

POWER PROTECTION PRODUCTS LOOKING TO ADD MORE ENERGY-EFFICIENT PROGRAMS, PRODUCTS

By Michelle Leach

In three years Power Protection Products has opened a new office in Des Moines, upgraded its Omaha headquarters and doubled its staff.

“Our growth comes primarily through educating our customer base,” said Brian Branigan. “The more they learn about power quality and energy efficiency, the better it is for our company.”

Educating customers on power quality is better for the company as the business, which operates out of the Scott Technology Center and specializes in providing products and services to enhance power reliability and optimize power performance.

Power Protection Products also offers Power Quality University, monthly seminars on various power quality topics, such as data center design and cooling and surge protection, that are held at the company’s offices in Omaha, Kansas City, and Des Moines.

A recent seminar in Omaha attracted 20 people, some traveling 300 miles.

“We have found that most people don’t understand basic electricity and how it works,” said Mark Cowart, business partner and manager. “When most people turn on a light switch they expect the lights to come on, but there’s a lot of little things that have to happen from the utility companies, from the poles all the way down to the little plug.”

Branigan said the Power Protection Products and PQU have always emphasized reliable, clean and efficient power. But now that there has been a greater demand for energy efficient products, the company is rolling out monthly seminars on environmentally friendly power called Camp Green.

Optimizing power in this way has changed the very face of the products they use and the way they do business, Branigan said.

“We are putting in what we call energy efficient transformers,” he said. “We’re in the process in industrial business of trading up more inefficient electric transformers with smaller, more efficient transformers.”

Cowart said the industry recently enacted a series of standards regarding efficient transformers, but Power Protection Products was offering these products since 2000.

“We always have been ahead of the curve,” Branigan said.

Power Protection Products is designing and managing a data center at the Peter Kiewit Institute.

“It houses one of the fastest super computers in the country and is the largest cluster of Dell servers available today.” Branigan said. “We did that last fall and worked on helping to supply the power, cooling and infrastructure for the data center.”

The Holland Computer Center is built smart through a system of sensors that monitor temperatures and respond to fluctuations by ramping the cooling unit fan speeds up or down accordingly. The operating costs are reduced while cooling effectiveness is optimized.

Thirteen years ago, before “green” was the buzzword, Branigan, who has known Cowart since grade school, was climbing the corporate ladder and decided he wanted to get into business for himself.

“One way I thought we could get into technology was through power and that led me to what we now call Power Protection Products,” he said. “We started by selling surge protection and backup power.”

Power Protection Products

Address: 6825 Pine St. Omaha 68106

Phone: 393-1223

Founded: 1995

Employees: 25 (all offices)

Services: manufacturer’s representative specializing in products and services to enhance power reliability, optimization and energy efficiency; provides educational seminars on power quality

Goals: roll out Camp Green, a power quality seminar that focuses on enhancing energy-efficiency

Industry outlook: Companies will continue to place an emphasis on uninterrupted power and environmentally friendly power products and services

Web site: www.p3-inc.com

“The joke around here was we thought electricity was going to be big someday and so we thought we would get into it.”

Branigan said at the time the informational age was being compared to the Gold Rush of the 1800’s, and everyone was clambering for a bit of the seemingly boundless technology profits.

“I learned about somebody that made a lot of money in the 1800’s and didn’t mine for gold,” Branigan said. “He sold blue jeans to miners and his name was Levi Strauss.

“I started thinking what are the blue jeans to this information age or this Gold Rush into technology, and that’s what led me to power and backup power.”

Since that time the company has added two offices and outgrown its offices in Omaha and Kansas City. It has also assisted a range of clients – from data centers and large factories, to hospitals and hog operations.

“With the proliferation of electric equipment from the data center to the hog farm, power has really become a very critical issue,” Cowart said. “Not only does power have to be clean and uninterrupted, everybody wants to be more green and save a little electricity if possible.”

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