



Quarterly News

Spring Edition
2006

Message from Bill Brown



As I write this newsletter piece, the Bill Brown Sales Marketing and Sales team is returning from the Frankfurt Light + Building Show where BBS/A.L.P. has had its European stand for over three decades. We participate in the show not only because we serve the global marketplace, but also to see the lighting industry's latest technological advances, including what the major lamp manufacturers are developing. It never fails that several ideas are generated from our experiences in Frankfurt that lead directly to increased sales and margins for our BBS customers, some lasting for many years. Do keep an eye out for Ron Richardson or Dallas Buchanan, sketch pad in hand, and some very interesting ideas.

As many of you know, George Dieckmann was recently hired as Vice President of Sales for BBS, a new position with focused responsibility for the BBS organization. George will apply his extensive knowledge of the market dynamics and boundless energy to further improve our sales and service as North America's largest OEM Lighting Component Agency. We get a glimpse of his perspective and approach as the leader of the BBS Sales Team in his own words on page 4. I know that many of you will join me in welcoming George back to the BBS family.

As we seek to maximize technology and opportunities, I positively believe that we have the most talented personnel ever on board, and the best team ever to go out and service the OEM marketplace.

We agree with the observation New York Times writer Thomas Friedman made in his recent book—the world is becoming flat! That is, as trade barriers fall and communication technology advances, we are more connected than ever before. We all have to have a global approach to serving our domestic and international customers.

Roytec Helps OEMs Control Costs, Streamline Operations

Bill Brown Sales adds leading wire harness and assembly manufacturer to its factory lineup.

Roytec Industries caught the attention of Bill Brown Sales because of its reputation for quality, service and value. A great complement to the BBS roster of client factories, this custom wire harness and assembly manufacturer has had a significant impact on the OEM lighting market. By using highly automated wire processing equipment, it has reduced the cost of fixture wiring for many OEMs. In one case, an entire product line was outsourced to Roytec, allowing the lighting manufacturer to install a multi-million dollar processing line without increasing the size of its building.



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Represented by Bill Brown Sales:



ADAM METAL PRODUCTS



A.L.P.
LIGHTING COMPONENTS, INC.



Arakawa
HANGING SYSTEMS

envisionlight

REFLEK

Robertson
INNOVATIVE LIGHTING SOLUTIONS



Steel Craft
an A.L.P. Lighting Division



Tripar Inc

Watt Stopper

legrand

WIREMAID U.S.A.

A.L.P. Commits to Improved Metals Manufacturing Capabilities

Metals Division acquires and refurbishes equipment, adds staff, and augments product line.

The acquisition of Steel Craft Industries has enabled A.L.P. to vastly increase its capabilities and offerings to the marketplace. However, integrating such a complex business into the existing Metals manufacturing operation presented no small challenge. Once the transition was completed, management took a hard look at the overall operation, reviewing ways in which efficiency and customer satisfaction could be improved. The result is a program of enhancements involving the investment of

nearly a million dollars for new or improved equipment, additional experienced personnel, and product development.

With emerging technology driving customer demand and a solid operational infrastructure to build on, the Metals area has been identified as having tremendous potential for growth. "We're doing more than just talking about growth," says William Brown, A.L.P. Chairman. "We are putting hard dollars into the process.

Plant Embraces Lean Manufacturing, Launches "5S" Initiative

More than just a "facelift," these improvements streamline productivity and efficiency.

Multifunctional teams of personnel from Engineering, Operations, Plant Management, and Maintenance have completed several 5S Events in A.L.P.'s Atlanta metals plant, with the goals of improving productivity, reducing defects, cutting change-over time and downtime, and improving safety, among others.



The 5S Method

Sort-Remove all items from the workplace that are not needed for current production operations.

Straighten-Arrange and label needed items so they are easy to use, locate, and return.

Shine-Clean and care for equipment and areas; inspect on an ongoing basis.

Standardize-Create a method to ensure work areas are orderly and similar, so that procedures are obvious and defects stand out.

Sustain-Make a habit of properly maintaining correct procedures.

"The key is to eliminate any waste of time or materials experienced in any process," states Mark McNeil, Senior Manufacturing Engineer, who heads up the initiative. "My goal is to complete 5S in all areas of the Atlanta plant this year, and plan the events in Monterrey," he says.

A.L.P. Invests in New Strip Fixture Dies for Improved Product Features

New SEP 240 and 296 Strips available this summer.

When A.L.P. acquired Steel Craft, it became apparent that the tooling for SEP strip fixtures was getting close to the end of its useful life. Not only are SEP strips the highest volume product in the Steel Craft line, they also are considered a staple item by the vast majority of customers. Accordingly, Engineering and Tooling staffs worked together in the evaluation and tool design process to devise improvements that would add value to our customers and improve our manufacturing processes. After a significant investment of time and talent, not to mention tens of thousands of dollars, the new SEP dies will soon be ready to produce strips packed with more features than ever before.

