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www.superradiatorcoils.com / 2008 sales: \$76 million / Mfg. sites: Arizona, Minnesota and Virginia / Employees: 350
 Products: Heat exchangers / Jon Holt, CEO: "Really, the key to quality is getting the design right in the first place."

‘COIL DOCTORS’

SUPER RADIATOR COILS SAYS SUPERIOR ENGINEERING AND SERVICE HELPS IT MEET CUSTOMERS’ HEAT TRANSFER NEEDS. BY **STACI DAVIDSON**



In addition to six certifications from the American Society of Mechanical Engineers and a certification that it meets the safety code of Underwriter’s Laboratories, Super Radiator Coils has been recognized for meeting the safety qualifications of Intertek-ETL Semko, which is a worldwide independent safety, benchmark and performance tester and inspector.

Not that the manufacturer of heat exchangers and heat transfer tube allows these certifications (and many others) to be the lone example of its dedication to quality. The company continually reinvests in research, technical knowledge and tooling at its three facilities in Arizona, Minnesota and Virginia, and continuously strives to develop new designs and methods in heat transfer technology to enhance coil performance and durability, CEO Jon Holt says.

Recently, Jon Holt and his son, President Rob Holt, spoke with *Manufacturing Today* about the company’s capabilities and how it meets the needs of customers from a range of industries and geographic markets.

Manufacturing Today: How do you maintain quality in your operations?

Jon Holt: We have application libraries going back to 1928, and they are filled with previous solutions for thermodynamics products. These libraries really help us guarantee the performance customers require. We also have a thorough inspection process.

We are in a niche – we don’t make finished goods; everything we make is for a specific application for our customers. The key to quality is getting the design right in the first place.

SUPER RADIATOR COILS



ROB HOLT AND RAY BIRK, VICE PRESIDENT AND GENERAL MANAGER, INSPECT COPPER COILS AT THE COMPANY'S VIRGINIA FACILITY.

» **MT:** Any recent innovations?

Rob Holt: We are developing something new everyday, always trying to find a new solution for a specific client or something we foresee possibly being an issue. We just finished a project for IBM. In one of their customer's computer rooms, they had some cooling cabinets that stored servers and other equipment at a low temperature. With IBM's help, we attached a coil to the box that stores the server – this cooled just the cabinetry, not the entire computer room. They were pleased because we saved them a lot of money by reducing the energy needed to cool this equipment. Also, the coil acted like a piece of furniture and the customer liked the aesthetics we developed.

JH: We did a project for the New York transit system's subway cars. The coils on those trains are subject to very harsh environments, so we developed an extremely sturdy product for them. We also worked with the South Korean government on a wind

tunnel to test jet engines. The tunnel had extremely high humidity and needed coils that would lower the temperature in the tunnel, but also withstand the humid conditions.

MT: How do you work with customers to ensure their needs are met?

RH: We pride ourselves on our customer service. Most of our customers come through word of mouth. We start by discussing their needs and then go over the design with them. We go back and forth on the design until we are both sure their needs will be met. We prototype the product and review it with them again. We manufacture everything to order and guarantee just-in-time shipping. Finally, we drop ship the products directly to their location.

MT: How do you manage costs?

JH: We develop products that solve our customers' thermodynamic problems in the most affordable way possible. We keep costs down by

reducing material weights and reducing the amount of labor used. We have three facilities in the United States that are strategically located to serve a national list of clients but still keep our shipping costs down.

MT: How are you improving?

RH: We doubled the size of our Phoenix facility to accommodate a new product line of Custom Air Coolers, which we started four years ago. These products are used in the power and petrochemical industries, primarily to provide a secondary cooling source or to cool fluids.

We've also installed a carbon adsorption system to reclaim solvent fumes in our coil-cleaning process. This process helps remove residual oils from our products and materials. This helps us reduce our manufacturing costs while being clean and green. It also reduces scrap, thereby getting the most from our materials.

We have a very clean operation. In our testing facility, we use water that has gone through a reverse osmosis system. This is chemical-free, makes the coils clean and doesn't introduce anything harmful to the coils.

MT: What are your plans for growth?

RH: We will continue to find new products or technology that are an extension of our thermodynamics expertise. For example, we have new fin designs and patterns that will improve efficiency for our customers.

There is really no challenge we will turn down in thermodynamics and coil production. People consider us to be the "coil doctors" because we adapt our products and solutions for different applications through engineering and service.

In fact, some competitors will come to us for engineering solutions they can't handle. By staying in our niche and remaining flexible in responding to customers, we will continue to be a leader in this market. **mt**