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Pa-Ted Spring Co. looking to expand

New manager/ownership team heading into first year at helm

Special to The Bristol Press

BRISTOL — On Aug. 11 of last year, four managers of the Pa-Ted Spring Co. realized the Great American Dream of employee ownership when they acquired the 59-year-old manufacturer of customized metal springs, wire formings and small precision metal stampings.

"The past eight months have been full of exciting challenges and gratifying results," said Ken Dayton, the chief executive officer for the producer of components of sub-assemblies and end products for diverse industries, including automotive, medical devices, hand tools, appliances and electric and electronic items.

"When you own the company, its success becomes very personal!"

Ken Dayton
COO, Pa-Ted Spring Co.

Dayton of Bristol joined with Dominic Rovero of Torrington, Erik Tedesco of Bristol and Scott Close of Plainville to become the owners of the Vincent Kelly Road business.

"Our first task was to assure our valued customers, vendors and employees that Pa-Ted remains a solid company that is well-capitalized for financial security and future growth and that our buyout was not done on a shoestring," Dayton noted.

In fact, the new management team hit the ground running on several fronts, he said. They purchased a new CNC torsion spring forming machine that has replaced old, less efficient equipment.

Rovero, the chief operating officer, reported that additional equipment upgrades are planned that are expected to further advance customer turnaround time, reduce unit costs and preserve the company's long-standing policy of continuous quality improvement.

Major enhancements to Pa-Ted's in-house computer system also are under way, as the new Enterprise Resources System is being integrated with existing electronic filing systems to produce a nearly paperless office environment.

The management buyout has been good for the workforce as well, they said. While there was some reduction in employment initially in order to "right size" certain operations, Pa-Ted now is looking to expand, according to Close, chief financial officer.

Randall Mortzfield/The Bristol Press
Pa-Ted Spring Co. headquarters on Vincent Kelly Road, Bristol

The company closed its El Paso, Texas manufacturing facility about a year ago and has moved that production activity into the Bristol headquarters. New hires in recent months have included a purchasing manager, IT manager, customer-service person and a direct sales representative. A new estimator has been promoted and trained from within the organization.

The company also has promoted a number of production and quality assurance people from line to supervisory positions over the past several months. "We are constantly on the lookout for good people and are especially eager to promote from within our organization," reported Close.

Pa-Ted management is determined to grow the business beyond its existing sales base. The decision was made recently to eliminate the company's independent Northeast rep organization and instead to develop new customer relationships directly.

"We have found that we can be far more attentive to our customers' needs in the Northeast states by working with their design engineers and purchasing managers directly, rather than through third parties," said Tedesco, the shareholder who heads the sales effort.

Pa-Ted also is expanding its new business development activities in the Midwest, Southwest and Northwestern U.S.

The 2005 management buyout of Pa-Ted Spring Co. has energized the entire organization. As Dayton puts it, "When you own the company, its suc-