- New ballast holes and lances for wider ballast selection.
- New ballast nail holes with stand-offs for efficient assembly.
- Row-connector lances improved for easier installation.
- Oval center knock-out for greater versatility.
- UL markings updated.
- SEPs remain compatible with other Steel Craft brand strip mating components.

New Equipment

The recently installed 220-ton Komatsu Press produces mid-size, previously outsourced parts, allowing for greater quality control and shorter delivery time. Later this year, a new Accupress will be added to the Monterrey, Mexico plant to increase capacity in forming louver components and other components fabricated using the FMS (Flexible Manufacturing System). In addition, new Gullwing dies will reduce the manual forming required in the construction of popular PLNA louvers.

Manufacturing Performance

At the Lithia Springs, GA plant, the vital Niagara 300T press recently underwent a significant and costly program of repair and refurbishment. A team of talented manufacturing and engineering personnel has also been involved in the transfer of key equipment to the Mexico facility. Most noteworthy was the relocation of the FMS to substantially increase Steel Craft brand capacity while reducing changeover costs.

Product Enhancements

A number of product enhancements are in the pipeline. Metals engineers and tooling experts have worked diligently on tools to vastly improve the staple SEP strips. Plans to redesign the EL family of products and add new tooling for wrap end plates are slated for the summer.

"With new and improved processes, equipment and more talented personnel we are better armed than ever before to maximize the potential of the market and the organization," concludes Division Manager Jeff Benton.

Monterrey News

Automation brings increased capacity and quality to louver cell.

To reduce production time and improve the quality of louver assembly, A.L.P.'s Monterrey, Mexico facility recently underwent a reorganization and automation.

Plant layout was revamped to accommodate the arrival of numerous presses from the Atlanta plant, achieving a more logical manufacturing flow in the facility in accordance with Lean Manufacturing principles.

And to become efficient in the labor intensive area of louver assembly, traditional assembly tables were replaced with a conveyor belt system to improve capacity, rates, and product flow. As a second line was added, a healthy competition between the two assembly lines has emerged, with each trying to exceed the quality and production rates the other was achieving. The result? Manufacturing efficiencies have increased across the board.



Don't Miss Lightfair Product Preview Insert Enclosed See Us at Booth 551



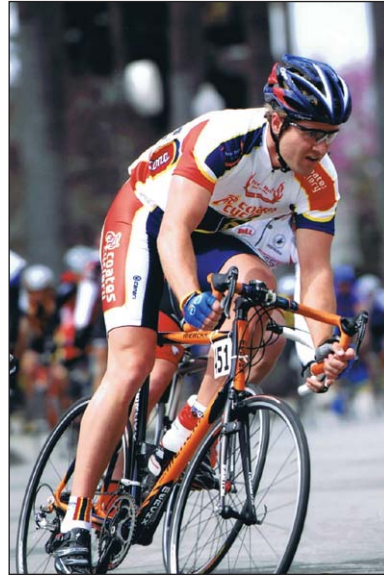
A.L.P. Commits to Shipping Efficiency

Managing the movement of material has become increasingly important to A.L.P. as our operation and supply chain grows in size and complexity, and the surge in fuel prices makes

freight and transportation a multi-million dollar commodity for the company. We now have four manufacturing locations in two different countries, in addition to two additional North American warehouses and a European operation. Products begin the manufacturing process in one location and are completed in another; raw materials come from all areas of the world, and we have customers in many different countries. Recognizing the significance of transit in overall organizational efficiency, A.L.P. recently hired Bill Homoky in the newly created position of Logistics Manager.

Bill is charged with managing the costs and customer expectations associated with moving freight to, from, and within the company. Bill joins us with progressively responsible experience in the freight arena with several different companies, including Holly Hunt furniture and Summitomo presses. Most importantly, Bill brings a customer-centered focus to the operation, understanding that they are not willing to pay for waste in the supply chain, and ultimately are not satisfied until product reaches its final destination.

Regional Account Manager Blows Past the Competition, On and Off Two Wheels!



The bike racing career of Benjamin Buchanan, West Coast Regional Account Manager for Bill Brown Sales, closely parallels his achievements in the professional arena. While a relative rookie in both fields, he is already making a huge impact. Benjamin, who began riding competitively a year ago and lost 50lbs due to the rigorous training regimen, channels his physical

strength to present a formidable challenge to more experienced peers. While smaller racers may have an advantage up mountains, Benjamin is known as a sprinter who excels on flat surfaces. Last year he was ranked 25th in Southern California for beginners, and this year is working his way up the rankings in the more advanced Category 4. His first outright win, posted last week in the El Dorado Criterium, brings him close to the goal of competing with the pros. As in professional competition, things can get fierce in the last laps of a race, Benjamin observes. "Hopefully I make it out of the mayhem in front," he quips. "That's the plan!"



