



Quarterly News

Summer Edition
2005

Message from Bill Brown



As we forge forward in 2005, Bill Brown Sales continues to celebrate its 50th year in business. We've grown from a small Chicago operation selling products locally to a seven-branch, international corporation with nearly 800 employees.

The significant investments, improvements, acquisitions and new relationships BBS has developed over the last year or so continue to gain momentum. Our new facility in Monterrey, Mexico, is in full gear, manufacturing thousands of cost-effective components for our valued customers. Recently acquired A.L.P. / Steelcraft is ramping up, supply-

ing the marketplace with quality white good components and superior regional access to product. We've introduced some exciting new products (Puffs, T5 Hi-Bays), and also, our recently renewed relationship with Robertson Worldwide allows our customers access to one of the most comprehensive lines of compact fluorescent ballasts available.

As the organization expands, we've wrestled with the question of how to most effectively manage the company's varied activities. A strategic planning team was assembled to answer that very question. This group worked diligently to develop an organizational structure to support our ongoing need for continual improvement as we strive to fulfill our goal of becoming a world-class company. We are happy to report that we have completed our new design and have begun implementation! BBS will manage the OEM and Distribution sales force, in addition to central Marketing Communications. The organization will become a sales agency for each of the A.L.P. Product Divisions and the manufacturing companies we represent. We are very excited about the changes taking place. In the years to come, our business partners and customers will reap the benefits of a more efficient, streamlined organization.

Ordering From Tripar® Now Easier Than Ever

No more paging through print catalogs and cross-referencing part numbers.

In March, Tripar®, Inc., North America's leading manufacturer of metal stamping for recessed downlighting, and metal decorative metal light fixture and lamp parts, unveiled its revamped print and online downlight catalog with expanded features to make evaluating and selecting products easier than ever. Along with improved search capabilities that allow users to locate parts by item number or description, the catalog groups parts in related sections and includes compatibility charts to help customers come up with combinations that best suit their applications.

"Making the process less complicated helps customers find what they need, find it fast, and save money," observes Lloyd Sevak, Vice President.

To help visualize products, the site features extensive color isometric views, and 3-D image viewing that allows users to view the part from any angle and zoom in on any feature. Print catalog pages can also be viewed online to obtain overall dimensional information. Like many retail shopping web sites, the Tripar site allows users to fill up their shopping cart for items they would like quoted, as well as sign up for periodic product updates via email. www.tripar-inc.com



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

TRIBORO
A.L.P.

Tripar Inc

WIREMAID U.S.A.

Robertson Worldwide Electra Series is Most Comprehensive Selection of Energy Star Compliant Ballasts Available to Lighting OEMs

BBS customers benefit from the significantly expanded product line.

Consumers are more aware than ever of the Energy Star program, and it is becoming more of an important factor in product selection decisions, a study released by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) earlier this year revealed.



Public awareness of Energy Star has jumped to 64 percent of US households, the survey revealed. In many major markets where local utilities and other organizations use Energy Star to promote energy efficiency to their customers, public awareness is even higher, averaging 74 percent. Also significant is the fact that 30 percent of US households purchased an Energy Star qualifying product in the past year.

This consumer awareness provides extra incentive for lighting OEMs to strive for energy efficiency, notes Greg Traphagen, President of Robertson Worldwide. "There's a huge marketing opportunity out there."

Robertson Worldwide's Electra Series features more than 50 electronic ballasts that will operate 350 various lamp applications. "We believe this is one of the most extensive offerings of Energy Star Compliant products in the industry," Traphagen says.

Reflecting its support of the Electra Series, Robertson has committed to becoming a valuable industry resource for Energy Star information, posting Energy Star and energy-related news, special offers, rebates and announcements that will be beneficial to customers and end-users on the company's website.

For a complete listing of Electra Series ballasts and specification sheets, please visit the Robertson website at www.robertsonww.com. An Electra Series 8-page catalog is also available online or by request.

Since last Fall, Bill Brown Sales has represented Robertson Worldwide, one of the largest manufacturers of compact fluorescent ballasts in North America, offering a complete line of magnetic and electronic ballasts for a variety of lighting applications. The product line also includes a complete range of linear and HID ballasts along with voltage transformers.

