race in which Leffler finished 6th, allowing him to hold on to his 4th place standing in driver points.

At the end of the event-filled weekend, Rodney Bixler, Northeastern Supply’s honorary pit crew member said, “There has never been a time over the years that they [Northeastern Supply] have not delivered for me. I credit Northeastern Supply for keeping my business going and now for making me an even bigger NASCAR fan!”

Bixler was specially selected to re-



NASCAR driver Jason Leffler thrills two young race fans in the Northeastern Supply tent before driving in the Nationwide Series race at Dover Speedway.

ceive pit and garage area passes for the entire weekend that enabled him to not only visit the Nationwide Series garage area weekend but also to take a tour of the Sprint Cup Series garage. He also was able to watch Friday’s practice from the top of the

Great Clips hauler and the Nationwide Series race atop the team’s pit box on pit road.

“I couldn’t have asked for a better weekend than this,” Bixler stated.

For more information, visit www.northeastern.com.

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Kickoff at Cowboys Stadium

All-Tex and Tyler Pipe team up for massive new stadium project

BY MARY JO MARTIN
Editorial director

One look at the new Cowboys Stadium leaves little doubt that “everything is bigger in Texas.” Jerry Jones, owner of the Dallas Cowboys, had long dreamed about building a stadium that would be unlike any other in the National Football League.

That dream became a reality this summer, with the completion of the

“The product we supplied is the heaviest and most difficult to install...with a construction site of this magnitude, everything must run like clockwork.”

colossal new Cowboys Stadium in Arlington. About the only thing this facility has in common with the former Texas Stadium is the opening in the roof so, as legend goes, God can watch His favorite team — although this one is mechanized to close on days when the weather isn’t favorable.

And when the Cowboys kicked off the 2009 football season, their fans at Texas-based All-Tex Pipe & Supply and Tyler Pipe took special pride in

the role they had played during construction of the new 3-million-square-foot stadium.

“It was a great honor to be chosen to participate in this ginormous project,” said All-Tex president Jill Brock Hurd. “We worked on it a long time behind the scenes with TDIndustries, the mechanical contractor. In fact, the planning started five years before construction even got underway.

“We’ve been involved in a lot of large projects over the years. That past experience has helped us develop a coordinated effort with our manufacturers and our customers. Being involved with TDIndustries as they worked on the Arizona Cardinals new stadium gave us the experience needed on this one, particularly because Cowboys Stadium is twice the size but at the same build schedule!”

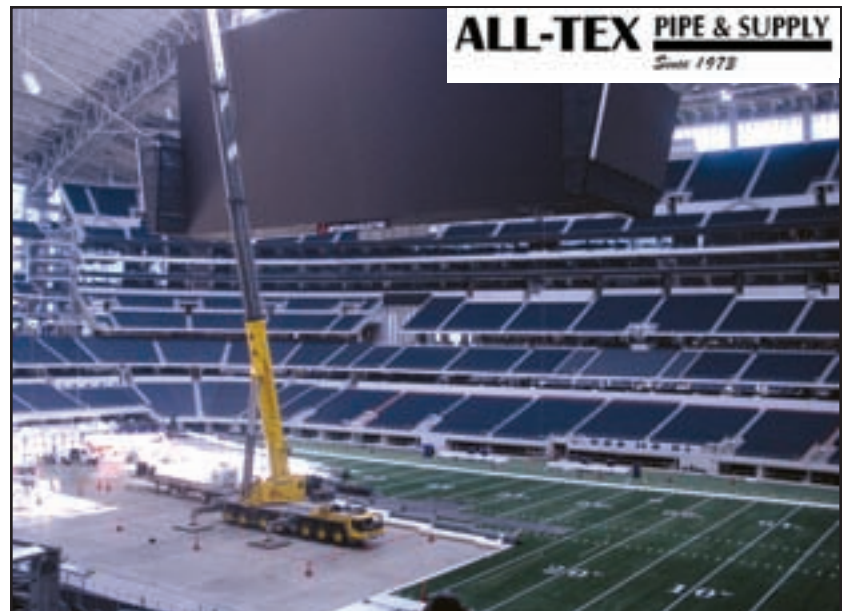
Bill Bliss, national sales manager for Tyler Pipe, which supplied the cast iron pipe and couplings for the stadium through All-Tex, added, “Absolutely everyone in the company was excited to be a part of this project. Because of our long-time relationships with both All-Tex and TDIndustries, we were able to secure it. Both of them have been doing business with us for over 30 years, so they know what we can do and how we can service them. They know that

no job is too big for us, which can be a concern with a high-profile job like this one, because they need to know without a doubt that they can get their pipe and fittings in a timely manner.”

Of course, a significant amount of coordination went into this project between All-Tex, Tyler Pipe and TDIndustries. Mike Coltharp, senior vice president-sales and a 34-year All-Tex veteran, shared some insight: “In a project like this, you can’t miss a beat because once you start falling behind it’s very difficult to ever catch up. We had meetings bi-weekly and talked daily with the engineering team, general contractor and mechanical contractor. In total, All-Tex



Tyler Pipe’s Bill Bliss, Sterling Bowman and Bob Davis point out some of their cast iron pipe used in construction of the new Cowboys Stadium. In all, Tyler supplied close to 5,000 tons of pipe.



All-Tex teamed up with Tyler Pipe and contractor TDIndustries to deliver and install some 13,000 line items — 50 miles of pipe in all — during construction of the new Cowboys Stadium. The Mitsubishi big screen suspended above weighs as much as a 747 and exemplifies the scale of the project.

made 2,811 deliveries to the jobsite, wrote orders that totaled 13,000 line items and supplied approximately 50 miles of pipe!”

They made as many as six deliveries a day to the jobsite — with an average of three — because of the logistical necessity to deliver smaller batches on smaller trucks.

Tyler Pipe regional manager Ster-

ling Bowman noted that the foundry ran extra long shifts during much of the project: “To give you some perspective, in an entire year in the state of Texas, we sell roughly 12,000 to 15,000 tons of cast iron pipe. In this project alone, they used close to 5,000 tons. It was important that we meet the timelines required by All-Tex, because there was a precision involved as to when they placed their orders and when it had to be delivered.



Personnel from All-Tex and Tyler Pipe gather for a picture in the stands during a tour of the stadium they helped build.

“The product we supplied is the heaviest and most difficult to install, so it had to be coordinated with the crane on the jobsite. With a construction site of this magnitude, everything must run like clockwork.”

A team effort

Coltharp credits TDIndustries for keeping their suppliers in the loop throughout the process. “Before they even broke ground, we spent numerous hours in the planning stages with

tween our organizations.”

Hurd was also quick to credit a number of All-Tex staff members for their dedication to the project: “While it was a team effort throughout our organization, our inside salespeople Pam MacDonald and Brett Arison were really the ones who coordinated the orders internally and got the information into our system. They specifically back up Mike [Coltharp], and work closely with TDIndustries. They lived and breathed Cowboys Stadium every day. Pam and our Dallas operations manager Bill Thompson worked together to coordinate materials going to the pre-fab shop, while Brett and our Fort Worth operations manager Darrell Brown coordinated all the materials that went directly to the construction site. And throughout the project, our accounting people did a fantastic job.”

To minimize the risk of jobsite ac-
(Turn to 2,811... page 20.)

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2,811 deliveries, 50 miles of pipe; it's all in a day's work for All-Tex

(Continued from page 18.)

accidents, vendors were required to adhere to a stringent safety protocol. All-Tex drivers had to pass safety courses and background checks, and had to adhere to the same safety standards as the construction crews — meaning wearing steel-toed boots, hardhats and safety glasses when making deliveries.

During construction, the one constant was that the project — and the price tag — just kept growing. The numerous change orders — with no deadline extensions — meant that everyone involved had to step up to meet new requests quickly, and were probably the most challenging aspect of the project for all involved.

And even though football season is well underway, the stadium is not yet fully complete. There is an entire additional floor that will not be started until after the season ends, so All-Tex and their supply chain partners will continue to be involved for some time to come.

A look inside All-Tex and Tyler Pipe

Founded in 1973, All-Tex operated from a single location in Dallas until an acquisition in 2000 gave the company an operation in Fort Worth. In

addition to its two Metroplex locations, All-Tex now has branches in Houston, San Antonio, Austin and Beaumont. All together, All-Tex employs roughly 125 people.

Hurd credits the Eclipse operating system for allowing the company's expansion and branch network to run so smoothly. "Internally, it makes a huge difference for us," she explained. "We don't have to travel to our other locations very often because we have access to all the information we need from our headquarters in Dallas. It's just like being there. Of course, it was a learning process for us to manage employees remotely after being focused on just the Metroplex for so many years. We had to learn to rely on electronic technologies to manage our growing organization."

To ensure that the All-Tex culture, which has been so finely honed at the headquarters, is standard operating procedure at all locations, Hurd planted "seed people" in these operations to get them off the ground. She also hired Judy Showalter, a human resources professional, to oversee the critical "people" part of the company. Through culture orientation, training and internal communication, Showal-



Key members of the All-Tex Pipe & Supply management team include (from left) executive vice president Dale Hurd, president Jill Brock Hurd, senior vice president-sales Mike Coltharp and chief operating officer Bob Arison.

ter helps bring unity to the group.

"We've also taken our quarterly company meetings — an All-Tex tradition for over 20 years — on the road to all locations," Hurd noted. "It promotes the culture and ensures that everyone feels like they are a part of the bigger organization."

All-Tex doesn't have branch managers per se; rather all branch personnel report to the executive team functionally. The operations managers report to VP-operations Larry Caffey, while purchasing agents are under the direction of VP-purchasing Brian Harrigan. COO Bob Arison leads the strategic initiatives of the company-wide sales staff, while SVP-sales Mike Coltharp handles day-to-day sales issues. EVP Dale

Hurd oversees all non-sales personnel and is involved in nearly all areas of operations. In addition, former Anvil executive Ernie Chuter joined the team a year and a half ago to develop the Houston and Beaumont market for All-Tex.

Tyler Pipe was founded in 1935 as the Tyler Iron and Foundry Co., producing cast iron soil pipe and fittings. In 1959, they introduced the industry's first 10-foot lengths of cast iron soil pipe, and the following year, installed a computer system for sales and inventory support. Just a few years later, Tyler Pipe acquired Wade Inc., and began marketing a full line of plumbing and drainage specification products. In the meantime, their TY-SEAL compression gaskets received national acceptance. Along the way, they introduced a number of new products, including no-hub pipe and fittings, pressure pipe fittings with push-in joints, carrier fittings,

RufWall Engineered Piping Systems, ductile iron production castings, gasket push-on specification products, and a variety of sizes of pipe and fittings.

In 1995, Tyler Pipe was acquired by Ransom Industries Inc., a sub-



Powered by 128 motors, the retractable roof can be opened or closed in nine minutes. On a clear day, it is visible five miles above the stadium.

Behind the scenes at the Cowboys Stadium

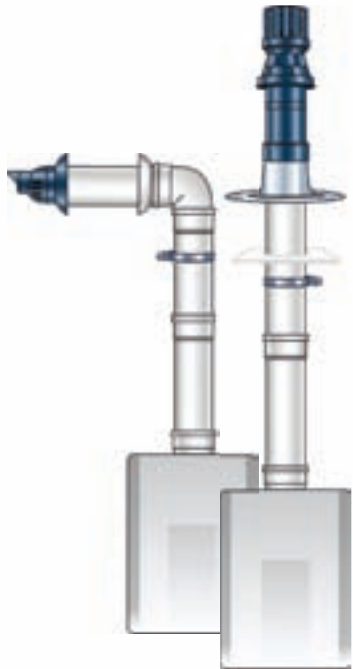
- The \$40-million Mitsubishi big screen that is suspended over the field — stretching between the 20 yard lines — is the largest in the world. It weighs as much as a 747 jet. It would take 2,000 52-inch big screen TVs to fill just one side of it.
- To ensure that fans still have a view of the game when they leave their seats, Sony HD flat screens are visible from every hot dog, beer and Kobe beef burger line in the stadium.
- TDIndustries' work at the stadium included 60 miles of piping, 2.5 million pounds of sheet metal, nearly 2 miles of ductwork, more than 3,450 plumbing fixtures and 2,600 food service equipment connections.
- The stadium holds up to 80,000 spectators for a "basic" event and can expand to accommodate 100,000 if necessary.
- Luxury suites range in price from \$100,000 to \$500,000 per year.
- The Dallas Cowboys Art Program launched with 14 commissioned artworks — some of which measure over 100 feet long — that

have been installed in prominent locations throughout the stadium.

- 40,000 lights were installed by more than 300 electricians.
- There is 270 feet between the field and the top of the two quarter-mile arches that support the roof.
- The retractable roof panels, powered by 128 motors that work in pairs, move at 23.8 feet per minute — meaning it can be fully opened or closed in approximately nine minutes. Measuring 660,800 square feet, the retractable roof is the largest of its kind in the world. On a clear day, the opening is visible from five miles above the stadium.
- The synthetic field rolls up into 41 different 6,000-pound wheels that can be stored when not in use. Recycled ground-up tires give it a real grass field look — making it appear that the field has pebbles of dirt in it.
- 7.7 million man hours went into the construction. The initial construction required 300 to 400 workers per day, five days a week. It topped out at 2,100 to 2,200 workers per day with scheduled half-day Saturdays.

siary of McWane Corporation with headquarters in Birmingham, Ala., and in 1998 automatic cupola charging and robotics were introduced to Tyler's plants in Texas, Missouri, Pennsylvania and California. According to Bliss, Tyler Pipe employs roughly 430 and has more than 1.6 million square feet of production under roof. In addition to the centralized shipping out of the Tyler facility, the company also operates a distribution center near Allentown, Pa., as well as a small pipe yard in Corona, Calif.

"We're highly mechanized, which has been the biggest change in the way pipe is produced," explained Bliss. "Most of the work done at our foundry is mechanized. Our pipe is rarely touched by human hands throughout the production process. It is made on machines that spin cast the pipe before going through a hot (Turn to Cowboys... page 22.)



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Cowboys Stadium a massive job

(Continued from page 20.)

dipping process. Then ink jet printers label pretty much the entire length of the pipe as it goes by, and then it goes onto pallets and is bundled. It is a very automated process. We have the capability to load and ship about 40 truckloads a day.”

When it comes down to it, both All-Tex and Tyler Pipe note that it’s really the partnership they’ve developed that has helped them be successful and to handle a job as big as this with precision and ease.

“Tyler Pipe’s relationship with our

“We just buckle down, do our part and make it work. The fact that we have built our infrastructure for growth meant a job of this magnitude was not disruptive for our normal operations. It is, in fact, our norm.”

wholesalers is very important,” Bliss explained. “We sell only through wholesale distribution and we have developed programs that enable both parties to be profitable. It’s a partnership and that’s exactly how we look at it. We value those relationships to the highest regard.”

His colleague Sterling Bowman added, “Since I’ve been involved with Tyler Pipe, All-Tex has been a premier customer. They are as top-class of a customer — both in the way they do business and in their personnel — as they come. Being involved with them on the Cowboys Stadium has helped us grow our business with All-Tex and prove that they can depend on us for any type of project.”

And for All-Tex, they continue to show that lean — but extremely focused — companies can pave the way in this highly competitive marketplace.

“We just buckle down, do our part



Gene Jones (in white blouse), the wife of Dallas Cowboys owner Jerry Jones, was actively involved in many aspects of the stadium construction. Their three children also have executive roles with the team.

and make it work,” Hurd said. “The fact that we have consciously built our infrastructure for growth meant that a job of this magnitude was not disruptive for our normal operations. It is, in fact, our norm. We’ve almost

always got some sort of billion-dollar project going on. It just proves what you can do if you are prepared.”

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Piping Industry Under Scrutiny

Core Pipe Products, President, Steve Romanelli speaks on this issue.

There is a growing concern in our industry with distributors and end users about defective products in the supply chain. Further investigations with our customers have confirmed many instances where other manufacturers' products have been below the ASTM and ASME minimum standards for wall thickness. Customers have asked Core Pipe to expand our efforts to help identify these problems for them, especially in the higher alloys. In response to these requests, we will now offer FREE QUALITY CHECKS for any weld fittings (regardless of manufacturer) sent to our facility in Carol Stream, IL where we will conduct non-destructive verification inspections for wall thickness and material grade. Results will remain confidential. Please contact your sales representative to arrange your FREE inspection.

It is unfortunate that any manufacturer in our industry would choose to ignore the specifications. If a part does not meet the ASTM or ASME standards, they should not mark them as compliant. It is not fair to distributors or the end users they supply and puts both at risk when the integrity of a designed piping system is compromised. If this program helps prevent just one damaging accident by educating our customers then we have provided a benefit to the industry we are proud to serve. We all are facing tough economic conditions, but cost cutting measures that diminish the quality or performance of our products is one option we will never choose at Core Pipe Products.

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Blanco receives design awards

LUMBERTON, N.J. — Blanco, a German innovator of quality engineered stainless steel since 1925, received four prestigious red dot design awards, most notably for Blanco STEELART's FLOW™ sink, now available in the U.S.

The red dot award signifies excellence and recognizes outstanding quality, craftsmanship, superior design and functionality in a world-renowned design competition. "To be recognized as a red dot award winner is a true honor," said Tim Maicher, director of marketing for Blanco. "We are immensely pleased to have this distinction bestowed upon us and feel it exemplifies our ongoing commitment to provide the best possible products the industry has to offer."

The FLOW sink is more than just a sink; it's an architectural element. Featuring new MicroEdge™ technology, FLOW creates the illusion of a flush-mounted installation — integrating

fully with the counter surface. Seamless and functional stainless side drainers flow gently into the elegant, purist bowl, offering a design that's both focal point and functional workspace.

Three other Blanco products,

available only in Europe, also received recognition: the STEELART system accessories; Blancostatura CrystalLine; and Elos-W wall-mounted line.

In the red dot competition this year, the panel of experts had to judge a total of 3,231 products from 49 na-

tions. They assess and test the products and judge them according to criteria such as degree of innovation, functionality, ergonomics, durability, ecological compatibility and self-explanatory quality.

For more information, visit www.blancoamerica.com.

OBITUARY

W.R. Bristow, manufacturers' rep

ATLANTA — William R. Bristow died peacefully in his home on September 21. He was 88 years old. He had recently been diagnosed with lung cancer but did not choose treatment.

Bristow was born February 19, 1921 in Petersburg, Va. He lived in the Tidewater Virginia area as he was growing up. A job took him to Evansville, Ind., where he met and married his wife of 61 years, Mary Elizabeth Hoffman. He was called to service for the Navy in World War II, serving for two years in Northern Africa. Bristow

was honorably discharged in 1945 as a Boatswain's Mate 2nd class.

He and Mary Elizabeth lived briefly in Rhode Island, Savannah and Macon before settling in Atlanta. He established a manufacturers' rep agency for plumbing and heating supplies in 1958. The company started with a desk in his home and Mary Elizabeth as his secretary. The business grew and in 1972 was incorporated as W.R. Bristow Mfg. Agents Inc. At first, he rented a warehouse but in 1979 purchased land and built

a 10,000-square-foot building in Cobb County, Ga. Bill and Mary Elizabeth retired to St. Simons Island, Ga., in 1981 but the business survives after 51 years with their son-in-law, Jim Watson, as owner.

Bristow enjoyed many years of hunting, fishing, golfing and playing cards with his good friends. He and Mary Elizabeth were part of a great group of friends called "Saturday Night Live" who got together for cocktails and dinner regularly.

Among Bristow's survivors are his daughter Marcia Watson (Jim), and granddaughters Katie Ashton (Rick), and Lisa Hill (Jamie).

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See contact information on page 98

BUILDING CONNECTIONS THAT LAST



Washington initiatives inimical to PHCP interests

It may have been sheer coincidence, but holding the PHCP industry's premier convention, the American Supply Association, in the lair of the government bureaucrats put the major problems facing recession recovery into sharp perspective.

When focusing on the PVF sector

Both manufacturers and distributors have been referring to a moderate uptick during recent weeks. Further generating demand for PVF industry products is the export sector, which is also being benefited by the weakness of the dollar.

specifically, the concerns become even more intense. While legislation working its way through Congress (universal healthcare, cap-and-trade, global climatological restraint, card check) is inimical to the interests of the preponderance of the PHCP industry's comprising small businesses in general, sub-sectors that drive pipe, valves, fittings are met with downright hostility by today's dominant governmental power structure.

Although much of the current PVF sector's business falloff from last year's peak can be attributed to the global recession, the Obama Administration's divergence from fossil fuel development, in favor of long-term reliance on renewable energy (wind,

solar, geothermal) will inhibit the production of the massive reserves of coal, oil and natural gas reserves available in the U.S. The disproportionate commitment to climatological improvement, which is not shared by China and India, will leave the U.S. even more dependent on foreign oil once the world economy returns to full recovery mode.

Based on the strong reaction to my "Viewpoint" editorial from dozens of industry manufacturers and distributors, it's becoming increasingly apparent that a large segment of our industry, comprised by small and medium-sized businesses, believe that the cap-and-trade energy proposal, already approved by the House of Representatives, would strike a critical blow against industry businesses. Equally repugnant to the overwhelming number of our contacts is the nebulous healthcare initiative, due for a showdown before the end of the year.

Most of our respondents voiced various degrees of concern over the impact of this legislation on their ability to function profitably. Nobody believes the President's pledge that a new universal healthcare program will not add substantial costs to their bottom lines.

Almost all have had to cut their inventories drastically, and some expect to prune their workforces even further in the months ahead. None I've talked to in my anecdotal surveys indicated any intention to add to their workforce in the foreseeable future.

It's becoming increasingly apparent that a potential double-digit unemployment rate will act as a deterrent to economic recovery for some time to come. This is a concern that is facing every aspect of America's growing potential workforce.

