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www.excelsiorhvac.com / HQ: Melrose Park, Ill. / Employees: 100+ / Products: Sheet metal manufacturing and HVAC distribution
 Denis Marino, president: "We have a solid brand name built on a long history of quality products and customer service."

LONG-LASTING SUCCESS

SUBURBAN CHICAGO-BASED EXCELSIOR HAS BEEN AN HVAC AND SHEET METAL MANUFACTURING LEADER FOR MORE THAN 125 YEARS.



FROM ITS MANUFACTURING FACILITIES, EXCELSIOR MAKES PRODUCTS FOR HVAC SYSTEMS.

Since its founding in the late 1800s, Excelsior has consistently offered high-quality sheet metal products to the HVAC market, President Denis Marino says. "You could pick up a catalog of our manufactured products, even from the 1920s, and some of the products do not look any different," Marino states.

"The manufacturing processes have changed, but the products have remained the same. We have a long history, a solid brand name, and our name has been out there from the very beginning."

Founded in Chicago, Excelsior got its start making sheet metal compo-

nents and heating products for residential application. Marino says the company later expanded into the Twin Cities and, shortly thereafter, other locations in Illinois, Kansas and Indiana.

As the residential HVAC market began to emerge in the 1950s and 1960s, Excelsior started focusing on two core areas – manufacturing and HVAC distribution, Marino says. Growth in the residential new construction sectors brought the company big success.

In May 2008, Excelsior was acquired by Temperature Equipment Corporation, one of the country's largest independently owned HVAC

distributor and the exclusive distributor for Carrier Corp. products serving the Chicago market.

For more than 70 years, TEC has been providing Carrier equipment, controls, parts and supplies for residential, commercial and industrial applications throughout Chicago and the surrounding areas. TEC is the third-oldest independent distributor of all Carrier brands, including Bryant, Payne and Racan.

The two companies remain independent and operate separately. "Excelsior provides an excellent opportunity for growth into multiple states," Marino said at the time of the acquisition.





EXCELSIOR'S PRODUCTS HAVE REMAINED MOSTLY THE SAME OVER THE YEARS, THE COMPANY SAYS.

EXCELSIOR LOCATIONS

- > Melrose Park, Ill.
- > Itasca, Ill.
- > Joliet, Ill.
- > North Aurora, Ill.
- > Elgin, Ill.
- > Hobart, Ind.
- > Blaine, Minn.
- > Plymouth, Minn.
- > Lenexa, Kan.
- > Brookfield, Mo.

» “Like TEC, Excelsior is a seasoned, independent company with a long history of excellent customer service,” he added. “It’s a great fit.”

SIMPLE SUCCESS

Marino says the company’s longevity can be attributed to two factors — good products and excellent customer service. “We watch the quality of the material and processes very carefully,” he adds. “We have very good suppliers and excellent relationships with them, and they sell us high-quality material.”

One of Excelsior’s greatest advantages is its locking ductwork components, Marino says. “Years ago, the company was able to develop a system which seals our duct products when installed,” he explains. “The connection is superior to anyone else’s. This represents an advantage to Excelsior customers, and we call it the ‘Excelsior Edge.’”

Excelsior metal products go through extensive sampling and inspection at

the plant to assure the integrity of the seal, he adds.

Excelsior’s sheet metal elbows also provide an advantage because they are flexible and of high quality. “Other elbows offered in the market might not have the ability to be easily installed into the right position,” Marino says.

“Most of the customers we’ve talked to ... prefer our metal,” he states. “As for quality image and type of metal, we’re definitely a leader.”

Excelsior’s customer service also beats the competition, Marino says, adding that the attention it gives to customers help it in the long run. Job-site delivery with the company’s truck fleet also makes Excelsior a customer favorite.

STAYING AMBITIOUS

Much of Excelsior’s business has been derived from the residential new construction market, and it’s no secret that new construction has entered into a slump. “The credit

crunch has hurt our market because home construction is down,” Marino says, so the company is finding ways to expand its reach and branch out to different markets. For instance, Excelsior is increasing its focus towards contractors who are serving the residential add-on and replacement market.

As part of the recent acquisition, Excelsior has become the new distributor of the Day & Night heating and cooling line from International Comfort Products, which is a member of the U.S. government’s Energy Star Program. Geared to homeowners, the line offers air conditioners, heat pumps and gas furnaces.

A focus on the future also has kept Excelsior busy. “We’re looking at the layout of the plant and how to enhance our employees’ skills,” Marino says. As a manufacturer, it’s important to improve a product’s flow through the plant.

“It’s not always what we do, it’s usually how we do it,” he says. “Since the products remain basically the same over many years, the focus remains consistently on quality and efficiency.

EARNEST EMPLOYEES

Excelsior has low worker turnover, so new employee training is usually conducted on the job. Formal sessions aren’t always necessary since new hires go through apprenticeships.

Marino says its employees are a competitive advantage and a very

important part of Excelsior's success. Jack Forbes, general manager of manufacturing operations, is a major asset to Excelsior, Marino explains. Forbes is a hands-on leader with a strong passion for quality and process improvement. He works out of the company's Brookfield, Mo., site and has strong ties to the local community.

Marino adds the Midwest location of Excelsior sites may have a lot to do with its valuable employees. "[It's a] good work force, with a good work ethic," he says. "And strong Midwestern values."

TEMPERATURE EQUIPMENT CORP.

The company that acquired Excelsior is based in Lansing, Ill., and serves the Chicago area, Southwest Michigan and Northwest Indiana.

TEC bills itself as a one-stop shop for HVAC equipment, solutions, controls, parts and supplies.

"TEC is your high efficiency expert, with the highest efficiency equipment available in the industry," the company says. "Condensing units up to 21 SEER, furnaces up to 96.6 percent efficiency and rooftops with EER's of more than 11.

"In addition to its HVAC business, TEC Properties leases office and warehouse space to a variety of tenants," the company says. "TEC Properties leases about 2 million square feet of space with properties in the Illinois towns of Lansing, Melrose Park and Elgin."

In addition to TEC's Lansing operations, the company has locations in:

- >Chicago
- >Alsip, Ill.

- >Elgin, Ill.
- >Elk Grove Village, Ill.
- >Joliet, Ill.
- >Libertyville, Ill.
- >Lyons, Ill.
- >Melrose Park, Ill.
- >Naperville, Ill.
- >Northfield, Ill.
- >Rockford, Ill.
- >South Bend, Ind.
- >Valparaiso, Ind.

The company also operates with the environment in mind.

In November, TEC reintroduced a popular product, its hourly analysis program, with more sustainable features to help properties earn LEED certification.

Additionally, four TEC employees in the company's HVAC division have taken the steps to become LEED certified. **mt**

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