A.L.P. Lighting Components Expands to Monterrey, Mexico

In late 2004, Bill, David, and Steve Brown opened A.L.P.'s new, 79,000 square-foot dual metals and plastics manufacturing plant. This custom-built production space significantly expands capacity and includes extensive machining capabilities including rotary thermoforming, SMC molding, louver assembly, forming and punching.



BBS Augments Lighting Product Line with Design Engineering Services

Envisionlight, a Wilmington, NC-based consultancy, offers engineering technology and design services to the lighting OEM.



Under the direction of Founder and President Mark Wedell, who himself has 20 patents currently on file, Envisionlight offers

a broad spectrum of turn-key product development services and expertise in manufacturing strategy. In turn, these R&D services allow manufacturers to truly optimize the thousands of component product offerings available through Bill Brown Sales.

"We want to be a resource to our customers," says Dallas Buchanan, Vice President of Marketing and Sales, Bill Brown Sales. "With this complement of products and services we can help them introduce new technologies, enter new market segments, get to market earlier with product improvements, and enhance their in-house engineering capabilities," Buchanan adds.

The 14-member Envisionlight technical team averages 20 years of experience and brings unparalleled expertise in such areas as LED, HID, fluorescent, and incandescent/halogen products for commercial, architectural and consumer applications. Past clients include Genlyte Group, Hella, John Deere and United Technologies.

"Given the cyclical nature of the business, manufacturers often struggle to match engineering resources with demand," Envisionlight's Wedell observes. "With us, they don't have to make a commitment to hire employees, but they can still remain competitive or increase market share."



www.envisionlight.com

Arakawa Grippers Now Value-Priced for the Lighting Market

Known for superior products for retail and gallery settings, Arakawa focuses on manufacturing efficiencies to drive down pricing for lighting OEMs, without compromising quality.

It's easy to see where Arakawa got its reputation for being top-of-the-line. After all, its grippers have been used in such prestigious institutions as the Smithsonian, the J. Paul Getty Museum and Sotheby's, and at high-end retailers like Armani and Donna Karan.

Through its partnership with Bill Brown Sales, Arakawa is aggressively pursuing the OEM lighting market with an improved, standardized product offering best suited specifically to the industry.

Arakawa's cable grippers offer lighting designers attractive features beyond economy. Unlike other systems that use a set-screw to fasten hardware to the cable, Arakawa uses three steel ball bearings to grip the cable, resulting in superior strength and adjustability.

By limiting its lighting product offerings to the five grippers that offer OEMs the most mobility, durability, and versatility, Arakawa takes advantage of tremendous economies of scale. Focusing on the parts that account for most of the company's volume, manufacturing involves very little setup or downtime.

"By continually streamlining our production, we are able to be very price competitive," notes Peter Gutmann, Arakawa president. "We're passing on the savings to our customers as we achieve them, which in turn gains us customer loyalty and earns us a reputation of a valuable business partner."

Arakawa has manufactured grippers for 32 years and holds numerous design and engineering patents.

www.arakawagrip.com

Product News

The Arakawa Grip™ cable hanging system uses stainless steel ball bearings, instead of brass, for improved product durability and testing integrity. Quick-release technology cuts installation time, reducing labor costs and therefore overall costs.

- **Mobility:** Fastens to cable with mechanical grip, eliminating set screws and damaged cable. Ball-bearing design for quick, safe adjustment.
- **Durability:** Load-bearing mechanisms made from stainless steel for maximum strength.
- **Versatility:** Multi-functional products permit design creativity without safety concerns. Ball bearings will not accidentally release, and will actually hold tighter the heavier the load.



New D-Grip Series

The D-Grip series accepts two individual cables into a single gripper housing, allowing designers new flexibility in suspension. Also ideally suited for situations where seismic bracing is required, as the D-Grip allows diagonal bracing from a single gripper. Includes fluted safety cap as standard.



Who's Who



Benjamin Buchanan, Regional Account Manager

Benjamin has spent the better part of the past decade developing lighting energy efficient projects for scores of private and public facilities throughout the U.S. From this unique vantage point, Ben has developed an understanding of industry trends, from luminaire construction to application design, along with an in-depth knowledge of the region's utility incentive programs. He is responsible for the Western region of the United States.



