

Q&A /// INTERVIEW WITH AN INDUSTRY INSIDER



PETER CAINE /// DIRECTOR OF CUSTOM PRODUCTS /// HEATTEK

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What is your role with HeatTek and what’s a typical week like?

My position at HeatTek is director of Custom Products. Our custom products division handles all of our furnace applications as well as our unique applications that are often focused on certain major markets including automotive, aerospace, the aluminum industry, and the foundry industry. Those four industries get us into many different projects, but a typical day at HeatTek for me revolves around managing our current projects that are in-house with our dedicated team of application and design engineers, and managing new and incoming projects through our applications engineering group. My part of that is filtering what projects we quote helping us focus on the industries in which we want to concentrate. And then from a marketing standpoint, we’re involved in our marketing pretty much daily, generating new business leads through our digital partnerships, website, and social media.

What products does HeatTek offer the heat-treat industry?

Within the automotive, aerospace, aluminum, and foundry industries, we offer ovens and furnaces in temperature ranges up to 2,000 degrees Fahrenheit, which is really where we top out. We also get into some atmosphere environments, primarily in nitrogen or hydrogen atmospheres, but the lower-temp furnace applications are what we are best at. Our projects in general can be in the half-million-dollar range and easily over a million-dollar range.

HeatTek recently opened an additional facility in Ixonia, Wisconsin. What role will this facility play in HeatTek’s future?

As we grow and increase our yearly revenue, it’s going to require more personnel for one thing. We no longer can produce enough out of the single location. Our newest addition, which we’re now calling Plant Two in Ixonia, will be primarily for logistics and some manufacturing potentially in the future, but primarily management of incoming and outgoing materials and warehousing — all to optimize our manufacturing efficiency.

HeatTek also recently acquired another plant. What is its purpose and why did HeatTek feel the need to add it?

HeatTek’s third plant is located in Milwaukee. We acquired this location solely because of the additional manufacturing space required

for the large systems that we build. This is a building twice the size of our current location with multiple phases of manufacturing and is suited very well for the largest machines we build, as well as multiples of those machines being built at one time.

Where do you see the heat-treat industry in the next decade and HeatTek’s place in that future?

Our place in the industry today is serving the low-end temperature range of the heat-treating market. With the current logistics issues



and shipping challenges, the heat treat industry here in the United States will be as strong as ever, and building those products we need domestically will be increasingly more important. And the integration of automation into that manufacturing is what HeatTek will have a part in. It’s going to be a growing market for us at HeatTek because of that.

Anything you’d like to add that we didn’t talk about?

We’re in a significant growth period at HeatTek and have made a commitment to serve some of the world’s most critical industries, many of which have high manufacturing demands. This is part of the reason for our recent expansion. We’ve also just reached 22 years of being in business, which is a milestone that is worth celebrating as we look back on everything HeatTek has accomplished for our customers during that time. 🍷

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