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Above the Rest

Repeat business and steady growth contribute to North American Industries' leading position

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What does it take to become a great business?

North American Industries



PROFILE

North American Industries

www.naicranes.com

Headquarters Woburn, Mass.

Products Overhead lifting systems

Tom Ullian, CEO "We can handle it all in one-stop shopping."

North American Industries specializes in bridge cranes, gantry cranes, monorails, jib cranes and custom systems.

ABOVE THE REST

Repeat business and steady growth contribute to North American Industries' leading position. The company is poised for continued success.

by **Hanna Aronovich**

Being a fully integrated manufacturer allows North American Industries to develop customized overhead lifting systems at the best quality for the best price, CEO Tom Ullian states. This enables the customer to purchase a lifting solution which is more efficient and cost effective. Headquartered in Woburn, Mass., North American Industries boasts worldwide sales, and provides services and repairs to customers nationwide.

The company's product line includes bridge cranes, gantry cranes, monorails, jib cranes and custom-engineered systems

with capacities up to 150 tons and spans up to 150 feet.

One of the main challenges North American Industries faces is dealing with local competition primarily from smaller players. "We sell to customers across the country, so we have to provide a higher level of products and services than the local manufacturers can provide," Ullian explains.

"One way we do that is partnering with our customers early in the process to understand their needs and provide a high level of support," he adds. "Repeat customers make up a big part of our business, so I think we're doing something right."

North American Industries not only part-

ners with customers but will work with their builders, architects and engineers early in the process; North American Industries often helps them with their building or process designs.

North American Industries says that getting involved in the beginning stages gives it a competitive edge because it has the engineering expertise to handle obstacles that might arise.

For every job, North American Industries assigns a project manager to serve as the liaison between the customer and the company. Having a single contact allows customers to get information on the status of their order quickly and efficiently.

"Whether the customer has an engineering question or a production concern, the same person at North American Industries is their advocate," Ullian explains. "This approach works for us and the customer – keeping us all informed on our progress."

More than 50 percent of its business is from repeat customers, and North American Industries strives to give its

customers reason to come back. Because of its early involvement on projects, the company is able to make suggestions so the customer's material-handling equipment is the most efficient possible.

"Another benefit that we provide is that we're a fully integrated manufacturer," President Jay Levenson says. "We do our own selling, designing, manufacturing and installing. That means we don't rely on others to get things done, so we have more control over a project. We can work through issues quickly and efficiently."

North American Industries offers crane repair, maintenance and inspections to continue servicing its customers after the equipment is delivered. "We can handle it all in one-stop shopping," Ullian states.

To continue its quest for improvement, North American Industries is in the process of reconfiguring its plant layout to improve flow and create more space. Levenson says quality improvements are an ongoing process.


Manufacturing excellence is critical because North American Industries cus-

tomizes its cranes and lift equipment to meet its customers' specific guidelines. "The applications fall into general categories, but we provide various levels of customization," Levenson says. "We go after highly customized cranes for very specialized applications. Because of our design capabilities, we can handle those complex jobs."

Typical lead time is two to three months, and Ullian says repeat customers know that customized equipment does not mean more expensive equipment.

"Because we get involved early and work closely with our customers, we can design equipment to meet specific challenges and actually save them money in the long run," he says.

North American Industries has enjoyed "tremendous growth" in the last few years, Ullian notes. In addition to double-digit growth, the company was elected by its peers into the Crane Manufacturers Association of America.

The group has high standards to induct new members and Ullian says it was an honor to be voted in. 



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