However, the late summer turnaround in manufacturing and the need to replenish inventories to keep up with maintenance replacement demand has picked up the post-Labor Day activities within those companies I've talked to.

Both manufacturers and distributors have been referring to a moderate uptick during recent weeks. Further generating demand for PVF industry products is the export sector, which is also being benefited by the weakness of the dollar. This is also making goods of American manufacture more competitive.



BY MORRIS R. BESCHLOSS
PVF, economic analyst emeritus

Also emphasized in my surveys was the easing in the availability of commercial paper and access to short-term loans, as part of credit improvement generally.

However, capital expansion seems to have reached a low point in both manufacturing and distribution. At the same time, local and regional banks are still leery about lending to new prospects. But they are much more amenable to short-term low-cost loans to creditworthy clients.

In summation, the outlook from now to year's end looks fair to middling. Long-term, all eyes are focused on Washington and the restraint Congress will show in passing major deficit-increasing legislation.

Biofuel boom has gone bust

While the U.S. is bracing for the legislative onslaught of a welter of budget breaking government programs, let's not forget the abysmal failure of the government subsidized biofuel initiatives of yesteryear.

This ostensible reduction in America's dependence on foreign oil was hatched by the Bush Administration, in league with 30 Midwest Senators (including then-Sen. Barack Obama, D-Ill.) to convert feed corn into a fuel additive. This legislation was supported by heavy subsidies and mandated usage that was amplified by a followup energy bill to force even more of this derivative into America's gas tanks.

This chicanery was so transparent that a leading executive within one of the nation's leading corn-based production companies, laughingly called it the "agri-business relief act."

It's no surprise that little has been said or written about the disastrous results of this multi-multi-billion "energy substitute" four years after its launch.

Two-thirds of bio-diesel production capacity now sits unused. Major manufacturers of ethanol are on the verge of bankruptcy and would be totally out of business were it not for the continued influx of huge government subsidies, on top of billions of U.S. dollars for
(Turn to Oil finds... page 28.)

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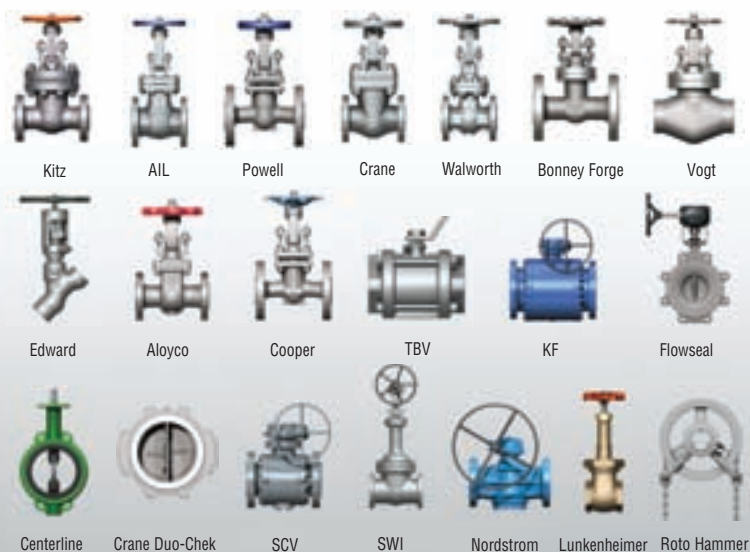
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Oil finds won't mean low prices

(Continued from page 26.)

agriculture as a whole. The next generation of biofuels (corn husks, saw grass and other non-food derivatives) have been abandoned for lack of investment interest.

It's easy to blame the crash of oil prices, overcapacity and the credit crunch for this disaster, but it would be no exaggeration to label this

Unlike the relatively cheap drilling and recovery methods of on-land drilling, getting down to these giant pools could eventually necessitate prices in excess of the \$147-per-barrel of oil reached in July 2008.

phony attempt to boost corn production a total calamity, buttressed by taxpayer billions.

Since the U.S. government is not responsible for bottom line profitability or stockholder transparency, let's hope that millions of taxpayers will continue to have their voices heard on current expenditure bills

with the only leverage at their disposal — the ability to flock to the polls at election time.

Brazil oil bonanza grows ever bigger

There's hardly a day goes by that doesn't report a major new oil find off the coast of Latin America's dominant nation — Brazil.

Out of the eight gigantic, multi-bil-

lion oil finds discovered in the last five years, six have been discovered in the offshore Santos Basin off the coast of Brazil. All but one are owned, majority-held and/or managed by state-controlled Petrobras, the South American super state's energy consortium.

But like the recently discovered

Tiber field found in the Gulf of Mexico and owned by British Petroleum, these reserves are deep under water, up to a depth of 35,000 feet.

Although such finds add to the desperately needed reserves for the years ahead, the cost of eventual extraction could be astronomical. Unlike the relatively cheap drilling and recovery methods of on-land drilling, getting down to these giant pools could eventually necessitate prices in excess of the \$147-per-barrel of oil reached in July 2008.

This is an eventuality the U.S. may have to face in the not-too-distant future, especially as government policy has discouraged conventional drilling in the lower 48 states, in spite of the huge available potential.

For those who believe in the fantasy of replacing oil for transportation, and such other uses as derivatives like plastics and myriad other uses with renewable energy, the reality of high-cost oil will happen sooner than they expect. That's why

the Chinese are buying all the discounted oil they can lay their hands on now.

With Mexico's offshore oil reserves cratering, the Canadian tar sands converters negotiating with the Chinese, and Venezuela diverting shipments away from the U.S. as fast as commercially feasible, the Administration's anti-fossil fuel policy will come back to haunt this country before Obama leaves office; even if he does so at the end of his present term.

To stay up to date with my twice-daily blogging, be sure to log on to my hyperlink at www.theworldreport.org and then click on 'Morrie's page,' announced in the middle of the *World Report* website. Your recommendation for my blog, as well as the individual columns will be much appreciated. ■

Morris R. Beschoss, a 54-year veteran of the pipe, valve and fitting industry, is PVF and economic analyst emeritus for THE WHOLESALER.

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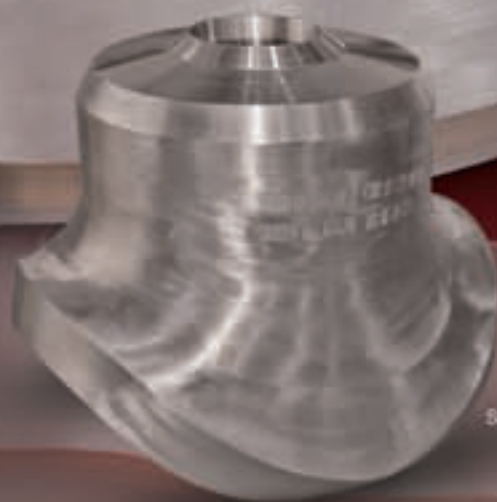
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ProTech bought by Simpson Dura-Vent

Simpson ceases Vicksburg manufacturing operation

(Continued from Simpson, page 1.)

tems (PTS) in Albany, N.Y.

• The cessation of manufacturing operations at the company's Vicksburg, Miss., facility.

According to Eberhard, the acquisition of PTS enables the company to offer a complete line of chimney and venting systems to the HVAC, plumbing and specialty hearth markets. The addition of PTS's FasNSeal® (Special Gas Vent) for Category II, III and IV appliances rounds out the company's offering to the plumbing-heating-cooling market. FasNSeal's reputation as a high-quality and innovative product is firmly entrenched in this market. Additionally, Ventinox®, welded seam, stainless steel flexible liner is a well-respected and established trade name in the masonry chimney relining market and completes the company's chimney relining offering to the Specialty Hearth market.

The cessation of manufacturing operations in Vicksburg enabled the company to consolidate manufacturing in Vacaville, Calif., and Albany, N.Y. Eberhard noted that this results in a leaner, more responsive manufacturing organization. The Vicksburg facility now serves as the company's Midwest distribution center. Other distribution facilities are located in California, New York and Minnesota.

Vacaville and Albany now serve as headquarters for the company's Eastern and Western Divisions. Each division manages its own manufacturing, engineering and sales efforts. Martin Wawrla, the former owner of PTS, is the vice president and general manager of the Eastern Division. James Molloy is Eastern Division director of sales. The Eastern Division is responsible for sales and distribution in New England, the Mid-Atlantic states, Pennsylvania and Ohio. This division is also responsible for the company's commercial product sales.

In addition to being president and CEO, Eberhard manages the Western Division. Michael Bruce is vice president-manufacturing and Todd Lampey is national sales manager.

According to Eberhard, the new sales and distribution organization puts sales management closer to the customer. The company's distribution centers put inventory closer to the markets. Each division has its own customer service and order entry department. Marketing and finance are centralized at the home office in Vacaville.

Simpson Dura-Vent is a wholly owned subsidiary of Simpson Manufacturing Co. Inc. of Pleasanton, Calif. Simpson is a publically traded company on the New York Stock Exchange. For information, visit www.duravent.com.

OBITUARIES

Ewin Allen Ottinger, former owner of George E. Lee Co.

NORFOLK, VA. — Ewin Allen Ottinger passed away on October 16. Born in Knoxville, Tenn., on October 9, 1938, he was the eldest son of the late Ben Hooper and Irene Mynatt Ottinger. Ottinger is survived by his wife of 46 years, Ann Jones Ottinger, along with a daughter, son and their families.

He was a graduate of Norfolk Academy, Class of 1955. In 1960 he earned a Bachelor's degree from the University of Tennessee, where he was a letterman on the Cross Country and Track teams. He pursued graduate studies in the field of history at Old Dominion University.

Ottinger proudly served in the U.S. Marine Corps from 1961 until 1967, when he was honorably discharged. He was a vice president of General Foam Plastics Corporation from 1964 to 1974, assistant treasurer of C.E. Thurston and Sons from 1975 to 1976, and president and owner of George G. Lee Company from 1978 until recently. He was past president of Southern Wholesalers Association and a member of the American Supply Association.

Dale McDaris, EISI branch manager

GREENVILLE, S.C. — Robin Dale McDaris, 49, passed away at his home in Greenville on October 8 following a three-month battle with brain cancer.

McDaris was the Anderson branch manager of Eastern Industrial Supplies Inc. He had worked for Eastern for 15 years. Kip Miller, president and CEO, noted, "Dale was a hard and productive worker. He played a major role in helping East-

He was a tennis player and avid runner, who completed 14 consecutive Marine Corps Marathons and hundreds of other races. He was a member of Virginia Beach Community Chapel, where he served as a Sunday School teacher of children and adults for many years. His deepest commitments were to God and his family.

Though a Tennessean by birth, Ottinger became an enthusiastic supporter of the city of Norfolk. Beginning in 1976 when he coordinated the City Council campaigns of two candidates, he drew great satisfaction from serving his city.

He was a chairman of Norfolk's Industrial Development Authority and a member of the city's Planning Commission. In 1992, he sought the Republican nomination to the Second District seat of the United States Congress.

A graveside service was conducted at Forest Lawn Cemetery. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made in Ottinger's name to Norfolk Academy or Virginia Beach Community Chapel.

ern establish business with some of the company's major accounts. Dale was one of the warmest and friendliest people I have ever known. I was blessed to have known him."

McDaris is survived by his wife Whitney Lockwood McDaris and their two children, Grayson, 5, and Tinsley, 3. He is also survived by his parents and many extended family members.

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See contact information on page 98

California, Vermont deadlines fast approaching

Matco-Norca is prepared for full compliance with lead-free legislation

BY MARY JO MARTIN
Editorial director

Years ago a number of television commercials ran that were designed to educate the public about the dangers of lead in paint. They warned that chronic illnesses, learning disabilities and reduced IQs could result from children eating paint chips, not to mention the risks of exposure to the toxicity of lead throughout a home or business.

Fast forward to today and the country is faced with a renewed push to prevent lead poisoning, especially in children. As concerns about lead leaching into drinking water sur-

As a result, plumbing products suppliers have been working hard to ensure that their products meet the upcoming January 1, 2010 deadline. One of those leading suppliers, Matco-Norca, began preparing for this over the last few years as debate over the lead-free legislation picked up steam.

“California and Vermont have passed this legislation for public safety concerns,” explained Corey Lowsky, director of marketing and product management for Matco-Norca of Brewster, N.Y. “They are cutting-edge states when it comes to positive public initiatives like this, so it’s not a surprise they would take the

“We knew it would require significant effort on our part to offer dual inventories and full marketing strategies to support all of our customers. ... We believe that in the next five to 10 years this legislation will probably go nationwide.”

— Corey Lowsky, director, marketing and product management

faced, some states began to take action. California and Vermont are the first states to pass legislation that implements very stringent “lead-free” restrictions on plumbing fixtures for potable water applications. Under California Assembly Bill 1953 and Vermont Senate Bill 0152, new pipe, fixtures and fittings that are intended to convey drinking water must contain no more than .25% lead. Neither law requires that existing plumbing fixtures be replaced before normal change-out is needed; but they do require that new and replacement pipe, faucets and fixtures be in compliance.

lead on this. We knew it would require significant effort on our part to offer dual inventories and full marketing strategies to support all of our customers. Both states have the same requirement, so our new lead-free products will be in compliance in both markets. We’ve also heard some rumblings that Maryland and Massachusetts may be close behind, but nothing has been confirmed yet. We believe that in the next five to 10 years this legislation will probably go nationwide.”

To prepare for this rollout, Matco-Norca systematically reviewed all of the

products they’ve sold in California and Vermont in recent years. “Our product really falls into three major categories: valves, fittings and nipples, and faucets and plumbing specialties,” explained Lowsky. “We detailed what we have been selling in



free products. There can be a relatively significant price increase on the lead-free products — as much as 30%, depending on how much brass is in the product — so they want to continue offering the less-expensive products in other markets. Of course, the company will sell its lead-free products to any customer who wishes



About 70% of Matco-Norca’s 15,000 active SKUs had to be sourced in lead-free versions to comply with new legislation. Their DC’s ‘Go Green’ section keeps product separated to eliminate the chance of errors in picking and shipping.

California and Vermont, and then looked at the financial impact of offering or not offering those products. We had to consider what business we might lose and what we might gain.

“Along the way, Matco-Norca worked with our factories overseas and our sales reps in the affected markets to define which products we needed. Through the process, we determined, defined and refined our product offering. We relied on our years of experience with global sourcing to be sure that our factories would produce the lead-free versions for us.”

As Lowsky described, a key element of the testing process for the lead-free products is that they must comply with the .25% requirement on wetted surfaces — the parts of the products that are in direct contact with the water. “We developed a testing protocol with three different measurements,” he explained. “The products are tested at our factories followed by a qualified agency testing the products; we also use independent testing labs throughout the U.S. to certify the lead content on each and every product. We’re extremely thorough and want to ensure we are in full compliance.”

For now, Matco-Norca will carry dual inventories of leaded and lead-

to purchase them.

“We’ve totally reorganized our LaPalma, Calif., distribution center and have an entire lead-free section now,” Lowsky described. “It’s a completely ‘green’ area of the warehouse, down to even the paint on the walls. We call it our ‘Go Green’ section. We requisitioned the lead-free products as much as six months ago and



Matco-Norca recently launched a dedicated website at www.matco-norca.com/lead-free that describes its line of lead-free products.

started receiving them about two months ago. The last should be in by November. The way the DC is set up now really helps us keep product separated to eliminate the chance of errors in picking and shipping.”

Matco-Norca currently offers about 15,000 active SKUs, of which 70% are affected by this new legislation. According to Lowsky, the facto- (Turn to Lead-free... page 34.)



Matco-Norca completely reorganized its LaPalma, Calif., distribution center to include an entirely ‘Go Green’ section.



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Lead-free product line rolled out by Matco-Norca

(Continued from page 32.)

ries are using various metallurgical alloys — including polymers, plastics and lead-free brass — in these products to ensure compliance.



New pipe, fixtures and fittings that are intended to convey drinking water are affected by this new legislation. They must contain no more than .25% lead on wetted surfaces — the parts of the products that are in direct contact with water. Matco-Norca has a thorough, three-pronged approach to testing products for compliance.

While wholesalers doing business in California and Vermont are certainly aware of the legislation and pending deadline for compliance, Matco-Norca has ramped up its marketing efforts to support this massive lead-free product rollout. “We launched a dedicated lead-free website in October — www.matco-norca.com/lead-free — that identifies all of our lead-free products, has spec sheets, price sheets, literature and additional information that our customers may need,” Lowsky noted. “We also have a dedicated catalog in our green lead-free look that will detail all of the lead-free products we are offering, along with a targeted adver-

tising campaign.”

Todd Evans, Matco-Norca’s Western regional sales manager who runs the California warehouse and West Coast sales team, is responsible for getting the Matco-Norca lead-free message out. Evans noted, “Our sales reps are completely on board and we’ve made sure to get all the new literature out to them so they can get it in front of our customers. We want our customers to know that we have a full, complete and compliant lead-free offering.”

Michael Matz, Eastern regional sales manager responsible for Vermont among other states, added, “It’s an exciting time for us. The ability to react to changes in the marketplace and provide customers with the products they need seamlessly is further evidence of our desire to provide the type of service they have become accustomed to from Matco-Norca.”

In describing all the efforts Matco-Norca has been making for this rollout, Lowsky said he would be remiss not to mention the key new additions to Matco-Norca’s management team that have played such a strong role in re-focusing the company’s direction.

“We definitely have some new things on the horizon. I won’t get into specifics, but we have some new products of substance coming soon. We’ve been in business more than 50 years and we have contacts all over the world.”

“Our management team has undergone some positive changes that have further strengthened the company in the past two years,” Lowsky said. “We’ve brought in six well-known managers and executives that have added structure and processes that were lacking. At the same time, it was important that we retain the ‘family feel’ of our organization — not only internally but also with our customers. One of our most important focuses is to make sure that the processes we put into place allow us to be more efficient, while at the same time making us easy to do business with.”

Among the key roles that have



Matco-Norca ramped up its marketing efforts to support this massive lead-free product rollout. In addition to this ‘green’ section in its California DC, the company launched a dedicated website, catalog and targeted advertising campaign.

been filled at Matco-Norca from other companies are the president, CFO, vice president-supply chain, vice president-sales, director of faucets and plumbing specialties sales, and director of marketing and product management.

“Our president, Lynn McVay, is well known throughout the industry and possesses significant experience and relationships with customers across the country,” Lowsky noted. “He’s really helped us mold Matco-Norca into an even more professional organization. He selectively uses his contacts with our customer base to get us into customers’ doors that we might not have been in before. Lynn brings strong direction to the company and challenges us every day to improve.”

Despite so much having already been in the works during the past few years, Lowsky hinted that more will be coming from Matco-Norca in the near future: “We definitely have some new things on the horizon. I won’t get into specifics, but we have some new products of substance coming soon. We’ve been in business more than 50 years and we have contacts all over the world. Matco-Norca will continue to use that to our advantage to discover new products at the right prices and made from high-quality materials. We will be launching some new products in early 2010 that we are very excited about and think will be of tremendous benefit to our customers.”

For additional information, visit www.matco-norca.com.



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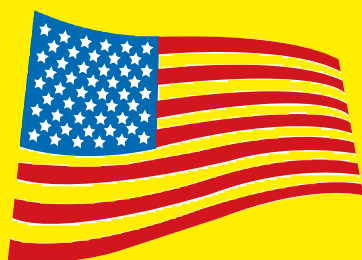
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Delta Group adds new dimension to PVF manufacturing/distribution interchange

BY MORRIS R. BESCHLOSS

PVF and economic analyst emeritus

Although the pipe-valve-fitting sector has increasingly gained independent stature within the breadth of the \$75-billion plumbing-heating-cooling-piping arena, the emergence of the Delta Group has provided this fast-growing PVF sector with a new dimension.

In an exclusive interview, we are privileged to bring this major PVF distribution group to our readers' attention.

Dating back to the darkest period of this sector's organizational development (the early 1980s energy de-



Phil Knipper,
Delta Group president

pression), a group of independent distributors, Pinnacle, decided to form an interchange of ideas concentrating exclusively on PVF-related issues. This was a particularly chaotic period for distribution, with industry leaders such as Grant Supply, Gulf Supply, Vinson, Wallace and other major steel pipe-oriented groups such as Republic and Bethlehem Pipe falling prey to the PVF implosion.

Pinnacle concentrated systematically on cost of goods and the changing nature of industry products and their ability to conform to the rapidly changing needs of end-users and fabricators.

Even though some of the original Pinnacle distributors were acquired by national chains, it continued to evolve into a nationwide interchange, with a buying group approach, that was solely restricted to PVF products.

Whereas Pinnacle set the foundation for a cooperative distributor approach toward the fast-expanding requirements of power generation,

traditional energy development and the beginnings of renewable energy, this evolution became an increasing commitment of the successor Delta Distributor Group, formed in 1995. Needless to say, there was consideration given initially to joining another buying group, however the members wanted a business model like Delta that was devoted to pipe, valves and fittings. "In short, we like to say that yes indeed, we are different than other buying/marketing groups currently in the U.S.," said Phil Knipper, Delta Group president.

Although the core members of this PVF distribution evolution consisted of Chicago-based Chicago Tube & Iron, greater Boston-based Independent Pipe & Supply, Michigan's Gallou Supply and Philadelphia's Deacon Industrial, the membership of the now-15-member group has been remarkably stable. (Note: For a complete list of Delta members, go to their website at www.deltadistributorsllc.com.)

All maintain exclusivity in PVF, and have had a respectful relationship with each other for years. Within the PVF sector, member distributors utilize their proclivity toward valves, pipe or fittings to provide the Group as a whole with their expertise in such specific subsectors as valves, pipe, tube, forged fittings and ancillary products encompassed by the PVF umbrella.

This is the adhesive that binds the Group together in promoting relationships with vendors, with whom individual distributors have developed mutually beneficial relationships. These are comprised of accepted brand names of U.S. as well as foreign manufacture.

