

WINTER 2010

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A GLOBAL PLATFORM

ESP International is proud of its global outreach and culture of continuous improvement in the OEM marketplace. *page 34*

EVERYTHING BUT THE OINK

Farmland Foods, which processes 'anything to do with pork,' is marking its 50th anniversary, and vows to remain flexible. *page 40*

Common > Sense

Sensient Technologies proves that a global company can achieve long-term success through autonomous profit centers. *page 32*



**AMERICA NEEDS
BOLD ACTION TO
REGAIN GLOBAL
MANUFACTURING
LEADERSHIP.**

< *Kenneth P. Manning,
Sensient chairman and CEO*

STOCK EQUIPMENT CO.

www.stockequipment.com / Mfg. site: Chagrin Falls, Ohio / Employees: 300 / Bob Ciavarella,

president: "Finding a solution for customers with our innovative technology and selection of products is where we shine."

POWER PLAYER

STOCK EQUIPMENT'S EXPERTISE HELPS IT IMPROVE EFFICIENCY FOR POWER GENERATION CLIENTS. BY DIANE WEISHEIT

AN EMPLOYEE ASSEMBLES STOCK'S DROP-FORGED CHAINS, WHICH CONVEY MATERIAL IN SOME BIOMASS APPLICATIONS.

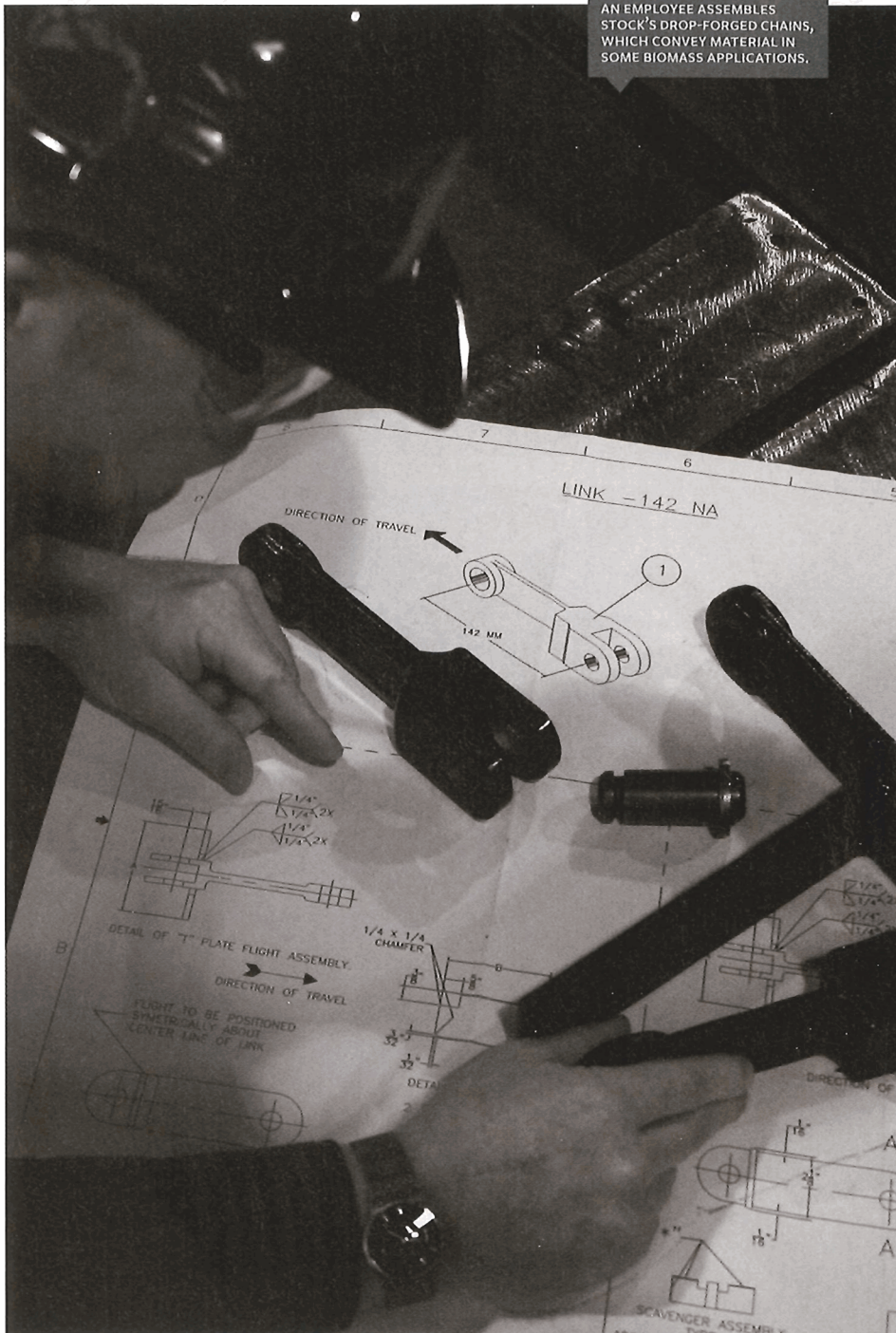
Efficiency is a quality valued in most operations, regardless of the industry. Power generation operations, in particular, are focused on being as efficient as possible in the face of rising fossil fuel costs and the need to implement environmentally friendly generation methods.

