

Q&A

steve ARTHUR

CEO

THE ADAMS COMPANY

GS: So all of the products you manufacture are custom made?


SA: Yes, they are. We stock some parts for our customers, but everything we make is according to their exact specifications. We manufacture straight bevel gears, helical gears, spur gears, worms and worm gears, a variety of shafts including keyed, pinion, threaded, or splined, and sprockets, couplings, and other power transmission parts. While most of our customers are located in the United States, we do have accounts in Canada, and since so many of them are OEMs the parts we manufacture are actually shipped all around the world. The markets we're involved in include agriculture, construction, oil recovery, and industrial pumps, among others. We're always exploring new opportunities, of course, but those are the primary industries we serve. And while we do utilize sales representatives, most of our business comes to us via word of mouth—which isn't surprising when you've been around as long as we have—and more currently, the Internet.

GS: To what do you credit the company's longevity?

SA: It may sound like a cliché, but we've always put our customer's needs first. We've learned how crucial that is over the years, and everyone here realizes its importance and is completely onboard. When my wife and I became the company's owners a few years ago we were blessed to acquire a business that was very strong from a financial and customer-orientation standpoint, and everyone here is extremely talented and committed, from the shop floor all the way up to management. They

work hard, and we couldn't ask for a better team. When our customers are faced with a challenge and require extra effort on our part, they know they can call us and we'll find a way to get the job done. You can make the best parts in the world, but if you aren't sensitive to your customer's needs they always have

“Any capital expenditure we make is an investment in our customers, so we're always willing to grow and adapt in order to meet their needs.”

the option of going somewhere else. We understand that, so we place a premium on providing excellent customer service. We're constantly evolving, in terms of our equipment and capabilities, and we do everything we can to promote efficiency and productivity. We see any capital expenditure we make as an investment in our customers, so we're always willing to grow and adapt in order to meet their needs. 

GS: Any company that's been in business for more than a century is bound to have an interesting story. What's yours?

SA: The company was established in 1883 as the Roberts and Langworthy Iron Works. Shortly thereafter Herbert and Eugene Adams bought it and renamed it as The Adams Company. I believe they were salesmen for the company. In the early days we didn't do much gearing, primarily pouring iron and steel to make home products like railings, benches, and heating and fireplace implements. Our historical claim to fame involves manufacturing the Adams-Farwell automobile, which was powered by a rotary engine much like those used in World War I-era airplanes. Out of about 70 that were made in various models, only one still exists that we know of, and it's in a private collection in Reno, Nevada. We started making gears and shafts around 1912, and we also manufactured machine tools such as hobbers, as well as foundry equipment. We got out of that in the 1950s, but we have an old Adams hobber on the floor that we still use today. We eventually decided to focus exclusively on custom gears and shafts, which is now our sole activity.

TO LEARN MORE:

Call (563) 583-3591, e-mail sales@theadamscompany.com, or go to [www.theadamscompany.com].