The primary objective of Delta is to jointly support buying programs that mutually benefit all members as completely as possible. All transactions with select members are completely transparent to each Delta distributor, and no deductions are taken from any earned incentives, secured by individual members.

Since major suppliers are producers of all aspects of pipe-valves-fittings, the Delta Group attempts to have one primary vendor for a selected commodity. However, due to the national reach of Delta today, that is not always practical.

Delta emphasizes its desire to selectively improve total vendor participation rather than dilute its sales by spreading its purchasing power.

Significant about the Delta Group

is the equality of the Group's ownership by all 15 members. Although the totality of its revenues have expanded substantially since its inception 14 years ago, Delta is open to additional members. However, it will continue limiting its membership to one member from each marketing area. Due to the broad geographical scope of major PVF distributors, the potential of expansion is limited. However, the occasional overlap of branches does occur.

All members have equal say concerning group operations, but maintain an executive group that provides guidance. Delta Group spokesmen indicate that all members pay the same annual base fee to cover minimal fixed costs and then share in additional expenses, based upon their Delta incentives received.

Since the Delta Group avoids accepting competitors within the same primary market, they exchange sensitive operating information in open forum. The Group holds three meetings per year, and requests that the CEO or his number two official attend. Meetings are held at varied locations to give every member a better insight into varied geographical regions.

The Delta Group is fortunate in having as its professional executive one of the most experienced veteran PVF leaders in the business today, Phil

Knipper. His background encompasses long service on the ASA's Industrial Piping Division, and as a director in the incipient Pinnacle Group. He served for 18 years as a manager for the major Southeast PVF distributor Hub Inc., which was eventually acquired by Ferguson.

In 1995, Knipper was recruited by Apex Supply of Atlanta to expand their PVF presence. The subsequent acquisition of Apex by Home Depot

The primary objective of Delta is to jointly support buying programs that mutually benefit all members as completely as possible.

involved Knipper with the overall HD Supply operations, which generated record U.S. distribution revenues of \$12 billion in 2006. As the PVF sector looks forward to a solid recovery next year, the Delta Group stands ready to take part in this prospective 2010 expansion.

For any inquiries related to Delta Group's activities or potential membership in the Group, Knipper can be contacted at Delta Distributors LLC, 194 Hurricane Shoals Road, Lawrenceville, GA 30045, telephone 770/757-5585; fax 770/496-5513, or e-mail deltagp@bellsouth.net. ■

Morris R. Beschloss, a 54-year veteran of the pipe, valve and fitting industry, is PVF and economic analyst emeritus for THE WHOLESALER.

EPA releases draft showerhead specification

WASHINGTON, D.C. — On September 24, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency released for public comment its draft WaterSense specification for showerheads. Once this specification is finalized, consumers will be able to renovate their bathrooms with a full suite of WaterSense-labeled products — toilets, faucets and showerheads.

As one of the leading uses of water in the home, showering accounts for nearly 17% of residential indoor water consumption. For most households, that's nearly 30 gallons a day! In fact, the average household could save more than 2,300 gallons per year by installing high-efficiency showerheads. Since these water savings will reduce demands on water heaters, households could also save enough electricity to power their television use for about a year. These reductions could add up to as much as \$50 per year in water and energy bill savings.

The WaterSense draft specification

for showerheads sets the maximum flow rate at 2.0 gpm at a flowing pressure of 80 psi. As with all WaterSense specifications, the draft showerhead specification includes performance criteria to ensure that consumers will not have to sacrifice water coverage or spray intensity in order to achieve water savings. EPA worked with a variety of stakeholders to develop these criteria so showerheads can be independently tested and certified for both water efficiency and performance.

WaterSense is an EPA partnership program that seeks to enhance the market for water-efficient products and services. WaterSense is both a label for products and a resource to help people use water more efficiently.

Visit the WaterSense website for more information about the draft showerhead specification at <http://epa.gov/watersense/pp/showerheads.htm>.

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ONE CALL GETS IT ALL

The great experimenter

One of the great-granddaddys of heating was John Mills, who worked with the H.B. Smith Company as a freelance inventor and engineer from 1873 until 1897. He was forever experimenting with heating, and sharing what he knew.

Between 1888 and 1890, he wrote a two-volume book titled *Heat, Science and Philosophy of its Production and Application to the Warming and Ventilating of Buildings*. It was one of the first serious books about heating and this magnum opus became an important resource for boiler and steam engineers in the years that followed.

John Mills invented the boiler that bears his name, and Mestek, the successor company to H.B. Smith, still makes the Mills boiler to this day. John Mills came up with the idea that in a tall building, which was to have a one-pipe-steam system, it would be best to send the supply main straight up to the top of the building, then turn it horizontal to go around the perimeter of the attic, and finally downfeed all the radiators so that the steam and the condensate traveled in the same direction. They called this the Mills System and it worked beautifully.

I remember once going to a fancy building on Central Park West in Manhattan where I saw a Mills System that had 12" screwed pipe. It was something to marvel at because a 12" screwed tee is a lot bigger (and heavier) than you think. I thought about The Great Experimenter that day, and about the men who installed that big pipe to his design. I try to imagine what sort of wrenches those guys owned, where they stood to get the leverage, what size their arms were. Those guys left echoes of themselves in that building. I heard them.

John Mills also experimented with heat loss, and he developed a quick method for figuring out the load in a building. They called it (not surprisingly) the Mills Rule.

Contractors loved the Mills Rule because it was so easy to use. Before long, they nicknamed it the 2-20-200 Rule and I'll explain why in a minute. Most of the size-it-quickly rules of thumb that followed John Mills' rule evolved from this method. They were all fine for their time, I suppose, but not so good nowadays because we build better buildings than they did.

Here, consider what sort of windows they used during John Mills' era. Most likely, they were single-pane, double-hung windows, with leaky sashes. There were no storm windows.

And what about insulation? Do you think they used fiberglass batts back

in the day? Do you think they used anything at all inside those walls? Not from what I've seen, and not from what I've read. The heat loss of a building was much greater back then, and the Mills (2-20-200) Rule was appropriate for that sort of construction. Not so good nowadays.

Here's what I mean. Take any building and size a new steam boiler using the Mills Rule. The first thing you're going to do is measure the square footage of all the glass in the building. Once you have that number, divide it by 2 (that's the 2 in the 2-20-200 nickname for the Mills Rule). Okay, now set that aside for a moment.

Next, measure all the cold surfaces in the building. A cold surface is any wall, floor or ceiling that doesn't have heat on its other side. In a two-story house, the first floor walls are cold surfaces if they face outdoors. It's warm on one side of those walls and cold on the other side. If a wall faces another heated room, you wouldn't measure that wall for heat loss.

You'd probably measure the ceiling on the second floor of this building because that ceiling faces the attic space (which is unheated), but you wouldn't measure the ceiling on the first floor of that building because that faces the heated second floor. The same goes for the floor; you'd count it if it was over a cold crawlspace or an unheated basement, but not if it was over a heated basement. Make sense? Good.

Okay, once you've measured all the cold surfaces, divide that number by 20 (that's the second number in the 2-20-200 nickname). Put it on the back burner for a minute; we've got one more measurement to make, and this has to do with the air that's inside the building. The air is constantly changing because of infiltration. Old buildings were drafty (many of them still are). Measure the cubic feet of air by multiplying the length, times the height, times the width of each room. Now add those numbers together and divide the total by 200 (the third number in the 2-20-200 nickname of the Mills Rule).

The grand total you come up with will be the required square footage of Equivalent Direct Radiation (or EDR for short) for the building. One square foot of EDR for steam will give out 240 Btuh when there is 70° air on the outside of the radiator, and 215° steam on the inside of the radiator. That temperature of the steam is significant because 215° steam is steam at about 1-psi pressure, so what the definition of EDR is telling us is you don't need pressure greater than 1-psi

inside the radiator, even on the coldest day of the year.

For hot water heat, when the average water temperature is 170°, the value of EDR drops to 150 Btuh per square foot. This is because hot water isn't as hot as steam. The Dead Men used the Mills Rule for both steam- and hot-water systems.

But here's the problem with the Mills Rule. We've upgraded the windows and even the insulation in many of those old buildings. The radiators are now oversized, based on the current heat loss of the renovated building. That can cause money to flow out through those new windows if people are going to be cracking them open so they can be comfortable. If you used the Mills Rule, or a similar shortcut, to figure the radiation for a modern building, you'll probably wind up with enough radiation to heat three buildings. That's the problem with using sizing shortcuts from more than 100 years ago. They didn't keep up with the times, and I think John Mills would agree, were he around today. He'd be using a computer to size his systems. He'd probably be writing the software.

A footnote on Mr. Mills: Sometime in 1905 or 1906 (and this was in Westfield, Mass.), Mr. Mills wandered into town, dressed shabbily and looking penniless. J.R. Reed, who ran the H.B. Smith Company in those days, saw him and said, "John Mills, I always warned you of this. Didn't I say that if you kept on at the rate you were going that you would surely scratch a poor man's pants?" He then gave Mr. Mills a check for \$5,000 and said, "You are not going to give this money away or use it for any more experimenting."



BY DAN HOLOHAN
Wet head

John H. Mills never again appeared in Westfield. He died in 1908. And he probably never stopped experimenting. ■

Dan Holohan began his love affair with heating systems in 1970 by going to work for a New York-based manufacturers representative that was deeply involved in the steam and hot-water heating business. He studied hard, prowled many basements and attics with seasoned old-timers, and paid close attention to what they had to say. Today, Holohan operates the popular website, www.HeatingHelp.com. He has written hundreds of columns for a number of trade magazines, as well as 15 books on subjects ranging from steam and hot water heating, to teaching technicians. His degree is in Sociology, which Holohan believes is the perfect preparation for a career in heating. Holohan has taught over 200,000 people at his seminars. He is well known for his entertaining, anecdotal style of speaking. Holohan lives on Long Island with his wife, The Lovely Marianne. They have four incredible daughters, all out in the world and doing wonderful things.

Grundfos Tour concludes journey across America

OLATHE, KAN. — The Grundfos "Impossible Tour" — a fully equipped, mobile educational center for trade professionals in the plumbing, heating and piping industry — visited 14 different cities in the Northeastern U.S. during the months of October and November. This final swing of the 2009 tour began in Cleveland in early October and ended in Lancaster, Pa., in mid-November. In between, the Grundfos "Impossible Tour" truck traveled through a half dozen other New England and Middle Atlantic states, spending one or two days in each location and giving tradespeople an opportunity to view the latest in pump technology from Grundfos.

The two-room vehicle includes a mini-theater for viewing video programs, as well as a series of interactive and working displays of a wide



selection of residential, commercial and industrial pump solutions from Grundfos. The tour features the new ALPHA™, an energy-optimized, 115-volt circulator with a permanent magnet motor design that will cut power consumption by a minimum of 50%, as compared with other circulators in its class.

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Q&A with Greg Leidner

United Pipe & Steel opens new Midwest facility

BY MARY JO MARTIN
Editorial director

Despite the challenging economic climate — and with many companies forced to make cutbacks — United Pipe & Steel has actually continued its expansion mode, recently opening a new facility in the Chicago area.

The company now operates six distribution centers and a fleet of 24 tractor trailers to service wholesalers in 27 states with LTL shipments of pipe products. Their customer base includes wholesalers in the following market segments:

- Plumbing and heating
- Pipe, valves and fittings
- Electrical
- Pump and wells
- Waterworks
- Irrigation
- Excavation.

United Pipe & Steel carries high-dollar-value products that are often costly to handle and subject to volatile pricing. Their full inventory of commodity pipe products includes:

- Copper tube (straight lengths & coils)
- Steel pipe 1/2" through 8" (Canadian and domestic origin)
- Plastics (S40 and S80 PVC, FG Gold CPVC, S80 SPVC, S&D, SDR, ABS)
- Copper linesets
- Electrical (PVC and metal conduit, strut, threaded rod).

With headquarters in Ipswich, Mass., the company expanded into the Midwest in 2006 with a distribution center in the Cleveland area, followed the next year with a warehouse near Indianapolis. From these facilities, United Pipe ships to customers in West Virginia, Kentucky, Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, Tennessee, Missouri and Wisconsin. In 2008, they opened a facility in North Carolina, which allowed better access to customers in Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Georgia.

Last month, they opened a facility about an hour from Chicago, allowing them to better service the greater Chicago area, and reach customers in Wisconsin, the Minneapolis/St. Paul metro area, and Des Moines, Iowa.

Dedicated inside and outside sales representatives serve each territory, and nearly all of United Pipe's deliveries are made by its own employees using the company's fleet of trucks. General manager Greg Leidner believes this ensures high-quality service from the time of initial quote all the way through to delivery: "Our business model is not about the first order — it's about the

weekly re-order process, and we make sure that customers' expectations are exceeded throughout the process. The name of the game is dependability."

Leidner recently spoke with editorial director Mary Jo Martin about the direction and continued growth of United Pipe & Steel.

MJM: *In today's struggling economy, many companies are hunkering down. How did you make the decision to invest further into your business?*

Leidner: Above all other factors, customer demand has led us to expand into new geographies. More and more, customers are becoming sophisticated in their purchase behaviors. What I mean is that customers are approaching pipe as an asset, and they are looking to increase their inventory turns on this important asset. Wholesalers are realizing that there are tangible benefits from working with United Pipe & Steel to reduce their risk on volatile commodities, and ensure that they always have competitive product on the shelf to service their customers.

The timing is good for us because the economic situation is challenging customers to take a close look at all areas of their business, from how they price their own customers to how they order commodity pipe products.

And strategically, we view this economic downturn as an opportunity — an opportunity to find good warehouse space and hire great people. Counter to the national trend, we have job openings in several areas of our company, including sales and operations.

MJM: *You recently opened a new facility in the Chicago area. Please share with us more information on this exciting development?*

Leidner: We've actually been servicing wholesalers in the greater Chicago area with weekly deliveries from our distribution center in Indiana for the past year. But the volume we've done in this geography (the third-largest city in the U.S.) justifies increasing our presence — and service levels — even further. Opening a 100,000-square-foot facility within about an hour from Chicago allows us to accomplish just that. As with all our locations, we store our steel pipe and copper tube inside so it looks as fresh as the day it was manufactured when it gets delivered to customers.

We will be able to service the Chicago metro area at least twice per week with regular route deliveries and low minimums for FFA. Additionally, customers will be able to do will calls at this new facility in Loves Park, Ill., so if they can't wait for

their delivery day, they can have access to high-quality and competitively priced pipe products. In essence, they can lower their inventory holding costs even further, knowing our stock will support their business needs.

Finally, in addition to servicing Illinois and Wisconsin, we'll be able to provide wholesalers as far as the Twin Cities of Minneapolis/St. Paul as well as Des Moines, Iowa, with weekly deliveries. By the time this interview is published, the facility will be fully operational.

MJM: *Have you selected any personnel to lead that new operation? Will they be familiar industry names?*

Leidner: They will absolutely be familiar names. Industry veterans Michael Blair (national sales manager) and Gerald Slattery (director of steel pipe sales) will be leading the sales effort, supported by our top-notch outside sales force, all of whom will be visiting customers and prospects throughout the next several months. This sales effort will be supported by an extremely strong, experienced inside sales force, and a top-flight operations team to ensure deliveries are made on time and complete.

MJM: *Is today's economy creating even greater demand for master distributors, as wholesalers are trying to cut back on their inventory overhead?*

Leidner: Definitely. The transformation over the past two years has been incredible — more and more wholesalers, from the very small to nationals, are turning to master distribution in pipe products. There are real, quantifiable benefits to working with a master distributor such as United Pipe & Steel on commodity products:

- Reduced inventory holding costs
- Increased turns
- Reduced risk of inventory devaluation (more predictable margin realization)
- Simplified purchasing — one purchase order for multiple product categories
- Advice on commodity trends — our sales force will give updates to customers on a weekly basis.

Additionally, our vendors — all manufacturers of high-quality piping products — are increasingly looking for large-tonnage, regular buyers. We help them base-load their operations, which is important in this economy.

MJM: *What are some of the ways you've chosen to market your business and attract new customers?*

Leidner: Word of mouth is perhaps our most powerful marketing tool. It's a small industry, and wholesalers are constantly trying to help other wholesalers (who they don't compete with, of course) find ways to improve their operations. Whether it's at a regional wholesalers association meeting, an ASA show or a buying group conference, wholesalers talk. We've brought onboard literally hundreds of new customers that have learned about us from another wholesaler. Of course, nothing beats "pounding the pavement" to meet wholesalers in person and explain to them what we offer, how we offer it and that we have a sales force that is second to none.

The best way we have of earning a second order is our performance on that first order. We provide high-quality product, excellent service, on time and accurate shipments. And we earn increasingly deeper levels of trust with our customer base with every



Michael Blair



Gerald Slattery



Greg Leidner

order we deliver.

MJM: *You recently updated your website. What are some of the functionality customers may make use of?*

Leidner: Well, speaking of word of mouth, one thing we put on our website is a section called "Testimonials." It's a slideshow of customer quotations about United Pipe & Steel — our inventory, our dependability, our people, everything. Another enhancement is that we've put our delivery schedule on the site. Customers can find out exactly what days we're in their area each week. Finally, we have all our list price sheets available, as well as submittal data and spec sheets for all products. Customers report that our site is easy to navigate and full of useful information.

I just want to reiterate that these are challenging times — for all of us. And I want to thank our valued customers for their continued support. We appreciate the opportunity to continue to earn your business.

If any of your readers have questions about our company, they can feel free to call me at 800/777-PIPE (7374) or e-mail me at gleidner@united-pipe.com. ■

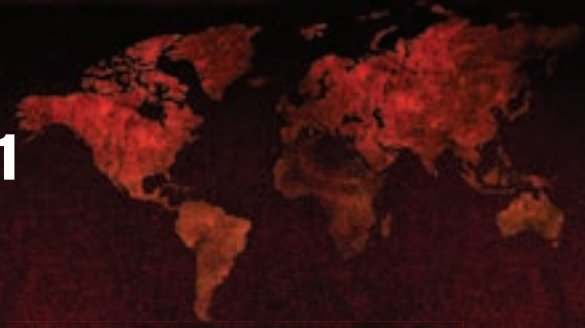


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INDUSTRY NEWS

Rotobrush releases private RotoConnect virtual community

GRAPEVINE, TEXAS — Rotobrush® International LLC has launched RotoConnect™, a private virtual community within the Rotobrush-owned website www.RotoVantage.com. RotoConnect is powered by cubeless™, an online social networking platform from Sabre Holdings and is for members of RotoVantage, an exclusive club from Rotobrush, which offers service providers business and marketing support.

Through the RotoConnect social network, members from across the U.S. and worldwide receive support and tips to be successful in their businesses and have a chance to ask and answer questions of each other, share ideas and help each other. Community members offer services like air duct cleaning, insulation, heating and air conditioning, carpet cleaning, restoration, pressure washing, window cleaning, janitorial, water treatment, plumbing, appliance repair and more.

This cubeless-powered community captures their interactions, the expertise and experience of members across the RotoVantage network, and makes that content searchable within the

platform. Because they are confident in the privacy and security of the community, participants can be open and honest in their communication, building a community of trust.

“It’s important to our customers to network with their peers and gain collective knowledge and support,” said Clint Harris, vice president-business services for Rotobrush. “In offering RotoConnect, we provide members 24/7 access to resources nationwide and beyond, with people who understand their challenges in business and can offer new perspectives. Members chat on marketing ideas, service performance techniques and even swap fishing stories.”

Rotobrush International LLC, based in the Dallas-Fort Worth area, is a market leader in providing businesses and entrepreneurs with turnkey packages and unique opportunities in integrated indoor air quality and energy efficiency services and products. Rotobrush is committed to its customers’ success, supporting them with world-class training and marketing and business support. For more information visit www.Rotobrush.com.

ITT Flowtronex offers ‘Cash for Pumpers’

DALLAS — Borrowing a page from the highly successful “Cash for Clunkers” car program, ITT Flowtronex is now offering a 10% factory-direct cash rebate for the replacement of old and inefficient irrigation pump systems. For a limited time, the “Cash for Pumpers” program will allow customers to replace pump equipment that has been in service 15 years or more with a new Flowtronex Variable Frequency Drive (VFD) Silent Storm™ packaged pump system. Flowtronex VFD technology has helped many golf courses reduce

energy consumption 25% and water consumption by 46%. All systems are supported by 65 FlowNet™ service centers to help with installations.

To qualify for the limited time rebate, customers just need to send a photo of the existing/old equipment and fill out a simple rebate form after the purchase. The offer applies to all qualifying equipment in North America. Flowtronex experts are also available for a free site evaluation to help customers maximize their energy efficiency potential. For details, visit www.flowtronex.com.

OBITUARY

Michael Babrowski, retired Zoeller executive

LOUISVILLE, KY. — Michael A. Babrowski passed away on October 13 after a two-year battle with cancer. He was 68.

A native of Peoria, Ill., and a resident of Louisville for the past 35 years, Babrowski was a retired vice president of marketing for the Zoeller Company. He was also a long-time member of St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, the Louisville Businessmen’s Club and the Louisville Sales and Marketing Association.

Babrowski is survived by his wife of 45 years, Emily; son, Timothy Babrowski (Susan); daughter, Christine Landon; grandchildren, Taylor Amanda and Jacob; his mother; and three brothers.

His funeral Mass was held October 16 at St. Margaret Mary Catholic Church, with burial in Resurrection Cemetery in Peoria, Ill.

Anyone wishing to make memorial contributions is asked to consider the American Cancer Society.

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How are you doing in the current economy?



BY PETER SCHOR
Showroom specialist

Everywhere you go, people are talking about how tough things are in the economy, and the media continues to daily blast us regarding unemployment, foreclosures, big-name businesses that are closing their doors and any information they can put together to let us know how bad things are out there. But the big question is “What are you going to do about it?”

