Ferguson opens flagship showroom that doubles as national training center

BY STEVE SMITH

The fact that Ferguson Enterprises decided to open up a new showroom could be treated as old news. After all, the company already operates more than 280 showrooms throughout the country. So what’s so newsworthy about this latest one? Actually, there is an interesting difference with the new 15,000 sq. ft. facility opened recently on the distributor’s Newport News, Va., corporate campus. Walk past the opulent displays of plumbing, lighting and appliances, and you’ll find a training center large enough for about 30 Ferguson associates.

Soon, the room will be filled with associates from many of those other Ferguson showrooms for additional showroom training. “We plan to bring in different levels of associates to train them on sales, profits, customer service, new product launches and other important categories to run a showroom,” explained Britney Hopkins, showroom trainer and brand ambassador.

(Turn to Flagship Ferguson... page 96.)
MILESTONES

BY DANIELLE GALIAN
Assistant Editor

Family is the pillar of every home, organization, nation, and creation. Most say there is nothing more important in life than family. This sentiment could not hold truer for the members of Control Supply Corporation (CSC) in Copiague, NY. Every single person at CSC feels like, and most of the time is a member of the family. And they have the years to prove it. With the average employment span of 25 years, CSC is looking into a bright future ahead for the business. Now with two sons in law and a daughter, there hasn’t been a more exciting time for this family owned and operated establishment.

Along with the latest in technological advances, CSC is committed to keep an “old school” approach to business. In other words, they don’t want to lose touch with their customer base. The personal relationships, camaraderie, and communications they have with their clients is an element that a lot of other businesses are leaving, opting to rely solely on email or phone.

calls. Since its inception, CSC has moved three times and currently occupies a 20K sq ft building. Since moving into their current location in 1998 sales have quadrupled. From a small crew of four they have now grown into 15 employees.

“Those days no one wants to speak on the phone anymore, at least that’s what we found. People want to email their orders; they don’t even want to fax their orders. They don’t want to be involved. But we pride ourselves on that personal touch. We want the customer to call us and speak to us to give their problems so we can recommend what it is they need. We still want that old fashioned personal touch. Yes, we’re

Control Supply Corporation gears up to celebrate its 40th anniversary this year. Here is its story.

Gary Herbst, owner of Control Supply Corporation since he opened for business Feb. 2, 1976, the day after a blizzard blew through the state.

Celebrating 40 Years of CSC

“We still want that old fashioned personal touch. Yes, we’re on the web and we do all sorts of email trades and we’re still very computer savvy. But our niche is that personal part of the business.”

— Debbie Herbst, CFO
Let’s Celebrate!

Honeywell is truly honored and happy to be a Control Supply Corp partner. Congrats on 40 years of outstanding service.

Visit customer.honeywell.com.
MILESTONES

(Continued from page 66.)

There’s nothing more rewarding for a journalist than listening to all the wonderful stories told by members of a company. That reward is especially sweet when everyone shares the same feelings of “family” and “teamwork.” These were the terms being used by all members of CSC. Check out their thoughts on what the 40th anniversary means to them throughout the story!

CSC has been serving customers in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico. With their product stock of over 50 different manufacturers, CSC provides a very high level of inventory. They also only sell to wholesalers. The personal touch is carried over into product ordering. Customers have a variety of ways of ordering while consistently met with the same friendly and professional expertise.

Another major way CSC keeps this friendly and professional approach is through founder Gary Herbst himself. Herbst has every reason to retire happily. But to this day he puts the pedal to the metal and visits his accounts from morning to night. This is the same quality and consistency of service CSC’s customers have been exposed to since day one. And in speaking to Herbst, there’s no stopping any time soon.

That same quality of service is shared by his two sons in law and his daughter. Lewis Finn, Sal Bochicchio, and Lauren Bochicchio are opening another chapter in CSC through their work in sales and accounting. There’s no doubt the knowledge and wisdom being shared by Gary Herbst to the next generation is propelling CSC to even greater heights. After all, it’s all in the CSC family.

(CSC history begins on page 70.)

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The history of Control Supply Corp. as told by Gary Herbst
1975-present

“I met my wife Debbie 12/20/74 at a singles weekend in the Catskill mountains and we were married exactly one year later on 12/20/75. We shared an apartment in Brooklyn, and we decided it was time for me to start my own business. Debbie had a career as a buyer for Federated Department Stores in Brooklyn; she continued to work to support us during this time while I started the business.

A snowstorm the night before, and my plans to go out on the road with my 1976 Ford Granada and call on my first accounts in Brooklyn were almost deterred. My wife Debbie said, “don’t go” which led to a small argument that I was able to win. First, I had to shovel my car out of my parking spot and hope that my new accounts were committed enough to work during a blizzard. I was able to receive three or four nice orders that day. And I

“We moved a third and final time to our fourth location in Copiague, N.Y. The building is now nearly 20,000 square feet and on 40,000 feet of property.”

Debbie now works full time for Control Supply as our CFO & also serves as a backup to the purchasing team.

We started the business with little money; little knowledge of the industry and very early in our marriage. My confidence came from my knowledge of our products and my six years experience with Honeywell.

Gary Herbst — “It means that I survived 40 years in business and I’m very, very fortunate that I always had very good people by my side who stayed with me for a very long time. Our average employees are still with us for over 25 years.”