Todd Buchwalter, Product Manager A.L.P. Plastics Division

Todd joins ALP with 13 years of experience in sales engineering, product development, and project management in the plastics industry. The bulk of his experience has been in compression and injection molded products. In his new position, Todd manages the entire product line life cycle, including product development, forecasting, and market research. Drawing on his background in engineering and manufacturing, Todd will work closely with sales and marketing communications teams.



Lisa Christy, Marketing Communications Manager

Lisa brings more than 15 years of experience in marketing communications to Bill Brown Sales, drawing on an extensive background in marketing management and sales promotion in magazine and retail industries. She is responsible for synthesizing the creative direction, strategic positioning and communication plans for client factories and developing the Bill Brown Sales brand. Her department creates sales support tools and reinforces sales activities with public relations, trade shows, and other marketing tactics.



Abbe Uribe, A.L.P. Plastics Production Manager

A 17-year veteran with the company, Abbe was recently promoted to this challenging position in our Monterrey, Mexico facility. Moving up in the ranks he started as a fabricator, and held various warehouse and operations positions in California, before assuming his new responsibilities. He currently maintains quality control standards in the production of plastic housings and puffs, implementing policies and procedures, and has established a preventive maintenance program for manufacturing equipment.

A.L.P./Steelcraft Ramping Up

Core products stocked and shipped quickly; expert engineering and manufacturing teams focus on quality and process improvements.

Just over 6 months ago, A.L.P. Lighting Components acquired Steel Craft Industries, the nation's largest manufacturer of unwired fluorescent fixture assemblies. Prior to the acquisition, A.L.P. represented Steel Craft to the lighting industry for nearly five decades through its Bill Brown Sales agency.

The merger is another significant step in the company's continued efforts to expand its product offerings and improve service levels to OEM lighting manufacturers. "As we had hoped, this acquisition is already proving out. We're systematically meeting the volume demands of this segment with a 24/7 manufacturing schedule, our deep tooling and process engineering bench, and manufacturing disciplines that this market has really never experienced," observes Steve Brown, A.L.P.'s CEO. "True, the fruits of our labor won't be apparent for a few months yet, but there is no question that we will set a new standard for value and service in the supply of white good components."

While our dedicated production teams have been stretched to capacity with the daunting task of relocating the steel manufacturing operation from Newark, NJ to Lithia Springs, GA and, in part, Monterrey Mexico, all core products are stocked and orders are being fulfilled in record time.

"Although we knew from the start that this would be no small undertaking, we also knew that ultimately we could provide our customers with a better



product and service," notes Pamela Stowers, Business Development Manager, A.L.P. Metals Division. "We have overcome many of the challenges and are addressing key issues as quickly as possible because we recognize the impact these have on our customers' business."



Initially, the newly relocated organization struggled to fulfill customer requirements on key products due to a slower-than-expected ramp-up of transferred machinery. "Our production staff worked furiously to get the presses running quality products," Stowers recalls. Currently manufacturing of core products, such as SEP and DEP strips, and 390 and 300 wraps, is running smoothly, and inventory levels are satisfactory.



"Our customers have been extraordinarily patient during these inevitable growing pains," adds Dallas Buchanan, Vice President of Sales and Marketing. "We have always appreciated their business, but now are really thankful for the benefits that come from decades-long relationships."

Backorders remain on some secondary product lines, including T5 and T8 staggered strips, knockdown T5 strips

and Concept 6 surface-mounted fixtures, but they are expected to be cleared soon. A.L.P.'s engineering team is working diligently to address problems with production dies and drawings, while expert tooling and production teams are addressing manufacturing issues.

In addition, manufacturing engineers have been working to remedy unacceptable levels of damage to shipments that have occurred in recent months. We are adding additional packaging where necessary and continue to test and develop effective packaging to eliminate damage, while focusing on cost-effective solutions that keep our customers competitive in the market.

"We are looking to the future," Stowers says, "when Steelcraft will be the preferred brand for steel fixture components. We will accomplish this through superior service and a broad offering of fixture products for current and emerging lighting technology."

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