You can jump on the doom-and-gloom bandwagon and say “Woe is me” and do nothing or you can make a choice to do something about it. This isn’t the first time we have faced this situation — and it probably won’t be the last. Do you honestly believe that by supporting a negative frame of mind things are going to get better?

Instead, think success! Take positive action. There are people and companies out there that have chosen not to participate in the recession. They are thinking and acting like winners. They are focused on and talking about success, rather than failure or survival. They are focused on making things happen rather than waiting for things to happen to them. They are planning for success and executing the plan.

In these days of really hard work, uncertainty and crisis, it’s good to remember the following words from Albert Einstein: “*Let’s not pretend that things will change if we keep doing the same things. A crisis can be a real blessing to any person, to any nation. For all crises bring progress. Creativity is born from anguish, just like the day is born from the dark night. It’s in the crises that inventiveness is born, as well as discoveries and big strategies.*”

Here are some methods that I recommend you try:

- Avoid negative media, such as television news, newspapers and radio — especially when you first wake up and before you go to bed. If you watch the news or read the newspaper, a half-hour a day will keep you well informed.

- Avoid negative gossip and stories of gloom and doom from fellow workers, family and friends. They become toxic and help create a negative attitude that impairs your ability to think clearly. Don’t condemn, criticize or complain. Look for solutions!

- Identify the resources you will need to overcome the obstacles you face. Many resources do not cost money. I.E: Go back to *The Wholesaler* (www.thewholesaler.com) archives and source out the many showroom articles with numerous tips that cost little or no money. In my showroom column of January 2008, I identified 33 things that you could use to make things better in your showroom. The #2 tip was having an “Outcall Service.” Create an outcall service charging a minor amount per hour to go to a consumer’s home to determine what would fit their applications. The cost should be refundable against the purchase of the goods from the consumer or through your recommended trade resources.

- Since 2004, I have been writing showroom

columns based on proven factual information extracted from the most successful showrooms in the U.S. and Canada — both plumbing wholesaler and DPH types. No matter what your personal feelings are about me, please don’t let this prevent you from looking back in *The Wholesaler* archives for showroom articles in order to create better results for you and your showroom.

- Read, listen or watch something positive, inspirational, motivational, educational or spiritual every day. Rent a sports movie that is uplifting and inspiring. Some of my favorites include *Facing The Giants* (football), my all-time favorite; *The Final Season* (baseball) starring Sean Astin of the *Rudy* movie fame; and *The Express: The Ernie Davis Story*.

- Have an attitude of gratitude. Stay focused on everything you should be grateful for.

- Look for solutions! Rather than identifying the problems, write down your solutions. Set a time frame in which to accomplish them.

- Goals: Set short-term, intermediate and long-term goals. Zig Ziglar said, “Obstacles are things we see when we take our eyes off our goals.” Work smarter.

- Embrace change. Learn how to embrace change. Some of you and your companies have more than 25 years in showroom education and

There are people and companies out there that have chosen not to participate in the recession. They are thinking and acting like winners. They are focused on and talking about success, rather than failure or survival.

believe that you do not need to change! Many of the suggestions that I advocated about showrooms in the late 80s, 90s, and 2000s forward have happened. What I was trying to do is have you strongly position yourself to capitalize on the market changes and become the leaders that most of you are!

- Think, talk and act like a winner!

I know a lot of people in our industry who are doing well in our current economy. Is this hard for you to believe? I am heading out to speak about baths while helping six of my well-known bath/plumbing manufacturers at a 5-star hotel conference in October. The event is *sold out!* There are 100 4- to 5-star hoteliers of all types attending. This event includes face-to-face meetings with 100 manufacturers who serve this segment. Out of the 100 manufacturers that serve hotels, 23 cover the middle to high-end luxury
(Turn to Schor ... page 52.)

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Rheem named exclusive solar supplier for groundbreaking program

ATLANTA — Rheem Manufacturing Company, one of the world's largest producers of residential and commercial heating, cooling and water heating comfort products, announced a

groundbreaking association with the Valley Electric Association (VEA) in Nevada, to launch the largest Domestic Solar Water Heating (DSWH) program ever undertaken in the U.S.



This program offers each member of the VEA, an electrical co-op servicing more than 22,000 meters within Nevada and California, an opportunity to install a Rheem solar water heating system in their residence.

By installing a Rheem SolPak water heating system, participating residents and business owners will achieve significant water and energy savings. It's estimated that members switching from electric or propane water heating systems will save between \$250 and \$550 annually on water heating. According to the VEA, this program will also help to eliminate 15.4 million pounds of carbon dioxide annually and save \$34 million or more, collectively, on energy costs over the next 20 years.

Valley Electric and Rheem officially kicked off the DSWH program at Valley Electric's 2009 Energy Symposium on September 5 in Pahrump, Nev.

The Rheem SolPak is an integral part of the nation's largest domestic solar water heating program, which is being launched by the Valley Electric Association, a Nevada-based, member-owned, non-profit organization.

"We're extremely pleased to have been selected as the exclusive solar supplier for this project, which is a watershed event for energy and water conservation in the U.S.," said Chris Peel, Rheem senior vice president and chief operating officer. "As the only company that offers innovative air conditioning and water heating products like SolPak, we applaud Valley Electric and its members for taking a proactive and creative approach to sustainability and green living. Together, we're looking forward to providing home and business owners in California and Nevada with the ultimate in comfort, while also doing our part to further conservation efforts."

Jeff Mahoney, Rheem alternative energy market manager, added, "In addition to providing affordable solar water heating to nearly 5,000 homes, we anticipate that the program will immediately create over 100 jobs in Nevada and increase capital in the

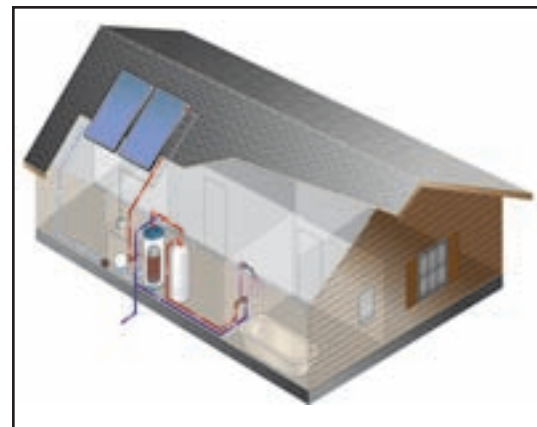
area by approximately \$12 million."

SolPak is an active, closed loop solar water heating system, meaning that it uses a pump to circulate a non-toxic heat transfer fluid through the system. Rheem SolPak makes installation a snap by coming packaged with all the components needed to complete a standard installation.

"With a successful history of more than 80 years in the water heating business, Rheem is able to bring the high level of consumer confidence that is essential to our business model and the success of the DSWH program," said Thomas Husted, chief executive officer of VEA. "The selection of a reliable solar partner with market-ready products was critical to the success of this program."

Valley Electric will provide 0% interest financing to members who choose to participate in the DSWH program, allowing resident members an easy pathway to using this exciting, innovative, energy-saving Rheem technology. Participating members will also be eligible to receive a Federal tax credit of up to 30% of the installed cost, including labor.

For more information, visit www.vea.coop or www.rheem.com.



Rheem SolPak is an active, closed loop solar water heating system that uses a pump to circulate a non-toxic heat transfer fluid through the system. SolPak is shipped packaged with all of the components needed for a standard installation.

Schor

(Continued from page 49.)

bath/plumbing manufacturer segment. The hoteliers, both specifying and buying, who attend this event had to "qualify to attend" by listing their current projects, hotel rooms and purchasing volume.

Am I saying that the hotel industry is booming! No. Am I saying that there is current opportunity outside of your comfort zone and belief systems? Yes. Twice over the past year, I wrote articles on the hotel opportunities in *The Wholesaler* for bath/plumbing manufacturers, manufacturers' reps, distributors and showrooms! Yes, showrooms! I would be glad to e-mail you an attachment of 3/4 of a page "Industry News" article that ran on page 67 in December 2008 and then again in the digital online edition of *The Wholesaler* in Au-

gust 2009. For those of you who e-mail me a request for this information, I will also send you one of my latest books. ■

Peter Schor, president of Dynamic Results Inc., is a bath/plumbing industry speaker, educator, author, columnist and consultant in many segments of our industry. He has conducted seminars for the past 20 years and speaks at numerous conventions. Schor has great expertise in the field of showrooms and hotel bathrooms and has won many industry awards. He also consults manufacturers in taking their products to market in the areas of sales, marketing and public relations. Schor can be reached at 1302 Longhorn Lane, Lincoln, CA 95648, phone 816/408-5346, fax: 916/408-5899, e-mail pschor@dynamicresultsinc.com or visit his website at www.dynamicresultsonline.com.

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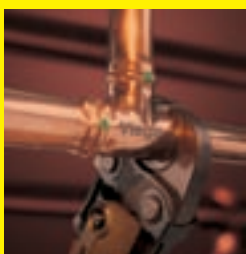
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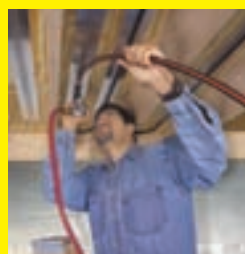
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Commentary from a veteran

Adding value to the supply chain – the rest of the story

From Martin's Corner comes a big "Hello" to all you readers!

If I have held your reading attention for this, the third column I have presented to you in *The Wholesaler*, I am very thankful indeed. This column has already afforded me — and I don't mean cash — the ability to work on some new life issues that I want to pursue. These include, but certainly are not limited to, sharing, teaching, learning and, in reality, giving up some knowledge that I have accumulated along the path of my 40-plus years that comes jumping out of my head from time to time. (I have a closing comment about learning, so watch for it.)

Well, let's get about telling "The rest of the story," in reference to this process called adding value in your current supply chain for all classes of your customers.

It makes no difference in this business climate today whether we are talking about your own P&L, a non-union contractor, a union contractor, or simply an industrial PVF end-user or plumber — the solution for all (reference survival and real profit) is that you must lower total cost and increase productivity. You may quickly say with a bit of doubt in your voice "Simple as that, huh?" Well, to tell you the truth, it is (as I have already explained) no walk in the park when you start talking about changing purchasing habits and perhaps systems and product lines.

To all of you owners and managers reading this, I'd say it is your call because it is your company, but taking business habits as status quo (to me) makes about as much sense as the definition of insanity written by one Mr. Albert Einstein many years ago. I quote: "The definition of insanity is simply continuing to do the same things but expecting different results!" Now I'm sure most of you have heard that statement more than once, but it should make you stop and think. If you have the desire to move "beyond insanity," make sure that all in your company understand your current supply chain and how you may be wanting to change/adjust it, have a structure to control your direct and indirect cost, and last but certainly not least, start planning to utilize electronic technology!

Don't forget that as a wholesaler, your supply chain typically has three legs to it — you, the manufacturer and your customer. You must know that the mechanical contractor, as an example, has his own supply chain to

worry about and consider. That would include, for instance, their company, a general contractor, an A&E firm, and many times the owner of the project or plant site.

You see, my friends, it has been told to me many times — and I am a firm believer — that in today's world, no one company competes one-on-one for its market share. It's really their supply chain that does the competing! To compete, all members of your supply chain must add value up and down the chain, actually making it a "value chain." When everyone in the chain works together to maximize efficiencies and take away waste, it adds value!

Question: How do your suppliers add value, Mr. Wholesaler, Contractor and End-User?

I believe the very first answer to this is that if they are working to build a preferred relationship, they are adding or trying to add value from the front to the back of the supply chain. Consider:

- Do the partners in your supply

If you have the desire to move "beyond insanity" make sure that all in your company understand your current supply chain and how you may be wanting to change/adjust it, have a structure to control your direct and indirect cost, and last but certainly not least, start planning to utilize electronic technology!

chain understand each others' objectives through a relationship that is built on trust?

- Are all of you working at integrating non-proprietary business systems?
- Are you planning to start using technology to enhance your business processes?
- Is there some redundant cost that the partnership can eliminate?
- Are you and your team demonstrating total management commitment to continuous improvement?

If your answers to all of the above bullet line points are strong "yeses," then you are probably reading this because you love me — not because you need to or want to try something new and different! But since I doubt that none to only a few of you could answer "yes" to most or all of the above questions, I will suggest you give them a try, as they will improve your bottom line if done properly. It's not easy by any means, but still worth trying!

I have already discussed a process called MCA (measured cost by activity). A couple of key areas of your business can be identified with this process alone:

- First, you will identify areas of

waste and inefficiencies

- Second, it will help you streamline internal and external activities
- Third, you will reduce overhead and related cost with same.

To be honest, I think you need to start some of these processes, because as we move forward in this market segment of ours and things get really busy again — and they will — you will need to know what it really costs you to deal with suppliers A, B and C, as well as customers D, E and F. You might find you have some decisions to make, know what I mean?

Just a few points on electronic commerce

To be clear, I am no IT person. I am not a technology guru. I am a peddler. And I get good input from folks I respect and really trust in our company as well as others on this subject. Please note:

- E-commerce will reduce transaction costs when done together as a partnership
- You will have quick verification

on your transactions

- You will have historical data retrieval and analysis
- You can develop solid relationship that will lead to superior value.

I have a personal friend with a very large contracting firm who cited the following to me in reference to going to an annual buying contract with a single supplier (with one as a back up) on his pipe, valves, fittings and hanger needs. What he shared with me was as follows:

- At the time his company was averaging about 13,000 annual transactions with all suppliers
- Before e-commerce and the annual buying contract, he felt his transaction cost was about \$50.00 per transaction
- After setting up his new deal, his transaction cost dropped to \$11.50 per transaction.

Wow! That calculation equates to an annualized \$500,000 net savings!

My mind doesn't even come close to thinking that this kind of savings (ratio) will happen to everyone who wants to strive for continued improvement with their current supply chain. But it is my belief that with no change to keep up with the future,



BY JOHN E. MARTIN
PVF market veteran

you and your company will simply have to *guess* what some of these changes in habits might do for you, your customers and your suppliers.

In closing out the "Value/Supply Chain" discussion, I want to add that investment cost is required, but why not? To really do it right you must invest dollars in e-commerce, implement the process, train your people, develop the control mechanisms needed, evaluate your vendors and customers on their capabilities, then *mandate* your supply chain partners to adapt to the technology in order to do business with you in *your chain!*

I just read an article about incoming ASA president Frank Nisonger of Slakey Brothers in Sacramento, Calif. I've known Frank a long time and it makes me proud to see him take the chair to lead the association. He stated, and I quote: "A huge challenge we face as a wholesaler is to find new methods of operating which will lower our costs, yet maintain or improve our service."

Isn't that what we are talking about and writing about when we evaluate our supply chains for value improvement? I certainly think so. Thanks, Frank, for taking the words "right out of my mouth!"

As you move into another month of business, I want to share something from Winston Churchill (I did not know him personally, but admire his will and his desire to be a "partner" to the world in a very tough and dangerous time). When asked about coming under the direction of another person (government) and having to learn a new approach, Churchill said, "Personally, I am always ready and willing to learn, although I do not always like to be taught!"

I'll leave it up to you on how this quote from him might fit an individual situation.

Well, that just about wraps up an (Turn to John Martin, page 82.)

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Prices down or steady; raw material delivery intervals 'shortest in recent memory'

STAINLESS STEEL PIPE

Pricing: ↓ Stainless Steel Pipe is forecast for a decrease of 1% - 2 1/2%. The increase in 3rd Quarter of 8% - 10% was driven by speculators and a weak dollar, rather than any real demand upswing. The prior increase held, but few factory orders were actually placed.

Lead Times: Manufacturers indicate lead times of 6 - 8 weeks with fill rates dropping. Due to extremely uncertain demand and price instability, manufacturers comment they are letting mill inventories run down to very low levels.

Comments: Mill backlogs are relatively light, so competition for available business is keen according to manufacturers. One manufacturer comments that the third quarter earnings reports may lead to a general sense of optimism, but lack of real demand may be creating a bubble that might burst if actual orders are not forthcoming. One manufacturer notes that raw material deliveries are currently at their shortest interval in recent memory.

STAINLESS STEEL WELD FITTINGS, 150 & HI-PRESSURE FITTINGS

Pricing: → ↓ Fitting manufacturers are predicting no change from one and 3% - 5% drop from others. One manufacturer notes that domestic prices have been more stable than import stainless fitting prices. Prices should be rising based on costs according to manufacturers, but too much inventory and capacity remain in the supply chain. One manufacturer is quoted, "the bottom has been hit."

Lead Times: Manufacturers indicate lead time of 2 - 4 weeks and 4 - 6 weeks for large OD fittings. Fill rates are running 80% - 90%.

Comments: One manufacturer does not see any change for the balance of 2009. Forecasts for 2010 point to the end of 2nd quarter for any improvement. Quoting activity remains strong, but the same bills of materials keep making the rounds without orders being placed. Too many masters have too much inventory. Demand still remains the missing link to recovery in the PVF sector. According to one manufacturer, it may be related to financial constraints or simply reaction to slowing consumer spending. While falling from its August highs, nickel still increased 40% during the third quarter; molybdenum also spiked then dropped, but still added 30% - 40%. Chromium's increase has been more modest, but has climbed nearly 20% since June. Obviously, as these key alloying ingredients of stainless continue their upward trends, commodity price increases will follow in the near future.

STAINLESS STEEL FLANGES

Pricing: ↓ Stainless steel flange pricing is forecast to decrease 3% - 5% thru the 4th quarter of 2009 due to foreign pressure, competition and lack of demand.

Lead Times: Fill rates are running

Stainless Surcharges	August per pound	September per pound	October per pound	November per pound
304L	\$0.5799	\$0.6637	\$0.8334	\$0.9500
316L	\$0.8597	\$1.0092	\$1.3310	\$1.4500

50% - 60% with lead times of 2 - 3 weeks. Specialty items are running 6 - 8 weeks.

Comments: Flange manufacturers comment that sales continue to be sluggish. Lead times have shortened. Raw materials are higher, because of Nickel at \$18,000/mt, compared to lower raw material prices in the spring of 2009 when nickel was near \$9,500/tonne.

CARBON STEEL PIPE - SEAMLESS, ERW AND CONTINUOUS WELD

Pricing: ↓ Carbon Steel pipe is forecast for pricing to be down 8% - 10% due to foreign pressure.

Lead Times: Fill rates for carbon pipe is running at 90% due to large inventories.

Comments: US Steel has confirmed plans to re-start the 2.3-million-ton blast furnace and steel-making operations at its Hamilton Ontario Works. The mill has been idle since March 2009. The U.S. government issued a 31% tariff in early September on Chinese steel pipe (anti-dumping suit as a result of a 203% surge in U.S. imports between 2006 and 2008). Even the European Union has assessed duties of 39.2% on seamless steel pipe shipped from China effective October 8, 2009.

CARBON STEEL WELD FITTINGS AND FLANGES

Pricing: → Carbon steel fittings and flanges are expected to remain stable through the 4th quarter of 2009. Demand continues to remain softer than last year.

Lead Times: Lead times are forecast for 2 - 3 weeks with fill rates of 90%. Specialty items are forecast for 4 - 6 weeks.

Comments: One manufacturer notes that market conditions for commodity carbon steel butt welding fittings and forged carbon steel flanges continues to remain steady, although significantly softer than 2008. The softness is being experienced in various markets hardest hit by the recession. The backlog of funded projects continues to support demand, although they are declining and should be depleted by mid-2010. Government spending on the BRAC (Base Realignment and Closure) Program and government buildings continue to support demand in certain areas of the country and should continue through 2010. Recovery and Reinvestment Act funds have not made any noticeable impact on the market at this point. A manufacturer remarks that the key issues directly affecting the PVF market in 2010 are the availability of funding in the private sector, "cap and trade" taxation, card check legislation and the application of the remaining 60% of the Recovery and Reinvestment Act funding.

FORGED STEEL FITTINGS

Pricing: → The forged steel fitting market should remain stable through the

4th quarter. This market has completed a deflationary period, which began during the 2nd quarter. The market price has decreased 20% during this time. The price decrease in the past two quarters was a result of raw material reductions and a desire by domestic manufacturers to close the price delta on foreign fittings. The industry decrease was nearly industry wide with the largest reductions occurring in domestically produced product. The deflation experienced by import product was to a lesser degree, according to domestic manufacturers.

Lead Times: Fill rates are 90% with lead times of 2 - 3 weeks.

Comments: Economic conditions are expected to remain consistent through the first half of 2010 comments one manufacturer. We are anticipating at best a 10% improvement for the second half of 2010. In support of these comments, commercial and industrial projects, including expansions and new buildings, are scarce as evidenced by a record number of lease availabilities. The energy sector has severely retracted its drilling, transportation, processing and exploration due to the low cost of oil and gas. We are hopeful the recent uptick in natural gas, nearly \$5, will continue to spur drilling activity. The U.S. rig count has steadily increased during the 3rd quarter, but a unique phenomenon is occurring. Many natural gas wells are being drilled and capped. With depressed prices, the companies are drilling to maintain leases, but they are not bringing the product to market. This condition decreases the demand for PVF product. The present majority agenda in Washington that includes cap & trade, card check, health care and new taxes discourages existing businesses from spending and the start-up of new businesses. The industry continues to battle a worldwide slowdown and an unfavorable business climate in Washington. The industry will be aided by a comprehensive energy policy including fossil and renewable sources of supply.

STAINLESS STEEL GATES, GLOBES, CHECK VALVES

Pricing: ↓ Stainless Steel Gate Globe and Check pricing is forecast to decrease by 2% - 4% in 4th quarter 2009 due to demand. Raw material costs are now stable and should remain unchanged through the end of 2009.

Lead Time: Commodity valves are shipping from stock 70% - 80% with lead times on the balance running 8 - 16 weeks. Specialty valves are forecast for 16 - 20 week delivery.