Arthur J. Stock first envisioned improving efficiency in the power industry in the early 1920s. After graduating from the University of Michigan in 1922 with a degree in mechanical engineering, Stock applied for patents on a nonsegregating coal distributor, which would supply coal in even-sized amounts to stoker-fired boilers. With this product and the market demand for larger, more efficient boilers, Stock was able to form Stock Equipment Co. in 1929.

His innovation helped the company persevere through the Great Depression and ultimately prosper with the development of its most significant product, the gravimetric feeder. This successful combination of weighing and material flow control into a single device shaped the industry standard for material feeding.

Today, as part of the Schenck Process Group in Germany, Stock Equipment is a leading supplier of bulk solids' material handling, feeding, weighing, screening and automation systems for the power, mining and process industries, and the global leader in the supply of coal feed systems, valves and microprocessor control systems for power plants.

"Our core competencies of metalworking, electromechanical assembly and testing are what keep us competitive in the industry," President



Bob Ciavarella explains. "Our products, combined with our engineering and design skills, help us create solutions to solve customers' problems."

Based in Chagrin Falls, Ohio, Stock Equipment helps clients reduce fuel, maintenance and capital costs of bulk material handling systems, as well as optimize particulate collection of electrostatic precipitators (ESP).

"Our knowledge base allows us to provide customers with individual assistance," Ciavarella notes. "Establishing relationships is the distinguishing factor of our customer service. Customers are assured a reliable source as we work to provide customized solutions for their needs. Many electric utilities are currently evaluating the transition to biomass fuels to meet Renewable Portfolio Standards. Making a fuel switch,

however, leads to material handling problems. At Stock, not only do our engineers help customers find cost-effective solutions to handle new fuels within their current systems, but our customer service representatives are available for continual assistance throughout the process."

OPERATIONAL ENHANCEMENTS

To ensure it is well prepared to meet customers' needs, Stock Equipment is dedicated to the continuous improvement of its operation and work force. "We created a process improvement department to thoroughly analyze our processes, organize the data and put it into a central database. We used that information to improve our operations," Ciavarella says. Continuous review of internal operations allows the com-

pany to adjust to changing market conditions and customer needs.

Since mid-2007, the company implemented production process improvement initiatives in the form of a workplace organization and standardization program. "We have been working with Schenck Process and work flow consultants to analyze and remodel our facility to perform better," he says. These improvements are being implemented worldwide, he explains, to create a company based on optimal efficiency—the very concept the company strives to fulfill with its equipment for customers.

The 5S system asserts the need for organization in the workplace to improve safety, efficiency and quality. 5S supports the method of one-piece flow, establishing an efficient arrangement of the workplace. »

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» “Creating one-piece flow has been a key activity of ours,” Ciavarella says. “By implementing this, we’ve dramatically reduced our assembly time on each project by 33 percent. Even though our equipment is custom-engineered, a standardization of the assembly process improves overall flow efficiency. The staging of parts and tools in designated work areas eliminates time spent locating and transporting items from previously centralized locations. Forming work teams allows for organized assembly processes and the implementation of overlap time as multiple teams can work in tandem on the same project. This has reduced throughput on the assembly floor by 60 percent.”

As a “strong believer in continuous improvement,” Stock Equipment has ongoing training programs to maintain the effectiveness of the one-piece flow assembly process, he notes. Also, regular conferences and process audits with the Schenck Process Production System Team

ensure continuous improvements through the interchange of ideas in a worldwide network.

