

A-T Controls is a global leader in the design, manufacturing, and sale of manual and automated, highly engineered valve solutions for process industries. As they celebrate their 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, the company is still customer-focused and driven by what they need. Supplying products to virtually every industrial sector, A-T Controls is active in the oil & gas, refining, petrochemical, chemical processing, pulp & paper, mining, water & wastewater, transportation, food & beverage, pharmaceuticals, shipbuilding, HVAC and power industries.

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## A-T Controls Celebrates 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and plans for the future

**T**he company currently operates from its 122,000-square-foot headquarters in Cincinnati, Ohio and the newly expanded 85,000-square-foot facility in Stafford, Texas, and is supported by several sales offices throughout North America. *Valve World Americas* had the opportunity to meet with President and CEO, Brian Wright to discuss the company's milestone, their solutions-oriented sales structure and plans for the future.

A-T controls started their business in 1994 and provided automation, actuators and quarter-turn accessories. It was not until 1997 that the company started offering three-piece valves in

simple pre-sized, pre-engineered, pre-priced packages. It aimed to provide customers with simple, complete assemblies. From there the product lines expanded with the introduction of flanged valves, three-ways, stainless and carbon steel, sanitary, fire-safe and resilient seated and high-performance butterfly valves. Maintaining the goal of providing efficient and convenient packages, A-T Controls has served as a single point of contact for all their customers' needs. "We have as broad an offering in the quarter-turn valve and automation business as anyone. We are a one-stop-shop," explained Mr. Wright. "Customers can look to us for solutions for



“I think our longevity can be attributed to the immense breadth of products we offer, our loyalty to our distribution network and the consistency in our products,” revealed Wright.

“What you bought from us in 1994 is going to be the same as the one you buy next week. We do make updates and revisions, but customers can have peace of mind knowing that our products are consistent and reliable.”

### Innovation

With customer needs in mind, A-T Controls is known for strong engineering and application expertise, and superior service in automated valves and day-to-day automation and controls. “We have a team of engineers that respond to specific customer issues because not every application is cookie-cutter. People come to us for solutions for abrasion, high-pressure, material compatibility or end connections that need to be customized,” explained Mr. Wright. “We are equipped to react quickly and efficiently to help when customers require applications assistance and we know that if we can solve a client’s difficult problems, they will know they can also come to us with the easy ones.”

butterfly and plug valves. The pneumatic rack and pinion, heavy-duty scotch yoke, and electric actuator offering allow the flexibility to accessorize with virtually any control requirements. The company’s wide line of products is complemented by a broad accessory line which includes Solenoid Valves, Filter Regulators, Limit Switches, Proximity Sensors, Positioners, Manual Overrides, and Customer Valve Mounting Hardware.

“We do everything from torque testing new products, cycle testing valves and actuators, material analysis and tests for endurance. We are very cognizant that we have to be on top of new regulations, different certification requirements and expectations in different countries,” shared Wright.

A-T Controls continues to develop and expand the product line based on customer requests and paying close attention to the latest developments and requirements to



Brian Wright, CEO of A-T Controls

about any quarter-turn application and we are not afraid of specials and modification requests.” Due to their broad product offering, A-T Controls can address many markets and spread out their exposure in most industries. This versatility has given the company greater opportunities to excel.

### Products made to last

A-T Controls offers complete automation services for quarter-turn valves, with the Triac brand actuators and accessories well-known within the industry as quality Quarter turn products. The company also manufactures precision mounting kits to automate other manufacturers’ ball,





meet their customers' needs, as well as making investments to obtain all necessary certifications.

"We listen to our distributors and our end users. When they tell us 'we love this product, but we need it in a new material, or you need to consider new pressures or a different design' we just listen and then we prioritize. We listen and we try to make the most frequently requested products bubble up to the top. It is a several-year process in many cases to bring these things forward to the market because it has to be good, it has to perform and it has to be deliverable," he said.

The company relies on its distribution network and manufacturer representatives across the globe to sell and service its wide product range and has established a Distributor Council that meets annually to relay feedback from customers regard-

ing new product ideas, application needs, industry trends and more.

### A large inventory

Known for its extensive inventory and highly experienced staff, A-T Controls provides the customer solutions needed to fulfill most valve and actuator requirements, while offering a competitive price and fast turnaround.