Comments: On August 2009, the Valve Manufacturers Association of America met in Chicago. Speakers at the VMA Market Outlook Workshop had many positive points to make with the



BY GARY J. CARTRIGHT
Special to THE WHOLESALER

main theme being recovery is already on its way, though it may take a while to get back up to speed. "We will not be impressed with the recovery of 2010, but 2011 will be the good year," said Alan Beaulieu, economist, Institute for Trend Research. There is a tremendous need for improvements to the infrastructure of the water/wastewater industry. Michael A. Schneider, CFA, managing director of Robert W. Baird & Co., spoke to attendees about the situation on Wall Street. He pointed out that the dam was about to break on power projects. He expects about \$13 trillion invested in the electricity infrastructure by 2030. Keith Small, senior marketing manager & proposals of Black & Veatch's Energy business, said renewable energy is the growth market in power today. He said power companies today have a three-pronged focus on sustainability (economic, environmental and community benefits). "It's not just about adding additional megawatts to the grid, but rather what kind of megawatts and at what cost," Small said.

BRONZE AND IRON GATES, GLOBES AND CHECK VALVES

Pricing: → Manufacturers of bronze and iron valves are not forecasting any change through the 4th quarter.

Lead Times: Fill rates remain at 70% - 80% with deliveries forecast for 4 - 8 weeks.

CAST STEEL GATES, GLOBE AND CHECK VALVES

Pricing: ↓ Cast steel valve manufacturers indicate prices down 2% - 4% thru the 4th quarter due to raw material costs and demand.

Lead Times: Deliveries are forecast for 12 - 16 weeks for commodity valves not in factory stock. The fill rates are running 70% - 80%. Specialty cast steel valves are quoting deliveries of 16 - 20 weeks.

Comments: Raw material costs are now stable and should remain unchanged through the end of the year for cast steel valve manufacturers. Overall there is a lot of high-priced inventory of commodity product in the U.S. stock. Overall demand of valve products is down about 8% - 9% versus 2008. Manufacturing plants around the world have scaled back capacity by 10% - 20%.

FORGED STEEL GATES, GLOBES AND CHECK VALVES

Pricing: → Forged steel valve manufacturers are indicating no price change (Turn to PVF... page 62.)



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GRUNDFOS 

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PVF activity slow

(Continued from page 58.)

through the 4th quarter.

Lead Times: With fill rates of 60% - 70% on commodity forged steel valves, the lead times are forecast for 6 - 8 weeks. Specialty forged steel valves are running 12 - 20 week deliveries.

QUARTER TURN VALVES – BALL AND WAFER

Pricing: No price changes are forecast for quarter turn product through the 4th quarter of 2009.

Lead Times: Fill rates for ball and wafer product is 60% - 70% with deliveries running 8 - 12 weeks. Specialty ball and wafer valves are forecast for 12 - 16 weeks.

Comments: One manufacturer comments on the global slowdown in business impacting inventories and profitability. Manufacturers are bouncing along the bottom in a slow-to-develop recovery. They do not see significant project business turning around until the 2nd or 3rd quarter of 2010. Reductions in capital spending with core industry sectors like the refin-

ing industry and the pulp and paper industry have been considerable.

CARBON AND STAINLESS PIPE UPDATE

In a September 2009 *Pipe and Tube Report* — Dan Markham, senior editor of *Metal Center News*, reports the following: “The pipe and tube market in North America — and the oil country tubular goods sector in particular — entered the recession behind the rest of the steel industry, and most likely will lag the rest of the industry on the way out.” The accompanying chart shows U.S. Imports for Pipe and Tube through August 2009.

Carbon and stainless stocking points have all trimmed inventories as much as possible since the inception of our economic difficulties. The chart shows the huge decline in U.S. imports of pipe and tube comparing 2008 to 2009. However, the stock reductions are very difficult with such weak demand. Suppliers note an outbreak of inquiries which seldom turn into bookings.

It has been interesting to note that only one Chinese mill, Hengyang Valin Steel Tube Co. Ltd, is being represented by an American law firm in the trade case filed

Commodity	August 2009 Year to Date	August 2008 Year to Date	% Change YTD
Standard Pipe	391,165	683,350	-42.8%
Oil Country Goods	1,290,242	1,745,987	-26.1%
Line Pipe > 16 in Diameter	701,203	1,300,545	-46.1%
Line Pipe ≤ 16 in Diameter	169,612	379,608	-55.3%
Line Pipe - Not Specified	177,551	295,055	-39.8%
Mechanical Tubing	226,988	355,536	-36.2%
Pressure Tubing	40,193	84,560	-52.5%
Stainless Pipe & Tubing	55,612	85,771	-35.2%
Other	181,948	343,255	-46.99%
Total	3,234,514	5,273,667	-38.7%

by U.S. mills against Chinese imports of seamless carbon line pipe. Evidently, October's 60th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China kept Chinese businesses, industries and just about everyone there on vacation for a full week beginning October 1. However, the ITC says other mills have responded or will respond to written requests.

The American Iron & Steel Institute reports that U.S. labor and manufacturing groups urged President Obama on Tuesday, October 6 to live up to his campaign

rhetoric and formally label China a currency manipulator in a Treasury Department report that was to be published in mid-October. ■

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This report is published as a service to the PVF industry indicating the direction of prices, lead times and market conditions reported by various domestic and import manufacturers as they believe the direction the market is heading each quarter.

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DOE reveals new agenda

NEW ORLEANS — Cathy Zoi, Assistant Secretary for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Energy at DOE, revealed her aggressive new agenda for energy efficiency at the CEE Industry Partners Meeting. Providing the keynote address, Zoi described the Obama Administration's commitment to scale up energy efficiency as the best approach to the urgent problems of climate change,

energy security and economic growth. Zoi's agenda rejects incrementalism, and she challenged the audience to join DOE to make big changes to save the planet. Zoi intends to hire the best talent available to make high-impact innovations, while also capturing hearts and minds to popularize energy efficiency. DOE is looking for help to develop a National Building Rating Program to

streamline building retrofits.

Zoi also announced, together with Maria Vargas, ENERGY STAR® communications and brand manager at EPA, the Expanded EPA DOE Partnership on Energy Efficiency. ENERGY STAR will be managed as a single program with clear lines of responsibility. DOE will have primary responsibility for product and service research and testing, while EPA will manage the ENERGY

STAR brand and public outreach. DOE will have the lead for minimum standards and appliance and building energy ratings, while EPA is leading on performance levels for ENERGY STAR. Zoi also described a new governing council and twice-annual stakeholder meetings to oversee the new agreement. The partnership achieves what CEE has been urging since the new administration formed.

Customer training is an ongoing process

(Continued from page 8.)

day-to-day products, you train them to trust and use your counter.

Messing up deliveries

If you are not reliable, you train customers to order from a more reliable competitor.

Creating problems for customers

Whenever you create a problem for a customer, whether it's your fault or his fault (like my airline experience) you are probably training him to do business elsewhere, if at all possible. If contractors get "punished" for buying from you, they are quick to find a different wholesaler.

Helping customers with problems

Whenever you step up and help solve a problem, you are training your customer to buy from you. (If you find that customers are only coming to you with their problems and giving the easy ones to a competitor, some retraining is in order. Often a simple discussion with the contractor will resolve the issue, saying that you can only continue to handle the high-cost (for the wholesaler), extraordinary events when you are also getting the customer's everyday normal business.)

Lecturing or criticizing customers

There is a big difference between friendly helpful coaching and lecturing or criticizing. When your team denigrates customers, those customers often look for a different supplier. I have heard this happen in a variety of ways:

- "This must be the third time that I explained this to you."
- "What did you forget this time? This is the third time you've been in today."
- "Wow, from the smell, you must be cleaning sewer lines today."
- "You just bought one of these yesterday. Did you break that one?"
- "Why do you need that?" Implying that he doesn't know what he is doing.

Substandard websites and storefronts

When you have a first-generation — aka crude website — you are

training your customers to use another wholesaler's website. When a contractor can't find a product in your online store or that store is slow or difficult, you are training them to look elsewhere. For a reprint about planning your website and storefront, e-mail me at rich@go-spi.com.

Please understand that I do not intend to use the "customer training" concept in a negative or demeaning light. That is never the intent. I do know that all humans respond to positive and negative feedback and that they are powerful tools in modifying a person's mode of operation.

The key is to be very aware of the messages that we are sending to our customers in the way we conduct business. You want to send messages and conduct business in ways that train customers to buy from you on a regular basis and stop sending messages and doing things that train customers to buy from your competition.

Regarding e-mail requests: I get many e-mails from readers. I appreciate the feedback and try to respond personally to every e-mail. Over the past several months I have become aware of several e-mails that were sent to me and somehow lost or that were dropped by our spam filter. I normally try to respond to e-mails is less than a week although my travel schedule may occasionally increase the response time. If you have requested reprints and I have not responded, I apologize and ask that you resubmit the request to me rich@go-spi.com or go to our website, www.go-spi.com, and click on the Reprint Requests entry.

Rich Schmitt is president of Schmitt Consulting Group Inc., a management consulting firm focused on improving the profitability of distribution and manufacturing clients.
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Q&A with Bob Elliott

Dodson Global builds stance in PVF master distribution

BY MARY JO MARTIN

Editorial director

On January 3, 2007, a merger between Dodson Steel Products and Global Fittings and Flanges created Dodson Global Inc. At that time, the two companies brought together locations in East Brunswick, N.J., Houston, Denver and two operations in the Atlanta area. The new company has since opened a branch in Reno. Today, Dodson Global Inc. is based in Stone Mountain, Ga., the total footprint of the company is roughly 600,000 square feet under roof, and the organization has 75 employees. They are a master distributor of domestic and imported carbon steel fittings, flanges, forged steel and valves, and sell only through wholesale distribution. All of their vendors are ISO 9001/2000 approved, with full traceability of MTRs.

Dodson Steel was formed in 1972 by Ralph Dodson and Bruce Porter, while GFF was founded in 2003 by Yehuda Mendelson and Mike Hawkins. As a result of the merger, the majority owner is Kaman, an Israeli-based publically traded holding company. Bob Elliott, who now serves as president of the operation, also maintains an ownership interest. Elliott came to Dodson Steel in 1995 after 20 years in the commercial banking industry. He joined Paul Clark and Steve Letko to form the managerial team and ownership of Dodson Steel. Elliott began running the business in January 2000.

As Elliott explained, the merger allowed DGI to reach new geography in a more effective, cost-efficient way. It combined two very strong master distributors, bringing the philosophies of each company into one, broadening its purchasing power and rapidly growing the customer base. At the time of the acquisition, about 50% of the customer base of each organization was unique.

Elliott recently shared some candid insight into Dodson Global's operations with editorial director Mary Jo Martin. Following is that interview.

MJM: Give us a snapshot of the lines that you currently carry, along with your customer base?

Elliott: The principal factories with whom we work make us a bit unique. We carry domestic, approved import, import and material manufactured in China. One feature that

differentiates us is that we have probably the broadest base of inventory of the master carbon steel distributors. Our key domestic manufacturers are Tube Forgings of America, Hackney, Mills Iron Works, Powell, AmeriForge, Piping Products and Bonney Forge. On the import side, our key suppliers include Erne, Riga, Arah Dagang, Bebitz, BothWell and several Indian flange manufacturers. In total, we stock approximately 30,000 SKUs from 20 vendors.

When it comes to our customers, we have built our business from the small supply houses up, as opposed to the very large suppliers down. Our diversified customer base includes the smallest individual single store operators to McJunkin Red Man, Ferguson and Wilson.

MJM: How important is it for your employees to be able to offer technical assistance to your customers?

Elliott: We are very fortunate to have experienced salespeople who have been in the industry for quite some time. They have developed a technical expertise that certainly can be invaluable to our customers. However, if we really need a very technical answer that is beyond our capability, we will lean on our manufacturers for an absolute answer or for documentation we can share with our customers.

The one challenge we have — if you can call it that — is that because we have had very little turnover in 30 years in business, we have to be concerned with bringing in and training new employees who will be able to hit the ground running as some of our veterans consider retirement. We must continue to enhance our staff and prepare for the future.

The majority of our salespeople have come through the warehouse as part of their initial training. We also have them work in other key areas of the company such as purchasing and MTR support. Most have visited several of our factories to observe the manufacturing process. On the valve side, the reps from some of our key factories provide training at our facilities. But really, for the most part, the product we are selling today is the same as that which we sold 30 years ago — which means that there is not a lot of training needed for new product introductions.

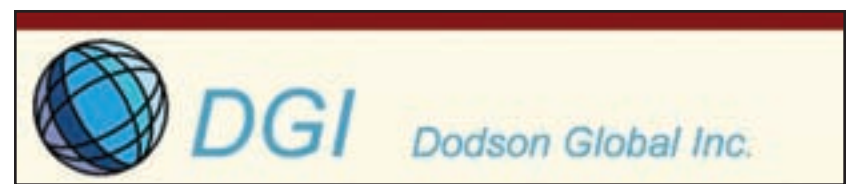
MJM: Describe your role in the company and how you manage the various relationships that are impor-

tant to your business?

Elliott: I view myself as the manager of four key critical partnerships:

- Our relationship with our vendors, which has been very long-standing. They are very loyal to us, and we to them. We have had minimal turnover with our vendors and have been fortunate to keep a consistency of product on the shelf. It is important for DGI to respect the commitment and responsibility the factories have entrusted us with and recognize our responsibility to work with them to ensure a mutually profitable and satisfying relationship.

- Our customer base is also very important, and we try to be consistent with them in accuracy, communication, delivery and pricing. They are a



key partnership that we are mindful of every day. It is imperative that we listen to our customers, react to their suggestions and concerns, and treat them in a courteous and professional way. The customer is the livelihood of our business.

- The company's relationship with its employees is also significant because they are the front line with our customers. We maintain a competitive salary and benefit package that includes health care, profit sharing, bonus compensation on a quarterly basis and 401(k) program. We believe in rewarding and recognizing the loyalty of our people. The employer and employee have a responsibility to each other. Very simply put, to provide a work environment that is healthy, fairly compensated and respectful, and in return an expectation of profitable effort and loyalty.

- And lastly, we are aware of our responsibility as a public entity and what that requires. In a public business environment, you are more keenly aware of deadlines, a sense of governance, a different level of responsibility and subject to more inspection than with a private company. Financial reporting has to be done on a much more timely basis; formal board meetings are held on a quarterly basis. The investor public requires a different level of business awareness than a private company.

MJM: How do you evaluate potential new suppliers and what is the process you go through when adding a new line?

Elliott: Over the last few years, we have added different lines in a couple of ways:

- Five years ago, we had no high-yield product, no Chinese product

and no valves. Most of these additions are a result of customers suggesting products that we could help support them by stocking.

- We have also added products as a result of our determination that they can enhance our profitability. When doing that we think about the impact they might have on existing products and on our ability to be more competitive and to further grow our relationship with our existing customer base in a profitable way.

MJM: Do you have an outside salesforce, or are all sales done through inside personnel?

Elliott: We have 20 salespeople, the majority of whom are inside sales oriented. However, several of them do go out and make sales calls on their

own key accounts. Some devote more time to that than others, and I've seen that increase lately, particularly in light of the economic environment we've been in. Bud Layson travels the Southeast and beyond on a full-time basis. Jimmy Whittall travels the Western U.S. To support that, we use some outside independent representatives in certain parts of the country.

The highest percentage of our phone calls come in through a switchboard in Atlanta and they are directed to a particular salesperson at the customer's request. It is natural for customers to develop relationships with certain people. We do not have territories, however we do have five salespeople who actually do business from their homes around the country. It's a bit unique, but they are people who have been with us 10+ years and have significant industry experience, so we try to accommodate their personal circumstances by setting them up with offices in their homes. In some cases, their customer base is in the area they live.

MJM: What have you found to be the best ways to market your business and target potential new customers?

Elliott: Because of the length of time we have been in business and have had association with our respective vendors, many of our customers find us because of an inquiry they make at the factory level. The factories will direct them to us because we can better service their needs and the customer may not necessarily meet the criteria of the factory if they are a smaller company and don't reach the minimum purchasing standards. We also attend key industry shows during the course of the year to maintain visibility. (Turn to High standards... page 70.)



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High standards spur Dodson Global to excel

(Continued from page 66.)

ibility. We attend the PVF Roundtable quarterly meetings in Houston; they have done a great job in improving quality of presentation and attendance. As a result of opening in Reno, we are trying to develop an awareness of DGI in the West.

MJM: *How have your customers' expectations changed over the years, and how has Dodson Global adapted to those changing needs/wants?*

Elliott: It's unfortunate, but in my judgment, particularly in the last 12 to 18 months, the level of relationships has deteriorated in light of some of the economic activity. Price, which has always been important, has become increasingly critical to satisfying the market. It has gotten so much more significant, particularly on large projects. We have always tried to distinguish ourselves with 24-hour turn-around on ordering and the inventory commitment we've made to the import side and the domestic side.

In addition, we've got an incredible level of experience in our organization and I take pride in their abilities. Our warehouse staff is extremely accurate and timely. In each warehouse, the leadership at the manager level is experienced and superior. Each one knows what is expected and required by our customers, so there is a sense of urgency combined with a pride of accuracy and a knowledge of the important role that the warehouse plays.

MJM: *Where do you see the economy going in the near future, particularly in this industry?*

Elliott: The economic climate suggests that for the next six months — at a minimum — we will have issues with activity in the marketplace. Having said that, this business runs in cycles. We generally have an off year every five or six years, and we are going through that now. I am confident that in the next six to 12 months, we will be back at better levels.

The low pricing levels that have existed for the last six to nine months is a concern because we will have to reestablish higher levels of prices in the near future. Profit margins that exist today are not at a level that offers a reasonable return to the factory, the master distributor or the supply house. Improved demand that eliminates some of the excess inventory and provides better cash flow to our industry should cure the problem. Establishing thoughtful fair pricing and margins is a responsibility that we all share, and one that we need to be attentive to as a group today. We understand that each company has their own individual circumstances, but there is a certain level of responsibility back to the industry as a whole — and reduced pricing to create demand will not work in the industry's favor.

MJM: *With so many sources of competition, how does Dodson Global differentiate itself?*

Elliott: I would identify and iso-

late that what really sets us apart is the fact that the original founder of this company, Mr. Dodson, set a very high bar for quality of products, service and the character of Dodson Steel. We have tried to continue to meet the level he established. As a result, the Dodson name has been known and favorably embraced over the years.

Both Dodson Steel and GFF operated in much the same way, so that

The low pricing levels that have existed for the last six to nine months is a concern because we will have to reestablish higher levels of prices in the near future.

provided a solid foundation for the formation of Dodson Global. We look at our relationships with vendors and customers as true partnerships and we treat each other with great respect. We endorse the basic principle that the customer is always right. Whenever an issue or circumstance arises, we try to take care of it as quickly as possible so our customers can take care of the needs of their customers. Our return goods policy is extremely forgiving. In fact, we will take back or buy back product in some cases that we did not sell to the customer. Additionally we try to work closely with our customers who may have a cash flow issue. Most companies in our industry have faced cash flow issues — too much inventory on the shelf or on order, and slower paying receivables. We try to assist with a solution to our mutual problem rather than say to our customer it is *your* problem.

I would also suggest that we compete with a group of master distributors who have long histories of quality for which they are rightfully proud. Many of those are also very good customers. As a result of their quality, we have to work hard every day to maintain a comfort and confidence from our customer. Our competitors help us maintain a high standard.

I can only conclude by saying I'm proud of the reputation the name Dodson carries with it. I cannot take any credit for it; it was started a long time ago by Mr. Dodson and continued by our people. I'm very pleased with the way the two companies came together through the merger, but our people, vendors and customers made the transition an easy one. Now three years into the merger, I believe that everyone involved is very pleased with the success we have achieved. ■

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Taking the fear out of warehouse management technology

BY JASON BADER
Inventory management specialist

Editor's Note: This is the second in a two-part series.

A few weeks ago, I decided to send out a survey to some of my newsletter readers. I was curious about their experience with warehouse management software (WMS) and where they saw the benefit. I wanted to understand the challenges associated with implementing

Get all the players involved in the decision process. If you spring the 'solution' on them, the team will be much more apt to find fault in your decision making.

these systems. Participants were also asked what advice they would give distributors that are considering the investment in this technology. This is the second part of a two-part article discussing the comments of current distributors using WMS and my personal experience with the technology. If you missed last month's column, send me an e-mail requesting part one.

• *What has been the most challenging aspect of implementing a WMS system in your company?*

Fear of technology was one of the challenges identified by the participants. Several of the users were afraid that they would screw up the company if they pushed the wrong button on the scanner. Others felt that the new method was too technical for their current employee base. Consequently, some employees left voluntarily.

The scanners can be intimidating at first. There are a lot of buttons and lot of information packed into a small screen. Don't gloss over the need for hand holding. For some, this is their first adventure into computing technology. The laser generated from the scanner can cause fear as well. Be patient and explain thoroughly. Don't let your IT person do the training unless they are very adept at coaching. Most are not.

The discipline and culture is the biggest hurdle to overcome. As I mentioned earlier, the company needs to change the way it functions. Technology does not fix problems. We apply technology to good practices in order to make them faster. If we have bad habits, we will make mistakes faster. Inventory movement dictated by a scanner will be frustrating to some employees. The discipline of scanning communicates that movement to our system and ultimately allows additional action to occur. When

someone circumvents the process (by just grabbing it off the shelf to take care of a customer), the system has no way of recording that movement. Ultimately, our count will be off and customer service will suffer.

Another challenge came from material without barcodes. Several of us buy from suppliers who have not invested in coding technology. This will cause your receiving process to bog down. Receivers will have to generate a barcode tag for this material before it goes to the shelf. Some distributors simply have master barcodes on the bins and do not label individual items. Work with suppliers and see if they can help this process.