On February 2, 1976 Control Supply Corp. was born.

1976
Control Supply’s doors officially opened on February 2, 1976.

Of course there was a horrible egg cream and pretzel stick each day Michael also asked me not to put our trash next to his since he was paying for pickup. Gary offered him a job and Michael moonlighted at Control Supply.

(March to page 72.)
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MILESTONES

(Continued from page 70.)
while his partner ran the candy shop. Michael went on to become Control Supply’s first key and longest tenured employee. Up until that point, I had difficulty finding quality help.

By 1980
More and more wholesalers were calling Control Supply for technical control advice and inventory.

We were close enough to our Long Island accounts and now had the opportunity to expand into Nassau and Suffolk counties while maintaining coverage in the three boroughs of New York City. We would remain in this location until 1983.

1983
Control Supply continued to grow and we moved to Bayside, Queens to a new 3,000 square-foot warehouse. Debbie’s father, Morris Stylman, lent me the money to buy the building. As it turns out the building was bought by the same guy that moved out of the original store in Flushing.

We acquired additional staff members at this time. Frank Bachhuber, Anthony Cinelli, Tony Demarinis, and Debbie joined our team and form a sort of bucket line and take the material from the truck into the warehouse.

Control Supply still was an oil burner supply house and our data base of customers at that time were predominantly HVAC contractors and wholesalers who I had met during my time working

Lauren Bochicchio — “It’s really impressive that my dad was able to take something out of nothing and he’s achieved so much, it’s just amazing to me.”

Sal Bochicchio — “I’ve been here about a year and half now. I’m still learning everything, but it’s just great that we have a family business here that’s been going on for 40 years and hopefully we can carry this on for many years to come.”

Debbie Herbst — “We’ve hired people right out of high school and now they have their children going to college. It’s just a mom-and-pop operation that has just grown. We’ve brought in two sons-in-law and a daughter in the business. We now have grandchildren and hope it’s a legacy for them for the future. That’s how we see it. We want to make a mark for more generations to come.”

(End of article.)

(March 2016 | thewholesaler.com)
MILESTONES

(Continued from page 72.)

for Honeywell. More customers were still calling us for control inventory.

1984

Control Supply becomes part of a local NY heating council. At each meeting wholesalers were pushing me to put out a price sheet of controls. I decided to take the business in a different direction, and Control Supply re-branded itself as a re-distributor of controls. I made the decision to stop selling to contractors and gave up about $1 million in business. In the beginning it was a struggle to get wholesalers to trust what we took in a new direction but since then 100% of our business is from wholesalers. We then were covering all five boroughs, Nassau, Suffolk and Westchester counties. We decided to expand into the whole tri-state area including the bottom of Massachusetts. In order to achieve this we called

Anthony Cinelli — “I had good mentors with Michael, Gary, and Frank. As a team we worked together to get to that goal of giving customer savvy service and our technical knowledge.”

Frank Bachhuber — “Control Supply is really like my family. We basically grew up together. I started here when I was 19 and I’ll be 53 this year. And it doesn’t seem that long. It’s funny how time goes by so fast. Gary and Debbie are very good to us and that’s why we’re kind of like a family.”

Lewis Finn — “I’m lucky that along with my brother in law and sister in law, we are able to take the company into a second generation. I would like to get the business to the grandchildren, that’s my goal. That will be how I judge my success. Forty years means that you’re doing something right. You have a formula that works.”

Brian Stone — Our 40th anniversary means that I have been part of a family and helped contribute to the success of the company for 1/4 of our existence. It means that I have been at a place that has helped me grow from a warehouse worker where I didn’t know what an aquastat was to helping solve problems and recommending controls.

Dianne Stanizone — This 40th anniversary means success to me. I am proud to be part of Control Supply’s 40th anniversary and of the company’s success. I started 10 years ago, part time in a fast growing company. This company runs like a well-oiled machine and the people here have become family to me. I’m proud of where Gary has brought this company and to be able to watch it grow and be part of it daily. Happy Anniversary, Control Supply Corp!

the wholesaler.com | FEBRUARY 2016 75
MILESTONES

(Continued from page 75)

ployees, and technical expertise, our sales volume continued to increase. We realized that years we improved the building with better insulation, updated our HVAC system, doubled the number of our staff and tripled our number of manufacturing

Armin Csibi — CSC's newest warehouse team member, Armin brings years of experience and will help continue CSC's legacy of efficiency and success. In order to keep up with the increase in sales we needed a more updated computer system, more telephone lines and more personnel. We also decided it was time to take on additional product lines. Within the next 17 years, CSC has grown from a two-person operation to a multi-million dollar business as we have added four purchasing groups and quadrupled our sales volume. 2015

We currently have 15 employees, it truly is a family business as we have added my daughter and two sons-in-law onto our staff. The business continues to run rather smoothly as the average employee remains with us for 17.5 years. Our management team has been with us an average of 23.5 years.

Michael D'Annunzio — Pride, success, accomplishment for future generations at Contro Supply. I watched it grow from a two man operation to major national distributor.

Our website is e-commerce friendly and packed with technical pricing and inventory related material. We inventory more than 60 major related HVAC product lines. We ship 99.99% completed orders daily. We continue to visit more than 1000 wholesale accounts and have just begun to call on fourth-generation accounts.

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