STOCKING UP

Growth is a primary focus at Stock Equipment, and through market diversification, product development and enhanced customer service, the firm is confident about its future. However, with the current state of the power generation industry and economy, it will be challenging.

“More than 70 percent of our business comes from the electric utility industry, and regulatory uncertainties are really driving our customers in how they approach their business,” Ciavarella explains. “They are not certain about what they will have to do, so they’re not sure how to invest in their operations.”

Although Stock Equipment also must share in its customers’ uncertainty, the company is using its relationship with Schenck Process Group to keep its business strong.

“Schenck Process has market presence in several substantial industries worldwide with its material handling products and services,” he says. “Regardless of the material, they have the technology for weighing, feeding, screening and automation. We utilize the expertise of Schenck Process to penetrate new markets, such as mining and transportation. We are expanding our market scope and product scope to gain new business.”

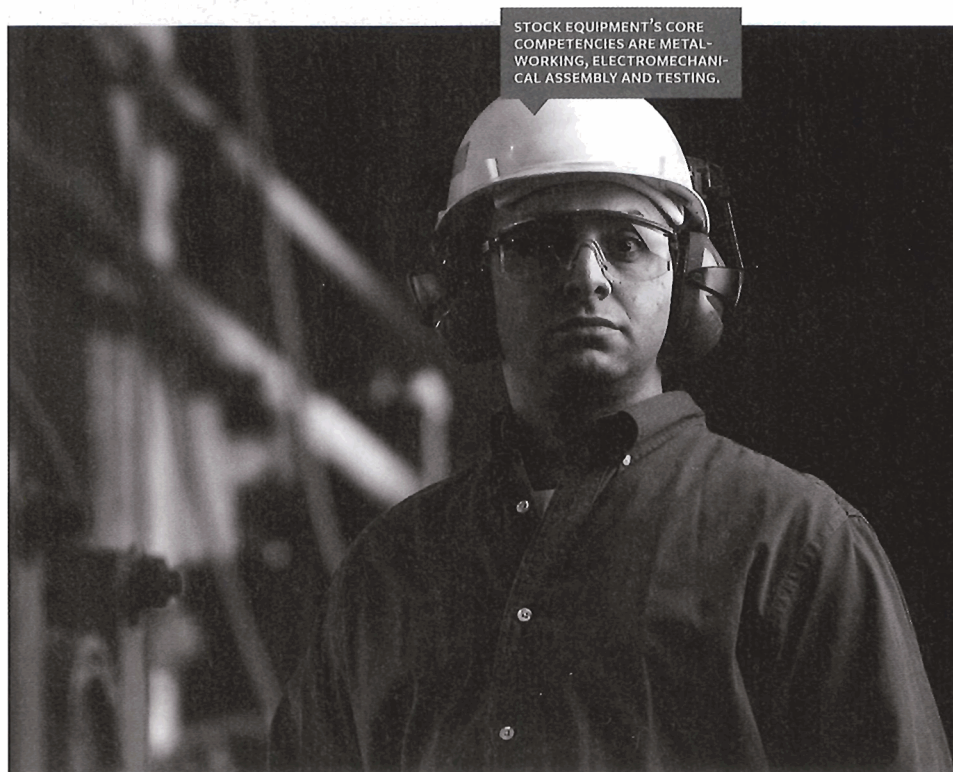
For example, with a foundation of technical knowledge from Schenck Process, Stock Equipment can provide technology to screen solid materials in the mining industry. In the transportation market, it is developing technologically advanced railcar-weighing products for railroads.

The company also has completed acquisitions that will expand its capabilities, he notes. One in particular, Fairfield Engineering Parts Co., has provided Stock Equipment with the ability to offer complete biomass handling systems. The aforementioned transition to biomass fuel to meet government regulations is a prime opportunity for the company to unveil its new capabilities in biomass fuel handling.

Ciavarella reiterates that current market conditions show the importance of customer service, which will drive key growth opportunities. “It’s hard to get permits to build new power plants right now,” he says. “Our technology helps ensure the current plants are operating to the maximum extent possible.”

He adds that service is central to the general culture of Stock. “This is a very unique company – it’s much bigger than when it started, but it still has a family feel.

“We have many long-term employees and families who have had multiple generations work here,” he notes. “This gives us a unique focus on service and customers that other firms don’t have.” **mt**



STOCK EQUIPMENT'S CORE COMPETENCIES ARE METALWORKING, ELECTROMECHANICAL ASSEMBLY AND TESTING.