• *If you were to give advice to someone considering the purchase of this type of system, what would you tell them to do?*

Some of the best advice from the survey was to go visit someone using the technology. It doesn't necessarily have to be from your industry, but that can help you visualize

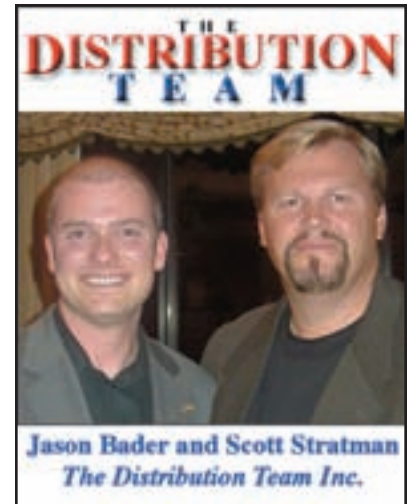
When buying a new distribution software package, make sure the provider has a solid WMS solution. If you don't have a plan to implement this type of technology, get one. This is not a fad or philosophy.

how it will function in your environment. Ask the company what they like and don't like about the package. Do several visits before you start shopping so that you can narrow your field quickly.

Get all the players involved in the decision process. If you spring the "solution" on them, the team will be much more apt to find fault in your decision making. The ability to embrace change will be compromised.

Get your warehouse in shape before implementation. Not only do you need to get the physical house in order, but your procedures need to be cleaned up as well. Really look at the way you are performing the basic functions: receiving, put away, picking, shipping and counting. What procedures need to be streamlined? Are we still sending packing slips to the office for receipt into the system? With regards to the physical plant, make sure that you quarantine the dead and obsolete inventory. Clean up the place and make sure that you have a good bin layout.

The participants were split on how to implement the different pieces of a



WMS package. I was always under the impression that a phased-in approach was easier to swallow. Start with either cycle counting or receiving and work your way through the modules. Several participants recommended that new users go live with all aspects from day one. Seeing the power of a fully integrated system will fuel the team to maintain discipline and help justify the investment.

Getting involved with WMS technology is a fairly big decision for many distributors. Some of the packages can be very expensive, but that is changing. The costs have come down to where the majority of dis-

tributors (under \$20 million in annual revenue) can justify the expense.

When buying a new distribution software package, make sure that the provider has a solid WMS solution. If you don't have a plan to implement this type of technology, get one. This is not a fad or philosophy. You may not execute the plan this year or even next. When the time is right, you will be far more prepared to make the best decision possible. As always, I am here to help you through the process. Good luck. ■

Jason Bader is the managing partner of The Distribution Team. He spent the first 20 years of his career working in distributor operations. His firm specializes in helping distributors become more profitable through operating efficiencies. Bader is regular speaker at industry events and spends much of his time working with individual distribution companies. He can be reached at 503/282-2333 or jason@distributionteam.com. Additional resources can be found on his website at www.thedistributionteam.com.

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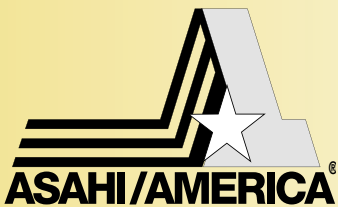
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Embracing dignity and respect for relationship marketing

As I was growing up, my mother always told me to treat people with dignity and respect. This was given as normal where I grew up out in the country in the Midwest. We valued people just as people and viewed everyone — at least initially — with a basic level of dignity and respect.

Too many times today, that sense of dignity in how to treat people seems to have gone the way of 8-track players and bell-bottom pants. At best, many people seem to have a superficial “Love you; mean it” plastic, forced smile. When this permeates marketing we have a culture of people who only see others as a quick way to make money or obtain some other objective.

You and I might wish that such a culture didn't exist but we can't do anything about the big picture. What we can do is make some changes in

our own lives and our own businesses, which will make a difference. Stay with me on this one and you'll get a way that can help.

We see it in the internet marketing world too often. There are some very good internet marketers who genuinely want to help others. However, there are too many who really don't care for how you're doing and don't want to help. You've probably seen them. They make a good presence on the stage and have their audiences turning to each other as total strangers voicing some staid, trite saying like “I'm terrific and you are too!” How manipulative!

Give me a break!

I think the world today is crying out for more sincerity. This is what human relations is all about. It is about caring for people as *people* — not just as someone who can buy something or

help you in some ulterior way.

By the way, here's a quick way to find out about the sincerity of the person on the stage. When you're at the next meeting, walk up to and talk with them in person, face-to-face. First, see if they “allow” this. Second, watch their eyes and see if they are roaming for someone better to speak to while they are supposedly talking with you. See if there is a significant difference between the person on the stage and the person they really are off the stage. Those who practice real Relationship Marketing make it a point to be genuine, real and to be “in the moment” with you.

So, how can you and I do business today in this environment and be serious about Relationship Marketing? Make it a point to focus on people as people, not just “consumers” or prospects who could buy our stuff.



BY TERRY BROCK
Technology/marketing specialist

Yes, we sell products and services. Yes, there must be value-for-value in every sincere interchange. Takers who only want something for nothing come on both sides of the transaction.

Focus on the real human being and the needs that person has. We're all human. This is what life — not just business — is all about. Helping others meet their needs and being with them at crucial times is vital.

At a business level, you succeed when you genuinely, sincerely care about others and demonstrate that in words and actions. Human beings want to be with people who really care about them. That means building systems around you which can support your ability to care more for others. Think through what that means in your business.

When people walk into your business, do they feel accepted? Do they find the atmosphere inviting? Do they feel like you're there to serve them? Continue to test this. Always focus on the needs others have and be there for them.

As you do this, you'll succeed in any environment. Have a product or service that helps them solve their problems and pain. Be understanding of where they are as a human being. From that, you will be enriched as a human being yourself. As a side benefit, you'll also have a better business.

Yes, these are just basic, common sense values that many of us were raised with years ago. We need regular reminders to make sure we are listening to and caring for others. Somehow I think our mothers would be proud of us for practicing those important principles in our lives and our businesses. And then I think our bankers will smile as they see the inevitable benefits from focusing on helping others and serving them. ■

Terry Brock is an international marketing coach and professional speaker who helps businesses generate profitable results. He can be reached by e-mail at terry@terrybrock.com or through his website at www.terrybrock.com. Join the Twitter adventure with Terry through his Twitter address: TerryBrock.

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Caroma is pleased to introduce the Profile Smart with integrated hand basin. The Profile Smart high efficiency toilet (HET) incorporates a sink into the lid of the toilet tank for increased water savings opportunities in the bathroom.

The Profile Smart with integrated sink features Caroma Smart™ technology, developed and mastered over the last decade, delivering the ultimate combination of design, water savings, and performance.



a 2.5 gallon toilet, and nearly 19,000 gallons per year compared to a 3.5 gallon toilet! The amount of water savings increases when you also use the integrated sink to wash your hands.

When the Profile Smart is flushed, fresh cold water is directed through the faucet for hand washing. This water then drains into the tank to be used for the next flush. This unique water and space saving design features chrome buttons built-in to the tapware design. It also features a large trapway, nearly double the industry average, virtually eliminating blockages and overflows. The installation process is quick and easy and does not require any special instructions.



Profile Smart features

- * Dual flush high efficiency toilet: 1.28/0.8 gallons per flush (full flush/half flush)
- * Integrated hand basin for enhanced water savings
- * After flushing, fresh cold water is directed through the faucet for hand washing and drains into the tank for the next flush
- * Large trapway virtually eliminates blockages and overflows
- * Washdown technology to push waste from the bowl
- * Unique water and space saving design
- * Chrome buttons built-in to tapware design
- * Easy installation
- * Features award-winning Smartflush® water saving technology
- * WaterSense labeled

The Profile Smart is dual flush, using 1.28 gallons of water per flush (gpf) for a full flush (solid waste) and 0.8 gpf for the half flush (liquid and paper waste). This averages just under 0.9 gpf, which can save the average family of four more than 5000 gallons annually by replacing a 1.6 gallon toilet, more than 11,000 gallons compared to



Water savings using Caroma Smart technology

	5 gal (19 ltr) Single Flush toilet	3.5 gal (13 ltr) Single Flush toilet	2.5 gal (9.5 ltr) Single Flush toilet	1.6 gal (6 ltr) Single Flush toilet	1.6-0.8 gal (6/3ltr) Dual Flush toilet	1.28-0.8 gal (4.8/3 ltr) Dual Flush toilet
Water used per year*	36,162 g (137,418 l)	25,314 g (94,022 l)	18,081 g (68,709 l)	11,572 g (43,395 l)	6943 g (26,037 l)	6480 g (24,301 l)
Water savings per year using Caroma Smart toilets	29,682 gallons (113,117 liters)	18,833 gallons (69,721 liters)	11,601 gallons (44,407 liters)	5092 gallons (19,094 liters)	463 gallons (1739 liters)	

* Based on 1:4 solid/liquid usage for an average family of four and 5 flushes/person/day.



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Executive search firm **Brooke Chase Associates Inc.** added new executive recruiters to its team:

- *Katy Yoder* has over 10 years of experience in career coaching and executive recruiting. Yoder formerly worked at Smith Hanley Associates as a technical recruiter in Chicago, specializing in the placement of programmers, business analysts and project managers.

- *Jeff Hokamp* was involved in many facets of the petroleum industry during his 24-year career with Mobil Oil, Koch Industries and as owner/president of his own company. In addition, he has held leadership roles in marketing operations, transportation and information technology and spent six years in the recruiting industry.

Boote Industries appointed *Gary Kirkwood* vice president-sales. In his new position, Kirkwood will be responsible for expanding the growth of Boote Industries products via wholesale distribution channel and retail accounts.

Patrick Appleby was named vice president-industry sales at **Danfoss Drives**. He will be responsible for industrial OEM and distribution sales. Appleby has more than 20 years experience with General Electric in a variety of capacities, most recently as North American distribution sales manager for GE motors.

David Baker has joined the St. Paul, Minn., branch of **Dakota Supply Group**. He will focus his sales efforts on growing DSG's plumbing products business as part of the mechanical sales team. Baker will offer his extensive plumbing knowledge and experience to customers in the Twin Cities, as well as western and central Minnesota. He previously

worked for American Standard.

EXHAUSTO promoted *John Altieri* to sales manager of the residential department. An EXHAUSTO sales representative since 2001, Altieri will now be responsible for managing the residential distribution network, which includes dealers, distributors and contractors.

Tracy Sianta joined **Hart & Cooley Inc.** as director of marketing. In her new role, Sianta will report to *Curt Monhart*, executive vice president-sales and marketing. Her experience includes marketing leadership roles for Mitsui & Co., Motorola and Ford



Tracy Sianta



Michael Klas

Motor Co. Most recently she was director of marketing, sales & business operations for Klise Manufacturing.

Heat Transfer Products has appointed two new regional sales managers:

- *Michael Klas* is regional sales manager for the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic territories. Klas had been with Lochinvar Corporation as regional sales manager for the Northeast region. He has held various sales and sales managerial positions since 1993.

- *Harold "Doug" McElwain* is Southern regional sales manager with additional responsibilities for sales growth in Nova Scotia and Quebec as well as national accounts. He was



Gary Kirkwood



Patrick Appleby



David Baker



John Altieri

vice president-sales for ComfortPro Systems and has been in the HVAC industry since 1982.

Gerry Cellucci, vice president of Yorkland Controls, was named chair of the **Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Institute of Canada** at the Association's 41st Annual Meeting. Cellucci has been in the HVAC industry for more than 25 years and has served on the HRAI Board since 2004 as a representative of the Wholesalers Division. 2009-2010 HRAI Board of Directors are:

- *Mark Boncardo* (past chair), Ineos Fluor Canada Inc.

- *Mike Latreille* (vice chair and



Harold "Doug" McElwain



William H. Tipps

chair — Contractors Division), Holmes Heating Inc.

- *Colin Jennings* (secretary/treasurer and chair — Manufacturers Division), Carrier Canada Ltd.

- *David Morden* (vice chair — Manufacturers Division), ECR International — Olsen Division.

In addition, *Rusty Jennings*, vice president-sales residential at Carrier

Canada Ltd., was appointed chair of the HRAI Manufacturers Division. Jennings has served on the HRAI Manufacturers Board of Directors since 2000.

JMF Company announced the hiring of *William H. Tipps* as vice president-sales and marketing. Tipps brings over 30 years of experience in the plumbing industry. He has been a senior sales executive for several industry corporations, most recently Globe Union America Corporation.

Power Distribution Inc. added *Jose Luis Crespo* to its management team. As vice president-international sales, Crespo will lead the continued development of PDI's global markets. He has extensive experience in international markets from sales management positions, most recently as vice president-sales for Europe and Latin America for NextPoint Networks.

Paul J. Trembl was appointed marketing manager for the FOAMGLAS® Insulation industrial product line. He will oversee market research, brand development, trade shows and Web marketing for domestic and international initiatives. Before joining **Pittsburgh Corning**, he was global program marketing manager for Kennametal Complete Services Group.

Superior Radiant Products Ltd. appointed *Susan Samson* marketing manager. Samson has been with SRP 12 years and will be responsible for all aspects of the marketing function at Superior Radiant and IR Energy. ■

Readers respond

GPS proves its worth

Re: *Rich Schmitt's column*

Several years ago I implemented a GPS tracking system on the cell phones used in our delivery trucks and by our outside salespeople, told everyone that I was doing it and showed them the reports that the GPS would generate.

One driver and one unproductive outside salesperson quit that same day. The system paid for itself the first day it was turned on.

Ken Landes
The Fixture Gallery
Blue Springs, Mo.

Boiler donations

Hello Dan [Holohan],

May I call you Dan, as I seem to know you well after reading all your articles for the past century.

I retired from the industry a couple of years back but keep in touch through *The Wholesaler* magazine and trade shows.

Your article, "The \$37 million steam trap," was excellent.

Over the years I donated a few boilers to my church (all hot water and of the Weil McLain variety).

The newest are 1997 vintage and the oldest date back about 29 years.

The finance committee needs to read this article and start making plans now to do some serious updating over the next few years. I do not have any more to donate.

May I share?

Bill Hurley
retired toilet and boiler salesman
N.O. Nelson Co St Louis, Mo
(1964-1979)
Ferguson Enterprises Nashville,
Tenn. (1979-1999)
Prudential Securities N.Y.
(2000-.....)

Economic forecast

Dear Morrie [Beschloss],
Based on my travels and meetings with other industry partners,

the consensus view seems to be sales returning to 2006/2007 levels, with 2008 being, if not an aberration, a truly exceptional year that shouldn't be used as a basis to measure 2009 against.

I'm forecasting for a return to 2006/2007 sales levels for 2010. With that said, we're still seeing significant activity and opportunity, but pricing has clearly softened and margins are compressing.

How the administration decides on cap and trade could also affect what investments the big oils will commit to in 2010. As it appears, it's a "wait and see" period.

Rob Raban
Industrial Valco
Rancho Dominguez, Calif.

We continue to baffle the other valve manufacturers.

*They're baffled at how we provide such good delivery.
(We've got a 98.4% on-time delivery record.)*

*They scratch their heads at our pricing
(so competitive).*

And they don't understand why we have maintained the most stringent levels of quality all these years when others have relaxed their quality standards. (Our highly automated production processes in Japan and South Korea have assured consistent quality since we began.)

You, however, won't be the least bit baffled once you've purchased Kinka Kikai gate, globe, check or ball valves.

Need stock items? Buy from one of our Master Distributors.

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If you're interested in quick delivery and profitability call us. You'll get a pleasant surprise (and give yourself a competitive edge that's sure to baffle your competition.)

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U.S. Metals, Inc.:
Phone 800-676-7836

Stainless Products:



Global Stainless:
Phone 877-980-3283

See contact information on page 98



Bradley releases results of national hand washing survey

MENOMONEE FALLS, WIS. — Worries about the spread of the H1N1 virus haven't changed the majority of Americans' hand washing habits, according to a national survey conducted by Bradley Corporation, a leading manufacturer of commercial plumbing fixtures and washroom accessories.

In Bradley's first Healthy Hand Washing Survey, 54% of the 1,020 respondents said they "wash their hands no more or less frequently" in public restrooms as a result of the H1N1 virus.

"Influenza A viruses, of which swine flu is one, are fragile viruses that can be easily destroyed through proper hygiene, including use of soap and water and alcohol-based hand sanitizers," said Dr. Judy Daly, spokesperson for the American Society for Microbiology, director of the clinical microbiology laboratories, primary children's medical center, Salt Lake City. "Flu viruses most frequently enter the body when contaminated hands touch mucous membranes of the nose, eyes and mouth. Frequent hand hygiene certainly makes this transfer less likely."

Jon Dommissie, director of marketing and product development at Bradley Corporation, noted, "We found the response to the H1N1 question extremely surprising, especially since the medical community has said over and over that hand washing is the best defense against the spread of cold and flu viruses.

"It's more important than ever for building owners and facility managers to continue to maintain and improve their restrooms to help encourage people to use these facilities."

Bradley's Healthy Hand Washing Survey was conducted online July 28-31, 2009, and queried 1,020 American adults about their hand washing habits in public restrooms. Participants were from around the country, evenly divided among men and women, and ranged in age from 18 to 65 and older.

Overall, 87% of respondents said they did wash their hands after using public lavatories, but other responses indicated that some may have exaggerated how often they actually did the job correctly. When asked if they had also used soap, the numbers declined only slightly, to 86%; yet 55% of the group admitted on occasion they've simply rinsed, without using soap.

In contrast to what people say they

do, numerous observational studies question what Americans actually do. In 2007, researchers for the American Society of Microbiology found that only 77% actually wash their hands after using a public restroom. In 2003 and 2004, the Minnesota Depart-

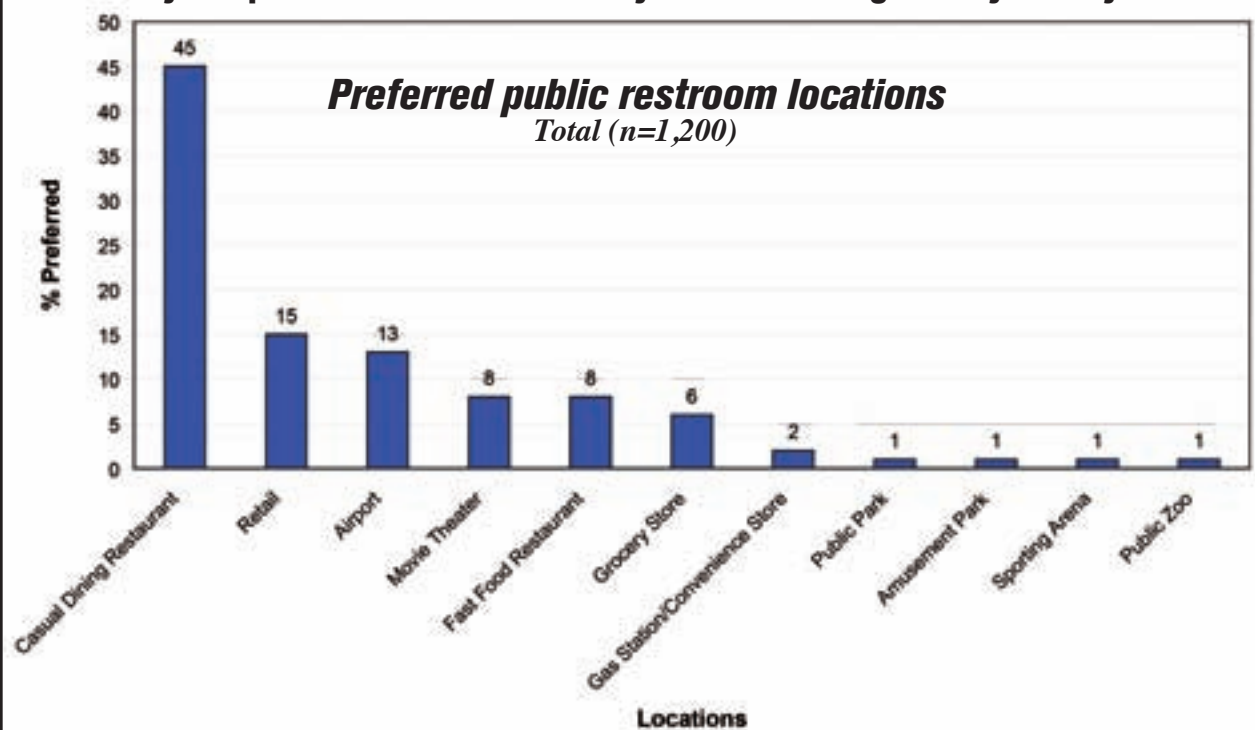
ment of Health, Division of Environmental Health observed hand washing practices at the Minnesota state fairgrounds. During the 2004 Minnesota State Fair, 75% of women and just 51% of men washed their hands with soap and water after

using the public restroom.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is unequivocal about the benefits of hand washing, calling it critical in preventing infection and illness:

"Hand washing is a simple thing to do and it's the best way to prevent infection and illness," the agency says. And by "washing your hands," the CDC notes that nothing beats good old soap and water. (See sidebar for CDC's instructions on

Bradley Corporation national healthy hand washing survey – July 2009



According to the data, casual dining restaurants are what most people (at 45%) would prefer when choosing a public restroom location to use.

What "separates" us from the competition?
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proper hand washing.)

Asked why they did not wash their hands before leaving a public restroom, respondents identified a number of reasons, such as the sinks weren't working, the wash area appeared unclean, the sink area was crowded and they didn't feel the need to wash. However, 28% of those who didn't wash their hands said they used a hand sanitizer instead. The primary reason respondents cited for not using soap, rinsing only with water, was that the soap dispensers were empty.

