

Therma-Tron-X Inc.

A Small-town Company with an International Reputation

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Otto Andreae, his son Brad Andreae and his business associate Ray Sherman founded Therma-Tron-X Inc. (TTX) in 1971 to bring a new energy to the world of custom industrial ovens. Before long TTX broadened the company's initial focus to include an array of different technologies, such as spray-washing products and automated finishing systems for high-performance industrial applications. A loyal following of global clientele soon followed, and the TTX team continues to work closely with clients to exceed their expectations by leveraging over 40 years of industry experience to deliver customized solutions.

TTX clients trust that the team will build the best product possible and the company has always pursued growth with the needs of its clients in mind, and without letting risk get in the way of innovation. TTX relocated its headquarters and fabrication facility – a 17,000-square foot industrial space in Wisconsin – in 1976, and this base of operations has since blossomed into a 150,000-square foot space with an internal 22,000-square foot office space.

The company operates a sales office in the Chicago area in addition to TTX Air LLC, a multiple aircraft operation





near Wisconsin headquarters, to facilitate travel and communication for employees and clients alike.

“Historically, we have taken the time to develop new technologies and to design, develop and test new products, even when business is slow,” asserts Brad Andreae, CEO of TTX. “It takes confidence to spend money on development when there is very little coming in, but even during recent economic downturns, we have kept our employees during slow times and we strive to continue developing new, more efficient and cost-effective products for our customers.”

A Legacy of Longevity

While a state-of-the-art facility helps, it's the TTX team's extensive expertise that has helped the company attract the attention of manufacturers like John Deere, Toyota, Caterpillar, General Electric, Bombardier and Kohler Corporation amongst many others. The average TTX employee has been with the company around 16 years, but over 35 percent of TTX's team has been with the company for 25 years or more, even as new talent joins the team.

TTX works diligently to align itself with the client's needs and an in-house engineering department ensures technical specifications are met with an eye for the energy efficiency and long-term reliability of the system. As a full-service supplier, TTX provides all mechanical electrical, structural and control components along with evaluation, testing, installation, start-up and after sales service so clients rest easy that systems will perform as promised for years to come.

“We build and install equipment really anywhere so sometimes it can be a challenge getting to a customer in a timely manner,” admits Andreae. “We have our own corporate planes to get our field personnel and engineers into the field

quickly and efficiently. With advances in private networks, it is also possible to monitor a customer's equipment remotely.”

Efficient, Effective, Durable

TTX specializes in e-coating, powder coating and liquid paint technologies that can be combined with other components for a complete finishing system. TTX's state-of-the-art facility is capable of fabricating 90 percent of every system in-house before being shipped off for installation and commissioning in the client's facility, which is also overseen by the TTX team. The total scope of complete finishing systems can include pretreatment systems, industrial ovens, environmental rooms, liquid spray booths, material handling systems and wastewater treatment systems.

“In more recent years our customers have had to change the way they deal with wastewater, so we sharpened our focus in that area,” adds Andreae. The company launched a subsidiary, TTX Environmental, in 1985 to complete the picture by developing a line of wastewater treatment solutions that has accumulated its own following over the years.

TTX Environmental looks to support all of the company's

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clients with systems that reduce water consumption and wastewater generation, while also ensuring facilities and systems remain in compliance with all federal, state and local discharge regulations. TTX's complete scope of wastewater treatment systems includes reverse osmosis, iron removal, fluid transfer, deionization, water reuse and process mixing.

Both innovation and technology are hallmarks of TTX's longevity. The company developed the SlideRail Square Transfer (SST) material handling system in 1987, just two years after launching TTX Environmental. The system has since become a cornerstone of TTX's product lines for its ability to perform high-volume finishing operations in just a fraction of the space required by a traditional monorail material handling system and in less time. The key ingredient is the use of two slide rails instead of a chain conveyor system that allows racks of suspended product to move through the system swiftly. The racks are then lowered into processing tanks and raised back out in unison, boosting the system's load density.

Targeted New Technologies

The system is built, as many of TTX products are, using modular components for easy and cost-effective replacements. As an added bonus, the SST system can be integrated with other material handling systems as needed so customers receive a system that meets each exact, individual need.



In the next few years Andreae expects the TTX team to continue pushing itself to innovate and has already begun investing in that effort. "We're adding more personnel and more floor space to accommodate the research and development into environmental technologies that address the rising limitations on phosphate discharge and the importance of recovering heavy metals from wastewater," adds Andreae. "Each new job adds to our understanding of what the future holds and it looks like the future is as colorful as ever."

As the company expands its focus and product lines TTX will continue to win over clients by approaching challenges as an extension of the client's team, securing Therma-Tron-X Inc.'s reputation as the small-town company with a global reputation for innovation. •