"It is very important to ensure we are meeting project deadlines. In addition to our finished goods inventory, we stock components. It gives us the opportunity to convert product, whether it is changing ends from threaded to socket weld, or changing actuator seals, etc. We have vast flexibility because we have a modular system for components to change the valves to what the customer needs," said Mr. Wright. "We stock completely assembled and tested



ball valves, but we also stock v-ported ball valves that if the customers decided to convert that into a control valve, we can put a 60-degree v-ball in that same valve and now they would have a v-port valve."

### Going beyond expectations

A vast and varied inventory allows A-T Controls to provide products beyond general industry expectations. Efficiency is paramount to A-T Controls - from the organization of product packages to the layout and cleanliness of their facilities. Ensuring structure and systematic management leads to efficiency that benefits clients by providing fast and easy access to support, simplified product selection and speedy on-time delivery.

"Our company culture is about making things as easy as possible for our customers to do business with us. The more we do to make things easier for the customer and to accommodate their needs, the more likely they are to continue working with us in the future," he said.

### Continuous growth

A large leap in the company's product history was when they released their



Trunnion Mounted Ball Valve line, which includes 2"- 48" valves in ANSI Class 150-2500 RF and RTJ. The valves are available in cast and forged construction, and numerous alloys including A216WCB, A352 LCB/LCC, CF8m, CF3M, Duplex and WC6, and are suited for numerous applications. "Our goal is to continue offering these Trunnion valves and expand into higher pressures. One recent development would be the high purity offering. We have a BPE-compliant high purity ball valve that includes force and cast ball valves. We also added a group of valves specific to water to accommodate the NSF 61 specifications, which also includes butterfly valves," said Mr. Wright.

The updates and upgrades made to the Trunnion valve line happen for A-T Controls' customers. Wright continued, "We had customers from the pharmaceutical industry asking for additional products and to expand our line into the biopharmaceutical and other high purity markets. So that is what we did!"

### Research and development

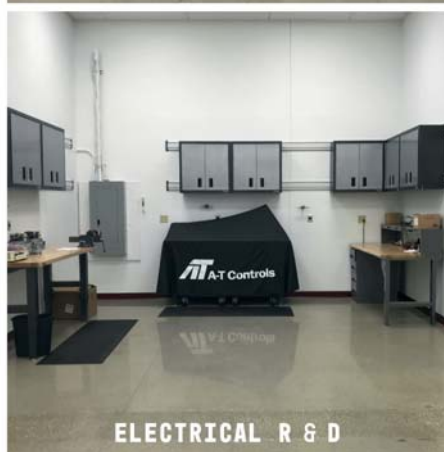
In the last two years, A-T Controls built a new research and development laboratory in Cincinnati and greatly has expanded its range of testing capabilities. At the new facility, they can do cold box testing to -100°F high-temperature testing, helium testing, torque testing, and PMI testing, among others. By adding these capabilities to their in-house testing, the company can stay current with product development and design. "Having the ability to do our testing in-house allows us to respond quickly and have control over the product. The customer knows they can count on us for a consistent quality product so that when



TORQUE TESTER



INSPECTION ROOM



ELECTRICAL R &amp; D



LOW TEMPERATURE TEST CHAMBER

they receive it, they do not have to worry whether it is going to perform properly. It also speaks to safety - if you have good quality products, you know you have a better opportunity to keep your plant and your workers safe," explained Wright.

### Looking forward

When looking back at the company's past, Brian Wright knows that one of their most successful tasks has been paying attention to their customers' needs. "We listen

to what they want, and we make product modifications and create new products to meet their needs. We have been doing that from the very beginning, and we are going to continue to do that for them in the future," Wright related.

As the company celebrates its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary, Wright is already looking forward to the next 25 years. "We are currently looking at some exciting global opportunities for the company as we expand our product lines," he said. Through organic growth, strategic acquisitions and continuing to broaden the product offerings, the company is exploring ways to support other industries.

"It is important for our business to maintain exposure across the board and ensure that we can provide solutions throughout all the different process industries. The expansion of our facilities and building our research and development center were important steps in being able to offer a greater local inventory to support the Gulf Coast region and ensure we can act quickly to supply to our customers," Mr. Wright said. "We are also going to continue to grow with our customers with the introduction of new products in the next several months which will broaden our offering even further but also speak to some new markets as well."