The survey also asked parents about their children's hand washing habits. The respondents indicated they believe their children wash their hands with soap and water 68% of the time after using the school restroom.

Hand washing among school-age children is especially important because it's estimated that at least 22 million school days are lost every year due to the common cold, according to the CDC. Illness can spread from student to student throughout the school so it's important that students wash their hands after using the bathroom, before eating and after coughing, sneezing or blowing their nose.

"Hand washing is a lifetime health practice that children should know about, understand the benefits of and take with them into adulthood," said Domisse.

When it came to the type of public

restrooms they preferred, nearly half the survey respondents (45%) chose casual dining restaurants, followed by retail stores (15%) and airports (13%). Restrooms in movie theaters, fast-food restaurants and grocery stores scored below 10%, with parks, sports arenas and zoos all earning just 1% approval.

The least favorite public restroom type? Gas stations and convenience stores. The reasons some restroom categories ranked high or low were not surprising: Respondents preferred restrooms that were clean, well-maintained and uncrowded, and were turned off by those they found to be dirty, poorly maintained, not well stocked or unattended.

Parents helping their children were especially frustrated by empty or jammed towel dispensers, having no space to put belongings, water collecting on sink counters, and sinks and soap dispensers that were too high for children to reach.

For more than 85 years, Bradley Corporation has designed and manufactured commercial washfountains, and today is an ideal source for plumbing fixtures, washroom accessories, restroom partitions, emergency fixtures and solid plastic lockers. Headquartered in Menomonee Falls, Wis., Bradley serves the commercial, industrial, health care, recreation, education and corrections markets worldwide. For more information, call 800/BRADLEY or visit www.bradleycorp.com.

Wash your hands the right way

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, washing your hands with soap and water is the best way to prevent infection. Here's how to do it correctly:

- Wet your hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available.
- Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all surfaces.
- Continue rubbing hands for 15 to 20 seconds. Need a timer? Imagine singing "Happy Birthday" twice through to a friend.
- Rinse hands well under running water.
- Dry your hands using a paper towel or air dryer. If possible, use your paper towel to turn off the faucet.
- Always use soap and water if your hands are visibly dirty.
- If soap and clean water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand rub to clean your hands. Alcohol-based hand rubs significantly reduce the number of germs on skin and are fast-acting.

Another CDC report noted that

after using a public restroom, a person's hand can host as many as 200 million bacteria! In restrooms, germs tend to concentrate in damp areas and on door handles.

Conventional faucet handles in older public washrooms also house germs, so touching the handle, even after washing, re-contaminates the just-cleaned hands. The problem multiplies when students use manual cloth or paper towel dispensers, or even air blowers that require a button to be pressed. When all those steps are combined, there go most of the hygienic benefits of hand washing.

That's one reason hands-free, sensor-activated faucets, hand dryers, fixtures and other accessories have come into widespread use in public facilities. (Another reason: They conserve water and help reduce utilities costs.)

Maze-like open entrances, which afford privacy and eliminate the need to push door plates to enter and pull door handles to exit are another design feature that eliminates germ exposure.

Am. Standard holds contest on Facebook

PISCATAWAY, N.J. — With nearly 750 Tweets per week about toilets, there are a lot of toilet stories to be told.

"Tell Us Your Best Toilet Story," a contest from American Standard, provided the chance to win a Champion 4 toilet for the best toilet story. Par-

ticipants were asked to submit a paragraph or two about a memorable toilet experience at www.facebook.com/AmericanStandardBrands, and members of the page voted for their favorites through October 12. (As of presstime, winners had not been announced.)

The grand prize of a Champion 4 toilet, complete with installation and the Champion 4 Slow Close toilet seat will be awarded to the story that receives the highest number of "thumbs up" from readers. Four additional top vote getters will be awarded a Champion 4 Toilet with Champion 4 Slow Close toilet seat.

"Everyone uses toilets, so nearly everyone has a toilet story," said Jeannette Long, American Standard general manager of e-business. "Tell people you work for a plumbing company, and you hear them all: the one about the overflow during the big party or the one about what the kids have tried to flush. We figured the best story deserved the best toilet."

For more information, visit www.americanstandard.com.



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models available

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Video technology gets word out

(Continued from page 98.)

them to vote. They also suggested that with mid-term elections nearing, those up for re-election will be especially concerned about appeasing their constituents.

The following week, the PVF Roundtable held their quarterly meeting in Houston. Approximately 120 members and guests attended

the meeting, which featured an insightful look at the economy and legislative issues from Morrie Beschloss, followed by a presentation on Approved Manufacturer Lists from Fluor's Ron Merrick. As always, there was plenty of time for networking and discussion before the meeting and during dinner.

In addition, over 60 members par-

ticipated in the Don Caffee Memorial Golf Tournament the previous day. Funds generated from the tournament will be used for scholarships awarded by the Roundtable. Owen Doss from PAC Stainless organized the event and was extremely pleased with the turnout and fundraising efforts.

By the time this issue is published, videos should be posted from the HARDI Convention and GreenBuild — and there will be more to come. We believe this is just another oppor-

tunity for *The Wholesaler* to build relationships with and provide added value to our readers and advertisers. If you have suggestions on ways to improve these videos or topics you'd like to see covered, please contact me. I always look forward to getting your feedback! ■

Mary Jo Martin is editorial director of *THE WHOLESALER*. She can be reached at editor@thewholesaler.com or 214/675-3992.

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John Martin

(Continued from page 56.)

other "Martin's Corner." I hope you enjoy the time you spend with *The Wholesaler*, and I sincerely hope you can take away at least one thing I said or indicated that might help you improve your company's supply chain! Feel free to get in touch with me or Mary Jo Martin at *The Wholesaler* with any questions or comments you might have. Until then, at least in my part of the country, winter is quickly arriving so don't forget to check that anti-freeze level and throw on those snow tires if needed! Be careful and know that I care for you. See ya next time. ■

Born Johnney E Martin in Venus, Texas in 1944, he is one of nine children raised 100% on a cotton and grain farm that his father sharecropped. Lived a simple carefree life, going right into the Army and then Reserves after high school in 1962. From the Reserves Martin joined what was then Grinnell Co. in 1968 and has been with them every day of his life since then through four different owners, now Anvil International, A Unit Of Mueller Water Products as vice president of national account sales for the Anvil Mechanical Unit. Holding various sales and management positions for the company over the years, Martin has been awarded the Fred V. Keenan Lifetime Achievement Award from the American Supply Association, The Distinguished Service Award from The Mechanical Contractors Association of America, and numerous other industry recognition awards from both the wholesaler and contractor side of the business. He has been involved with industry education foundation boards, and the Board of Directors of both ASA and MCAA. Martin currently resides in Castle Rock, Colo., with his wife Kathy of 27 years; they have a daughter Kayla who is 25 years old. He is committed to staying involved in the plumbing and PVF industry (which he loves) for many years to come.

All the hot water heaters in the world with PVC venting that are 98% efficient.



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Eemax brings hot water to users of all sizes

OXFORD, CONN. — Today's economic uncertainty has left a lot of businesses in hot water, but one Connecticut company is deriving success for producing hot water. In fact, Eemax Inc. is boiling over with success — pro-

viding the means to heat water while saving businesses and the average household energy and money.

With an estimated 80 billion gallons of water wasted in the U.S. each year as people wait for hot water at the

faucet, Eemax is providing innovative solutions that realize energy efficiency and water conservation through installation of tankless water heaters.

"It's smart, it's responsible and it makes sense to go tankless," said Aaron Siegel, vice president-marketing & sales for Eemax. "There are new efficiency standards for household and commercial appliances, and that's a positive sign for our company and our industry. Even the Department of Energy has encouraged schools to use tankless water heaters and other smart energy choices as part of the energy design guidelines for high-performance schools. The time is right to capitalize on proactive ways to improve the environment and the efficiencies of everyday living."

Eemax produces a large selection of tankless electric water heaters for use in industrial, residential and commercial applications, providing on-demand hot water without the need to continually store and heat water 24 hours a

day. Eemax products reduce the cost of energy, saving money for consumers, businesses and the government.

Many top design projects across America — from the new, grandiose \$1.5-billion Yankee Stadium to Citi Field and the New England Patriot's Gillette Field — are using Eemax products for their water heating needs. But Eemax has also outfitted homes and residential facilities, schools, retail outlets, municipalities and emergency sites like those affected by Hurricane Katrina with products from a relatively new and fast-growing category that are environmentally beneficial.

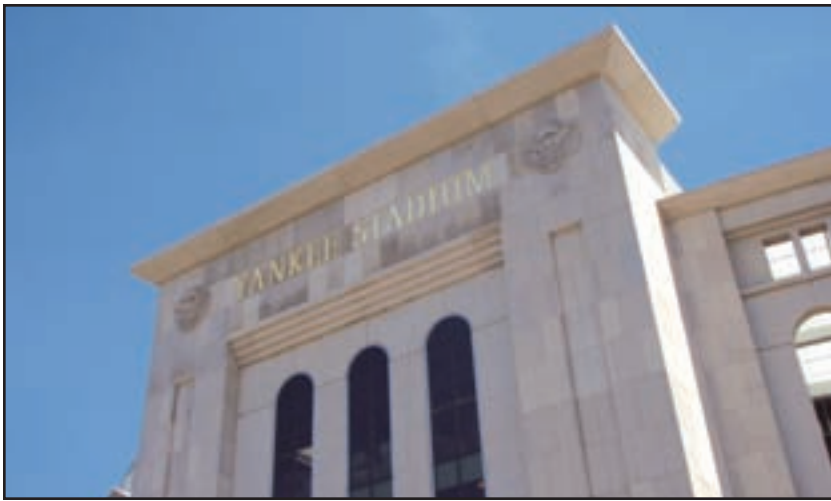
It is estimated that the energy needed to heat water accounts for 20% of an average household's annual energy use. In fact, an average household that pays \$458 per year for a standard tank-type of water heater would reduce their costs by approximately \$266 annually with a tankless water heater.

With the tank market growing at a 20% annual rate (and President Obama's commitment to establishing higher energy efficiency standards for everyday products), Eemax is optimistic with its growth plans and is looking to emerge from a commercially known brand to one that will resonate with consumers. The popularity of the units has led Eemax to double-digit growth over the last five years, predominantly in the commercial business, and resulted in an expanded employee base of 100 (from 20 over a 20-year span).

Eemax has outfitted homes, offices, stadiums, schools, malls, restaurants and factories with point-of-use tankless units, providing hot water units for hand washing, sinks and showers. The units are compact enough to be installed wherever hot water is needed — under a sink or next to a shower. Residentially, Eemax products heat water for the bathroom or kitchen sink or showers.

In an effort to save valuable resources and provide end users with the convenience of endless, safely delivered hot water, many stadiums and commercial building of all types have specified the Eemax electric tankless water heater to meet their hot water needs. They are small wall-mounted units that can be conveniently placed at the point of application, which saves water, energy and time to get hot water at the fixture.

Eemax Inc., established in 1988, has quickly emerged as a market leader in electric tankless heaters in the commercial and residential market. For more information, visit www.eemaxinc.com.



Eemax products are in large venues like Yankee Stadium, but they also outfit homes, multifamily projects, schools, retail outlets and municipalities — and also bring needed hot water to emergency sites like those affected by Hurricane Katrina.

The Clean Machine

Drain-Rooter PH™

Variable speed power cable feed makes the job clean and easy!

Equipped with a variable speed power cable feed and variable speed motor the compact, portable Drain-Rooter PH makes drain cleaning jobs cleaner and easier.

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- Variable Speed Motor - Drum speed can be varied by changing pressure on the foot pedal, making it easier to thread the boring head through strainers.
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Simply add variation T-106 to any of our flush valve model numbers, replacement diaphragm kits or assembly part numbers.

www.delanyproducts.com



Changing for the Better...Working to be the Best!

See contact information on page 98

State sponsors home tour

ASHLAND CITY, TENN. — State Water Heaters is sponsoring the Living Zero Home Tour by showcasing the Premier® Power Vent gas water heater on the traveling modular home. The tour demonstrates how to integrate energy efficient products into homes and has been recognized by *Good Morning America*.

The Living Zero Home Tour, which began in July, features ENERGY STAR®

products and showcases high-performance, low-maintenance building materials, home systems and appliances.

ENERGY STAR is using the NASCAR circuit to reach consumers in 16 cities before concluding in late November. It offers visitors the opportunity to experience first hand a state-of-the-art energy efficient home to see how neighbors are integrating energy efficiency and other sustainable technolo-

gies to reduce their monthly utility bills and help protect the environment.

“State Water Heaters is proud to sponsor this tour with their energy efficient Premier® Power Vent and tankless models,” said David Chisolm, brand manager for State Water Heaters. “The tour’s presence at NASCAR races makes it a perfect fit for State Water Heaters.”

The Premier Power Vent offers significant operating cost savings due to its 96% thermal efficiency compared

to conventional 78% efficient gas water heaters. And, with an estimated 127-gallon first-hour delivery and 93 gph recovery, it provides greater hot water output in a standard footprint. “It is a revolutionary product for plumbing contractors giving them another option to address the ever-increasing consumer demand for hot water,” Chisolm observed.

Energy efficient choices can save families about a third on their energy bill with similar savings of greenhouse gas emissions without sacrificing features, style or comfort.

For more information, visit www.statewaterheaters.com.

Speakman launches new look for its commercial website

NEW CASTLE, DEL. — Speakman Company recently unveiled its newly redesigned www.speakmancompany.com commercial website. The launch of the site marks the beginning of Speakman’s external rebrand launch to the commercial plumbing and emergency safety markets.

The site now features an updated contemporary look and offers users a clean and simple interface, making navigation a breeze. It not only has a modern look but also expanded sec-



tions highlighting Speakman’s green product offering, no-lead products and hospitality products. The site continues to offer many of the unique features available from the previous version of the website, such as a competitor cross reference search and a robust customer section where Speakman customers can log in to their personalized accounts to view current orders as well as order history.

Speakman’s rebranding campaign began in early 2009 to bring a fresh look and message for the company. Its new tagline is “Absolutely the Best.” The Speakman Company was founded in 1869 as a plumbing pipe-fitting company. Retaining its independent and privately held status, Speakman has forged a reputation for continuous product innovation and quality leadership. Today Speakman continues to pioneer innovations that improve the quality of life for the global community. Speakman manufactures high-quality commercial plumbing products, innovative emergency equipment and exceptional hospitality and residential showerheads.

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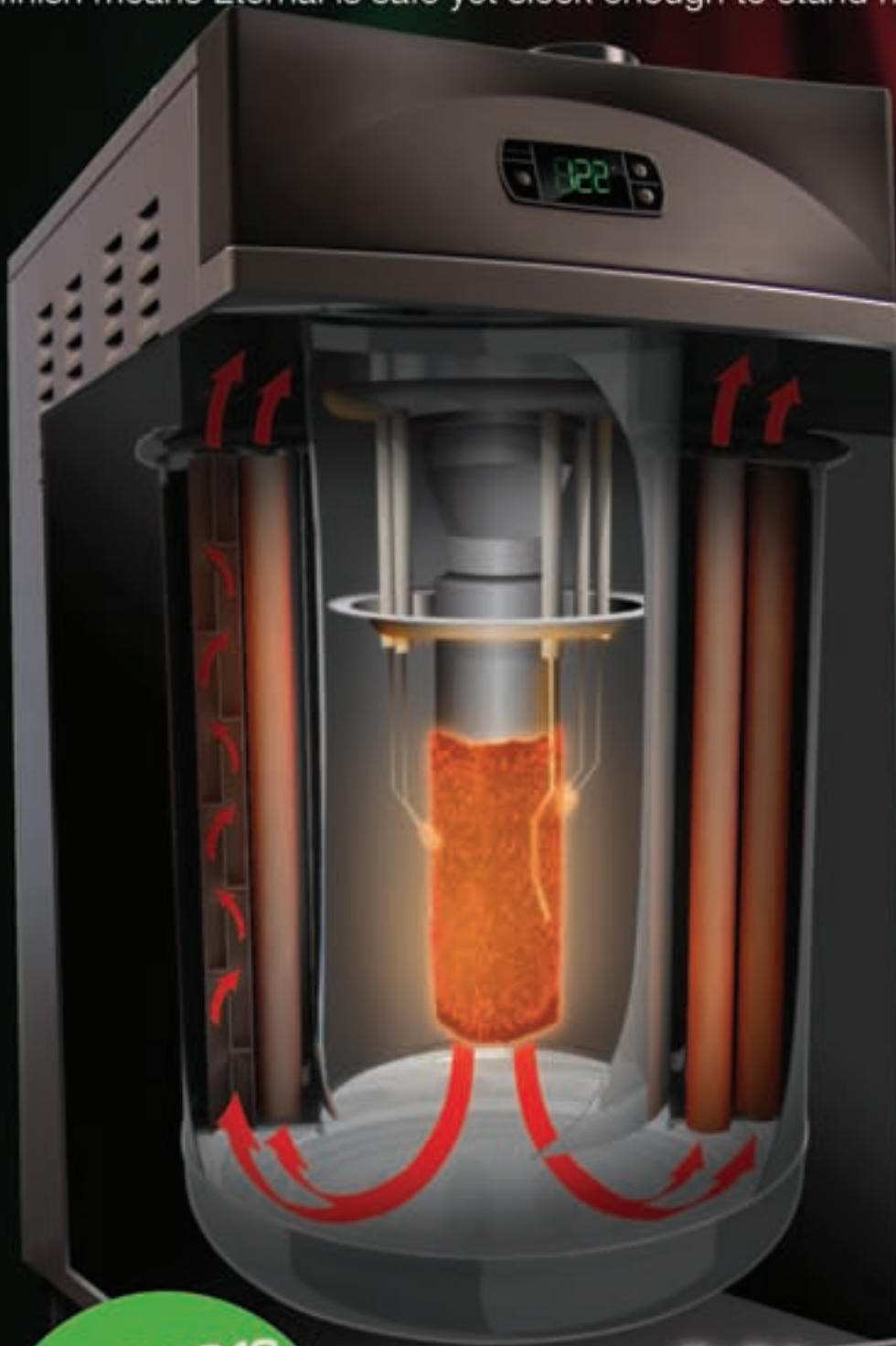
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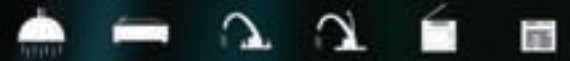
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FAVORITE
50

Pharmacia Advanced





Green home heating

The freewatt® home heating system is the green alternative in home heating, allowing homeowners to reduce their carbon footprint without sacrificing comfort. Uses micro-combined heat and power (micro-CHP) technology, which marries an Energy Star-rated, high-efficiency gas furnace or boiler to a Honda generator. Produces nearly 5,000 kw a year; reduces carbon footprint up to 6,000 lbs. **ECR.**

www.ecrinternational.com

Pre-assembled sump pump system

The Pro Pak 53 is a preassembled sump pump system complete with Model 53 primary pump and Model 507 backup



pump. Offers extra protection when the primary pump fails in power outages with 7 ½ hours of continuous pumping on a fully charged battery. Pro Pak 49 is also available, featuring a Model 49 primary pump. 3-year warranty on both systems. **Zoeller Pump Co.**

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High-efficiency flush valves

Easy-to-operate FreeHand™ high efficiency flush valves promote water and energy savings by using an infrared sensor beam to activate a flush cycle when a user is in range, ensuring efficient water use and sanitary protection. Promote water savings with new low flow rates. Available in a variety of options including battery-powered flush valves that utilize standard lead-free AA alkaline batteries, or low-powered AC adapters.

Moен Commercial Division.

www.moen.com



Commercial water heater

With inputs up to 500,000 Btuh, 96% thermal efficiency and storage up to 125 gal, the SHIELD commercial water heater has everything it takes to provide the ultimate green operation — without the risk of lime scale buildup inside the tank. An advanced stainless steel heat transfer system located outside of the tank provides a 100% defense against lime scale buildup within. Designed to maintain the same high efficiency and low operating costs throughout its life cycle. **Lochinvar.**

www.lochinvar.com

Intelligent control valve

The ICON System™ next generation gas control valve will be standard equipment on almost all of this manufacturer's residential and light duty commercial product with no additional cost. Features advanced temperature control, exclusive performance software, intelligent diagnostics, pilot-on indication, millivolt-powered operation, separate immersed thermowell, and an integrated Piezo igniter.

Bradford White.

www.bradfordwhite.com



High efficiency toilet

The strong demand for its push button-operated Conservor Dual Flush HET has led to development of 8 new models that add style, shapes and functionality to this EPA WaterSense-certified product line. The Maelstrom series provides powerful one-flush performance that uses only 1.28 gpf. The Conservor Dual Flush HET allows users to select 1.0 or 1.6 gpf. Both are offered in round, elongated and ComfortFit styles. **Briggs Industries.**

briggsplumbing.com



Bath suite

Designed with water conservation in mind, the sophisticated Wicker Park™ bathroom suite provides contemporary design and product performance. Includes high efficiency toilets, low-flow bathroom faucets, pedestals and self-rimming or under-counter lavatories. Collection features water-conserving products that result in considerable monthly savings for homeowners. **Gerber.**

www.gerberonline.com



Electric tankless water heaters

The HomeAdvantage Series is a full line of premium electric tankless water heaters for the whole house. Offers a digital micro processing fin-

gertip temperature control with LED display and patented eco smart staged heating module technology. Provides consumers with an endless supply of safe hot water and uses only the exact amount of energy needed. Rated 99% efficient and conveniently mounts on any wall for faster delivery of hot water. **Eemax.**

www.eemaxinc.com



Video inspection system

The lightweight, Gen-Eye POD™ and MINI-POD™ combine camera, reel and monitor in one package. A 5.6" LCD color monitor is protected by a padded case. Full size Gen-Eye POD features a self-leveling camera and 200 ft of Gel-Rod® for trouble-shooting 3" to 10" drain lines. MINI-POD carries 125 ft or 175 ft of push rod and the color mini-camera is small enough to troubleshoot 2" to 4" lines. **General Pipe Cleaners, a division of General Wire Spring Co.**

www.drainbrain.com

Stop valve trim, connector kits

These Quick-Connect stop valve trim and connector kits contain everything you need to connect a CPVC, PB, PEX or copper stub-out to a faucet or toi-

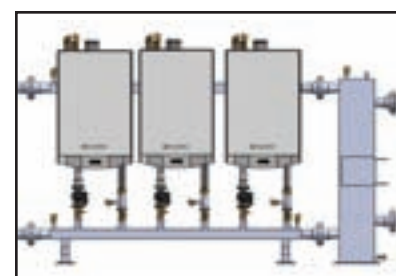


let. Kits require no tools, making installation a snap while providing a professional and decorative look. Available to connect and/or trim a 1/2" or 3/8" CTS stub-out to a standard toilet or faucet. **Watts.**

www.watts.com

Boiler manifolds

The Prestige Cascade system of factory prefabricated boiler manifolds offers capacities from 800,000 to 2 million Btuh (2-5 boilers) in two dif-



ferent piping arrangements. Features individual, 95% efficiency, fully modulating, low water content 399 MBH boilers. Substantially reduces off-cycle losses. Available in reverse return piping arrangement or primary secondary piping.