Engineering Interns Bring a New Perspective to Monterrey Plant

Challenged with ambitious growth plans and a commitment to innovation in its Monterrey, Mexico manufacturing operation, A.L.P. recently instituted an engineering intern program with Monterrey Institute of Technology. Brainchild of Senior Manufacturing Engineer Vinod Kashyap, the demanding "Practicante" program gives students full-time, hands-on work experience while they complete their studies in the evening.

Vinod, who joined A.L.P. earlier this year, leads all engineering operations in Monterrey and is managing the project to transfer multiple equipment and tools from the Lithia Springs, GA plant to Mexico. A graduate of Georgia Tech, Vinod also received training in Lean Manufacturing in his previous roles with Lithonia Lighting, and will use this knowledge to implement Lean principles in his current location.



Message from George Dieckmann

The BBS sales force is bigger and stronger than ever with more than 200 years of combined lighting experience. Recent additions to the team, aside from me, include Bill Phillips, Regional Account Manager for the Mid-Atlantic, and Rick Kellen, Regional Account Manager for the Midwest. With these new hires, we feel we are poised to provide better service than ever before to our growing customer base and the factories we represent.

The Bill Brown Sales roster of factories is second to none. With an unparalleled depth of product line, we offer the total package from engineering services, prototypes, and plastic and metal products to ballasts, wire guards, and grippers. We are your "One Call Does It All" resource for lighting components. Recently we added even more value to the BBS product line by inking representative agreements with Watt Stopper/Legrand, industry leader in the field of occupancy sensors, and Roytec Industries, a multi-national manufacturer of custom electrical wire harnesses and electrical assemblies.

At BBS we believe that to compete in today's dynamic marketplace, we have to arm our sales team with all the latest product and market knowledge. To this end, we recently completed a rigorous sales and product training meeting in Atlanta, and plan another for the Fall. In addition, all of our Regional Account Managers are equipped with the latest technologies, such as handheld wireless devices and electronic documents, to speed the flow of information to our internal and external customers.

We are in a global economy and service is critical. At A.L.P./BBS, we recently launched the Xtra Mile program, to recognize employees who go "above and beyond" for our customers. With the influx of goods from China, we may not always offer the lowest price on all products, but we do offer the best overall value for the products and service we provide. This value proposition will only improve as we continue to secure partnerships with the lighting industry's foremost manufacturers, and allow technology to drive product development.

This year started strong and we feel that we will see a good summer for the lighting industry in general. We can make one promise: that the BBS sales team will continue its customer focus.

Don't miss Bill Brown Sales at Lightfair International 2006

Visit the Bill Brown Sales Lighting Components Solution Center at Booth 551

Don't forget! Also join us for a networking event, sponsored by the Bill Brown Sales factories. This reception, to be held at Booth 551 on Tuesday, May 30th, 4:00-6:00 p.m., will include cocktails and hors d'oeuvres, as well as an opportunity to see the latest lighting components—up close. See you there!



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(Roytec Continued from page 1)

In addition, by outsourcing sub-assembly work, manufacturers have streamlined the procurement process while reducing part cost. With manufacturing and distribution operations strategically located in Woodstock, GA and Monterrey, Mexico, Roytec can leverage its labor pool and distribution efficiencies to provide competitive assembly costs while minimizing delivery times.

The company has more than 20 years of experience in cutting and stripping a wide variety of wires, ranging from awg 32 wire to 535 MCM cable, from single conductors to multiple conductors, as well as numerous insulation types and specialty projects. Its versatile product line includes custom wire harnesses and assemblies, Metal-Clad (MC)/Flexible Metal Conduit (FMC) "Whip" assemblies, power cord and ribbon cable assemblies, coax and semi-rigid coax and high temperature wires.

"Our common customers have been very outspoken about the quality of service they receive from Roytec. The more we got to know about them, the more obvious the fit became," observes Dallas Buchanan, Vice President of Marketing for BBS. "They really are an ideal factory for us," he continues. "They're reliable, affordable and supply a product that everyone needs. They're well financed and have significant growth capacity. It's hard to ask for more!"

Roytec's capabilities include hot stamping, inkjet and labeling, as well as soldering and harness braiding. Among its many services are kitting and bundling, sonic welding, braiding, and tube or heat shrink marking.

The engineers at Roytec provide turnkey design assistance to quickly turn around project quotes and can reverse engineer from a sample. Completed engineered CAD prints and electronic documentation services are provided.



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