

COMPANY PROFILE ///

SUPER SYSTEMS INCORPORATED

APPLYING ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY TO THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS

An SSI customer does a furnace uniformity survey using the SSI SDS 8020 survey box.
(Courtesy: Super Systems)

Since it opened its doors in 1995, Super Systems Incorporated has worked to make heat treaters more efficient using today's technology.

By **KENNETH CARTER**, Thermal Processing editor

It might be a cliché, but the path to a successful business can often be summed up in six words: Be good at what you know.

For Super Systems Incorporated, that expertise is evident in how it has become a prime player in thermal processing.

"With our specific focus on the heat-treat industry only, it allows us a great deal of strength and expertise in that area for the technology we provide," said Stephen Thompson, president of Super Systems.

By focusing only on the thermal processing market, which includes heat treat, atmosphere, vacuum, nitriding, and ferritic nitrocarburizing, Super Systems is able to offer its customers consistent quality products and services, according to Thompson.

Super Systems Inc. (SSI) was established in 1995 as a supplier to the thermal processing industry with a focus on sensor and control technology for protective atmospheres. The company was founded by Bill Thompson, who has a long history of servicing the heat-treating industry. Today, under the direction of Stephen Thompson, SSI provides a wide variety of products and services for the industry worldwide.

"Something unique to us is we only sell to the heat-treat market, and with this focus, we provide more solutions to the same customers, building our relationships, which are key in the growth of our company," Thompson said. "It's not just one sale; it's a beginning of a long-term relationship."

SSI's philosophy for innovation and customer service is simple: *They listen*. According to Thompson, whether they are serving a customer who needs technology to maximize efficiency and deliver the highest quality services, or investing back into their Research & Development (R&D) team and challenging them to deliver innovative technology to the heat-treating industry, customer focus and innovation have always set them apart.

"Many of our customers believe our products have provided them with a foundation for intelligent heat treating, gaining and maintaining the competitive edge they need," he said.

ISO9000 ACCREDITATION

"We are focused on our quality systems, which has allowed us structured growth in the organization," Thompson said. "We use the quality standards to provide a foundation for continuous improvement in all areas of our business."

SSI's products include probes, controllers, software, analyzers, gas flow meters, and installation and engineering services covering all facets of heat treating. Super Systems is ISO 9001:2015 certified and ISO/IEC 17025 certified for the calibration of dew point, infrared analyzers, and temperature instrumentation. SSI participates in many industry forums as well, such as ASM Heat Treating Society, AMEC and Nadcap, and the company is a proud member of the Metal Treating Institute and IHEA, according to Thompson.

TECHNOLOGY AND SOFTWARE

"As a technology company, we develop software for multiple appli-

cations focusing on productivity, repeatability, and quality. Almost all of our products are complemented with software providing ease of use and accessibility," Thompson said. "From configuration tools, backup utilities, mobile applications, and complete SCADA system, our software provides tools to enable heat treaters to do their jobs better and more efficiently."

Data provides access to many key performance indicators that can be critical to the shop floor operating efficiently, according to Thompson.

"A heat-treat shop or department can easily capture 1 million data points in a day, and that data can be used to show compliance and, better yet, provide valuable information looking forward," he said. "Both maintenance and operations can really see how to create efficiencies, predict compliance, and anticipate downtime with predictive maintenance."

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Having the ability to see the operational efficiency of the equipment and staff helps in making better decisions on capital investments, training, and maintenance, according to Thompson.

SSI develops hardware with methodical process and procedures. It focuses on a good user experience, producing a technically sound product that addresses a specific need in the industry.

"Our instrumentation and controllers are built around addressing a customer need," Thompson said. "This could be addressing an industry standard, a unique application that involves algorithms not readily available from other products, and most importantly, something that customers find valuable."

CUSTOMER SATISFACTION

But you can't have great products without treating customers right from the get go.

"We have established a worldwide footprint that gives us an opportunity to support heat treaters around the globe," Thompson said. "Our team takes a lot of pride in helping heat treaters with everyday problems. Sometimes those problems are future investments in technology to address controls or SCADA, and sometimes those questions are customers looking for support on metallurgical results they have been getting. We have a team to address the customer needs."



A variety of SSi products.
(Courtesy: Super Systems)

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With thousands of furnaces and ovens using SSi products, it is important to have a sound process in place for getting resolution, according to Thompson. SSi has a support system in place that tracks incoming support calls with an escalation process to address potentially critical issues.

“Our engineering team has a methodical approach to ensuring our systems are supportable by all our staff,” he said. “With updated electrical drawings, well documented code with strict standards, we can easily support our install base both onsite and remotely.”

The end goal is the ability to provide the necessary support a customer needs.

In addition to Super Systems’ global footprint, Thompson is quick to point out the company’s excellent worker retention.

“We are proud of our team and the years of service accumulated,” he said.

THE FUTURE OF SUPER SYSTEMS

From a glance at the past to an eye on the future, as Super Systems enters the next phase of what’s cooking in the heat-treat industry, Thompson has a few prognostications as he looks into his crystal ball.

“Future demands for us will remain the same, innovating products to meet and exceed our customers’ expectations,” he said. “Automation, big data, and tighter heat-treat tolerances are all areas that we will integrate into our products. With a market place that will see changes in our future, we will continue to lead the technology trends in industry and plan on continue to work with commercial and captive heat treaters worldwide in delivering quality heat-treated products.”



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