Triangle Tube/Phase III Co. Inc.

www.triangletube.com



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See contact information on page 98



Copper alloy valves

This unique copper alloy line of valves, branded as Keepalloy, covers a full range of sizes for potable water systems. This material is globally patented, complies with the CA AB1953 law and the VT 193 ACT for 0.25% maximum lead by weight, 3rd party certified to NSF/ANSI 61 Annex G, CDA registered, and meets rigorous criteria for lead-free systems.

Kitz Corporation.

www.kitz.com

Water piping system

ReUze™, a new CPCV water piping system, gives engineers and others in the green/sustainability industry a practical, easy-to-install system for



non-potable water uses in commercial and residential buildings. The use of non-potable water can contribute up to 10 LEED points on a project. Manufactured using high-quality CPVC compound along with a purple pigment (purple is the universally accepted color for non-potable water systems). Available in CTS sizes 1/2", 3/4", 1", 1 1/2" and 2" sizes in 20-ft lengths.

Charlotte Pipe & Foundry.

www.charlottepipe.com

Pressure independent control valves

The AB-QM line of pressure independent control valves (PICVs) combines a control valve with a differential pressure controller and has been expanded to include new 1 1/2" and 2" valves that offer maximum flows of 35 gpm and 55 gpm, respectively. Soon to include 6" valves. Compensates or balances differential pressures in the circuit, so the required volumetric flow always reaches the heat exchanger. Can be used in all hydronic cooling and heating applications. **Danfoss.**

www.danfoss.com



No-hub couplings meet ASTM standards

STAR no-hub couplings are independently certified to the ASTM standards for standard and wide body heavy duty applications. Engineered for maximum performance and ease of installation, the Standard 60, Heavy 80 and Super Heavy 80 couplings feature all stainless steel construction and premium neoprene gaskets. **Star Pipe Products.**

www.starpipeproducts.com



Brass fittings, nipples

These AB 1953 compliant brass fittings and nipples are in stock and ready to ship with your next order. This company also has ball valves, gate valves, check valves, dielectric unions, galvanized malleable iron threaded fittings and galvanized nipples that meet the AB 1953 low lead standard.

Smith-Cooper International.

www.smithcooper.com

Technical paper

2009 edition of *Technical Paper No. 410* explains the flow of fluid through valves, pipes and fittings to aid in selecting equipment for piping systems. Introduces a companion website containing a suite of web-based tools that solve equations found within the paper. New entries include chapters on pumps, control valves and flow meters, as well as an updated bibliography and technical references. **Crane Co.**

www.flowoffluids.com



Carbon steel valves

This carbon steel 24" 1500# gate valve stands 10 ft high and weighs 11 tons. It and all accompanying valves for a large hydrocracker project were completed and shipped to arrive on-time at the project site. All of this company's valve castings are poured at their own foundries in South Korea and Japan. **Kinka Kikai.**

www.kinkavalves.com

Quality control for valves

TCI Valve is designed, cast, machined, assembled and tested by this supplier. Vertical integration allows better quality control, shorter production times.



Approved and used by many different end users and engineering companies; recently approved by one of the major chemical and plastic companies in the U.S. **TaChen.**

www.tachen.com



Cast iron pipe, fittings

Service weight cast iron pipe and fittings and extra heavy cast iron pipe and fittings meet ASTM A 74 standard and carry UPC approvals. The hub and spigot cast iron pipe and fittings with Neoprene sealing sleeve gasket conform to ASTM C 564. For underground applications including sewers and building drains. **NewAge Casting.**

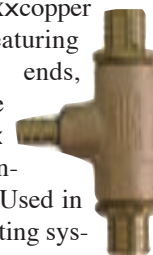
www.newagecasting.com

PEX tees

New patent-pending PEX monoflow tees are available in PEXcopper and PEXPEXPEX. Featuring factory-installed PEX ends, these tees eliminate the need to solder copper PEX adapters in conventional monoflow tees. Used in one-pipe hot water heating systems supplying radiators, convectors, baseboard and kick space heaters, tees are available in 1/2", 3/4" and 5/8" (5/8" in PEXPEXPEX only).

Raven Products.

www.ravenproducts.us



Large-diameter balancing valves

The TA balancing valve in 14" and 16" (350 and 400 mm) sizes is for large-diameter applications with high flow requirements. Precise flow measurement and balancing, optimized energy efficiency, more stable temperatures and reduced energy costs. Manually adjusted for precise system control and isolation/shut-off capabilities. **Victaulic.**

www.victaulic.com/balancing



Cushion tees, O-ring unions

This manufacturer is adding two new product lines for the oil & gas industry. The first is domestic A234 WPBN



cushion tees size ranging from 2" thru 6" with schedules from S/40 thru S/XXX. The second is domestic 316/L o-ring unions with 316/L nuts. Unions come stock with Buna or Viton O-Rings. **Westbrook Mfg.**

www.westbrookmfg.com

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muellersteam.com



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See contact information on page 98

Triple offset valves

Trinity triple offset valves offer dependable, economical service for all applications that require proven performance and quality. This bi-directional zero leakage valve utilizes a stainless steel/graphite metal seating surface. The disc and body seat engage with no rubbing of the seating components. Sizes through 120" and pressures through 600# in all materials are available. **Newmans.**

www.newcovalves.com

Copper fittings

It is very important that fittings meet the ASME B16.22 (standard used in refrigeration and A/C applications) to ensure against system failures and increased maintenance costs. Since



2001, this company's ACR copper fittings have exceeded ASME B16.22. They are known for their increased weight, quality of finish and perfect fit, and are ideal for commercial refrigeration & HVAC systems. **NDL.**

www.ndlinc.com

Water powered back-up pump

The highly efficient, water-powered SJ10A SumpJet® back-up pump re-



quires no electricity to operate. An integrated alarm and optional auto-dialer calls you if the unit has activated — especially important if the main sump pump has failed and you're away for an extended period of time. **Liberty Pumps.**

www.libertypumps.com



Condensing tankless water heater

Delivering up to 95% thermal efficiency, these tankless condensing units are ideal for residential and commercial applications. The unique condensing design incorporates 2 innovative heat exchangers to achieve optimum heating performance. Available in 4 models, suitable for mid- to large-sized homes, they offer all the same benefits homeowners have come to expect from this manufacturer. **Rinnai.**

www.rinnai.us



Low-lead valves

Line of ultra low lead products meet Calif. AB1953 and NSF61-G requirements. All products are third-party certified and are currently in stock in two California warehouses. Product part numbers are designated with an 'AB' suffix and the mark of the ANSI certifying laboratory, which is required by AB1953 and NSF61-G. Valves also carry NSF61-8, CSA and UL/FM certifications. **Red-White Valve Corp.**

www.redwhitevalveusa.com



Cast carbon steel valves

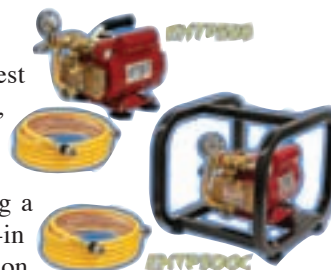
Cast carbon steel gate, globe and swing check valves are available in 150# thru 600# class. Trims are available in API 8, 5 to NACE, and 12 to NACE. End connections are flanged and butt-weld. Available at all of this company's branch locations for immediate delivery. In addition, watch for forged steel A105 valves in the coming months. **Warren Alloy.**

www.warrenalloy.com

Electric hydrostatic test pumps

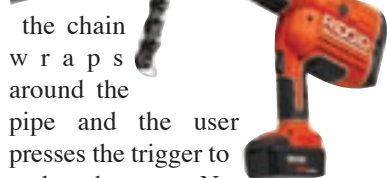
Electric Hydrostatic Test Pumps pressure test water meters, plumbing lines, pressure vessels, solar systems, sprinkler systems, etc. in both residential and commercial buildings. Output pressure is easily adjusted simply by turning a knob and watching the attached gauge. Built-in bypass allows for automatic water recirculation once the set pressure is reached. **Reed Manufacturing Company.**

www.reedmfgco.com



Soil pipe cutter

The Press Snap™ soil pipe cutter provides a fast and easy way to cut cast iron soil pipe. Eliminates manual ratcheting when connected to a press tool. To make a cut, it is attached to the press tool,



the chain wraps around the pipe and the user presses the trigger to make the cut. No need to score the pipe beforehand. Cuts most 1 1/2" to 4" no hub and service weight soil pipe. **RIDGID.**

www.ridgid.com

Automatic flow limiter

Automatic flow limiter measures flow rate, not just simply verifies differential pressure. Inlet orifice resists clogs unlike variable orifice and variable restriction designs. Stainless



steel flow cartridge for durability with a large pressure differential range across the cartridge (2 – 80+ psid). Based on fixed orifice/constant differential flow dynamics to offer superior control and repeatability. **US Industrial Sourcing.**

www.usinso.com

High efficiency toilet fixtures

These single-flush high efficiency vitreous china toilets are available with or without its water-efficient Flushometers. Models use 1.28 gpf. A toilet bowl specifically engineered for dual-flush operation accommodates dual-flush electronic and manual HETS, flushing at 1.6 gpf/1.1 gpf. Choose from wall-mounted and floor-mounted toilet fixtures. **Sloan Valve Co.**

www.sloanvalve.com

Valve lines available

Besides its complete line of high-quality ball, gate, check and globe valves in ANSI 150-2500, this company offers automation and accessories to meet customers' flow control needs.



Expert technical support, competitive pricing and a large inventory of "in-stock" valves. They are able to ship valves from their plant in 10-12 weeks. **Global Valve & Controls.**

www.globalvalveandcontrols.com

Handy silicone grease

Silicone Grease is now available in a new 1-fluid-oz squeeze tube for easy application. An ideal product for lubricating faucet stems, valves, ballcocks and more. It will not harm rubber or plastic parts. Silicone Grease is also available in 1/2-oz and 1-oz containers. For a free sample, call 800/252-5796.



Black Swan.

www.blackswanmfg.com

Ball Valves

API-6D trunnion-mounted ball valves in classes ANSI/ASME 150, 300, 600, 900 and 1500 in sizes from 2" to 48" feature bolted or welded body; API-6FA/API-607 fire-tested;



full or reduced bore; wrench, gear or electric actuator operated; double block and bleed; bi-directional, carbon and stainless steel bodies; NACE, low temperature and stainless steel trim. **Walworth.**

www.walworthvalve.com

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East Coast distributor with 6 branches bought by TSC

(Continued from TSC, page 1.)

ity practiced by the Telford & Scattergood families for the past 62 years," said Joel Becker, CEO of TSC Distribution Group.

Barry Wolff, president and COO, added, "Litco is a strong addition to the TSCDG footprint. Although we will go to market as separate companies, we are confident we can overlay the operating and back-office practices and efficiencies TSC is known for."

Torrington Supply Company is an independent Connecticut-based, privately held wholesale dis-

tributor of residential, commercial, and industrial plumbing, heating and air conditioning equipment, pumps, and industrial piping supplies serving contractors, industry and institutions throughout Connecticut. They operate from eight locations in Connecticut. The 72,000-square-foot headquarters, showroom and distribution center is located in Waterbury with branch points of sale in South Windsor, Danbury (2), New Haven, Stratford, Bristol and Stamford.

For additional information, visit www.torringtonsupply.com.

Dover Pump Solutions Group to partner with Webb Pump

(Continued from Webb, page 1.)

include: Neptune, a premier manufacturer of chemical metering pumps; Almatec, a provider of premium diaphragm pumps for chemical, semiconductor and solar markets; and Griswold, a quality centrifugal pump manufacturer.

The Pump Solutions Group features world-class facilities in the U.S. (California, Michigan and Georgia), Germany, China, India, France and the Czech Republic. Brands within PSG are deeply committed to the pursuit of excellence, customer satisfaction, research & development and market knowledge.

As a premier pump organization, PSG has the infrastructure, knowledge base and intellectual capital to exceed customer expectations worldwide.

Webb Pump is a market-focused division of the F.W. Webb Company targeting the commercial and industrial pump marketplace. Founded in 2002, Webb Pump has grown to be an industry leader by bringing together a team of experienced, seasoned pump professionals along with a comprehensive lineup of market-leading products. Now a team of 16 people, Webb Pump is headquartered in a 53,000-square-foot facility in Cranston, R.I., with a satellite sales location based in its Winslow, Maine, facility.

Webb Pump represents industry-leading pump companies that stand behind everything they do. They have a comprehensive local inventory of pumps and spare parts to support the products they represent. To learn more, visit www.webbpump.com.

In related news, Webb's Kentrol/Sevco Division has acquired the Control Equipment Company in Cazenovia, N.Y. (www.contralequip.com). They

are the Masoneilan rep for upstate New York. Kentrol/Sevco will have the Masoneilan product line for all of New England and Upstate New York. Its corporate headquarters is located in downtown Cazenovia in Central New York.

Control Equipment offers an extensive product base of industrial equipment, packages and systems to control and monitor pressure, temperature, flow and level.

Kentrol and Sevco trace their roots back to 1968 and 1982 with their incorporation. Sevco was established as a fully certified and approved pressure relief valve assembly and repair facility. Kentrol was established as a full service control systems company. Both these were divisions of the Inesco Group. They were acquired in 1998 by the F.W. Webb Company.

Today, Kentrol/Sevco, as an integrated company, provides industrial process plants with a single source for control valve, process control instrumentation, overpressure protection devices, and analytical measurement products.

Regional sales, service and stocking facilities are located in Northern and Southern New England to serve customers' needs. They also offer preventive maintenance and energy conservation programs to assist customers in enhancing system performance and reducing facilities' down time.

Among the many service offerings from Kentrol/Sevco are:

- Valve Automation
- Engineered Products
- Valve & Instrument Services
- Process Controls
- Sevco Computerized Valve Survey System.

To learn more, visit sevco.fwwebb.com.

Mueller Brass introduces new website

PORT HURON, MICH. — Mueller Industries Inc. Industrial Products Division launched a new website at www.muellerindustriesipd.com. The Industrial Products Division website will provide existing and potential customers an overview of prod-



ucts, processes and capabilities.

The Industrial Products Division produces brass and copper alloy rod, bar and shapes; aluminum and brass forgings; aluminum impact extrusions; and custom machined components.

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See contact information on page 98

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On the cutting edge

Video interviews offer first-hand look at industry events, issues



BY MARY JO MARTIN
Editorial director

In our quest to continue being your most reliable and complete source of information for all that is happening in the PHCP/PVF industry, *The Wholesaler* is now using an exciting new medium to bring you closer than ever to industry events and issues. Last month, during Network ASA and also at the PVF Roundtable, we began shooting short video interviews with leading executives from numerous industry companies.

During these video segments, I asked the executives questions that covered the gamut of issues from pending legislation to the outlook for 2010, and what's new within their own organizations. To tell the truth, I felt a little like Diane Sawyer during this process, which has turned out to not only be a great communication vehicle, but a whole lot of fun. If you haven't already, check out these videos at www.thewholesaler.com. They are organized by event, and each interview is labeled with a short description so you can tune into those in which you have the most interest. And be sure to keep coming back, as we will be shooting more footage at upcoming industry events, as well as other opportunities we have to speak with executives.

So now, a little about the Network ASA and PVF Roundtable meetings we attended in October.

Frankly, I wasn't sure what to expect going into this year's Network ASA. The association was launching a new untested format, and times are tough out there, which has led a lot of companies to cut back on extra expenditures. The stage was set for what could have been a less-than-stellar event.

On the contrary, I was delighted to witness solid participation and an outstanding lineup of speakers who generated quite a buzz. Thursday morning kicked off with separate Plumbing and Industrial Piping Division breakfasts. I attended the Plumbing breakfast, where NAHB president and chairman Jerry Howard shared an overview of what he sees ahead for the U.S. housing market — and what needs to be done to “right the ship” when it comes to residential construction. My publisher, Tom Brown, attended the IPD breakfast and said that Karen Harbert, who is CEO of the U.S. Chamber of Commerce Institute for 21st Century Energy, really hit the nail on the head with her presentation.

The keynote speaker was Kohler Co. president and COO David Kohler. He gave a well-researched presentation on the economy, construction, mortgages,

and even provided some global analysis. Noting that this recovery will take years, Kohler cautioned that there will be a “new normal” going forward. He concluded by saying, “Forging ahead, we have to be relevant, disciplined and entrepreneurial, and be true to our mission and values. Consumers want genuine authenticity. ... [They] want to do business with companies that show an interest in good citizenship. We're looking at sustainability and a new strategy — not for PR benefits, but because it's what we believe in.”

With his trademark dry sense of humor, political pundit George Will delivered a sharp, on-the-money speech at the member lunch, complete with dozens of statistics that he incredibly can tick off without any notes. One of the major themes of his presentation was the staggering effect the aging of the Baby Boomer generation will have on this country. Here are a few of his insights:

- “The retirement of the Baby Boomers is going to govern much of our future. The elderly vote because they have the biggest stake in the federal government, particularly Social Security and Medicare.”
- “By 2030, when all the Baby Boomers are retired, the average age in this nation will be higher than the average age in Florida today.”
- “The average length of retirement expanded in the 20th century from two years to almost 20. No one anticipated when they instituted Social Security that they would be subsidizing people's incomes for a third or more of their lifetimes. In fact, in 1935 when Congress set the retirement age of 65, U.S. life expectancy was 61.”
- “Today there are only four workers for every retiree; by the time the Baby Boomers retire there will only be two.”

Will also answered numerous questions from the audience, which led to what is probably my favorite quote of the day. Q: “When will our officials in Washington start using some common sense?” Will's answer, delivered without a moment's hesitation: “We're not zoned for it.”

On Thursday afternoon, ASA arranged for Congressional visits for all those interested. Among the key issues that ASA members wanted to share their views on were a threat to repeal LIFO, card check legislation, cap and trade, and water conservation.

Perhaps because we were in our Nation's Capital, but more likely because it is critical, the speakers really encouraged attendees to get involved in government affairs, to write their Senators and Representatives and make their voices heard. They emphasized that grass roots lobbying does make a difference and it's our only hope of letting Congress know exactly how we want

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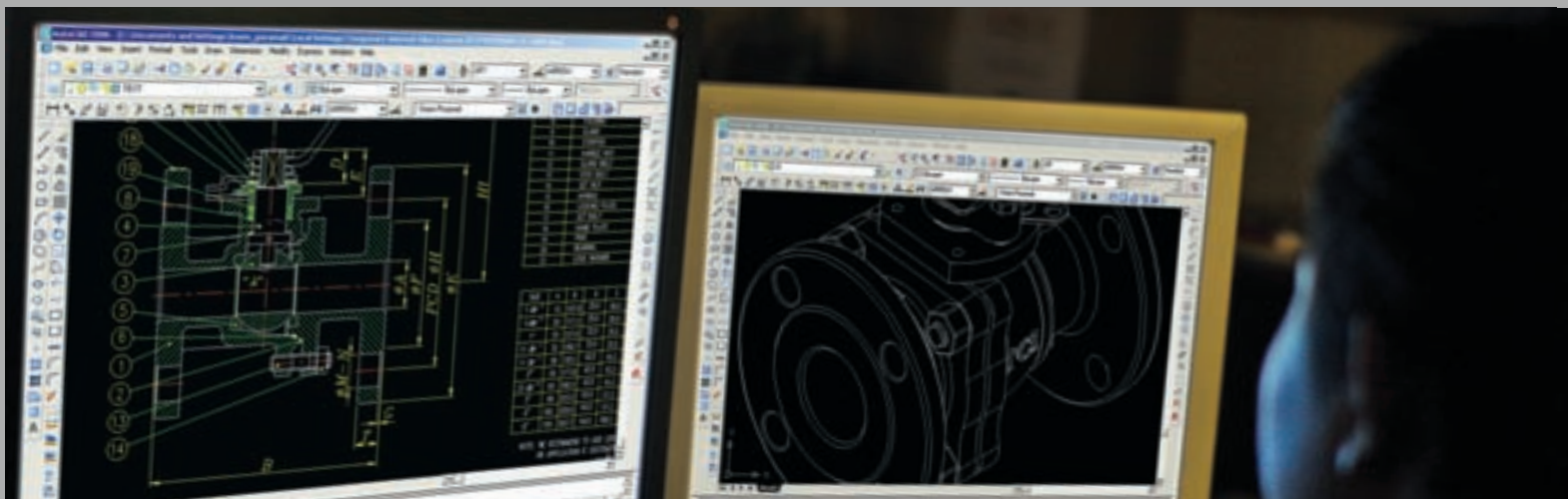
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