



## Customer Highlight **EAGLE** TECHNOLOGIES GROUP A HANSON COMPANY

Secant Account Manager Jennifer McGeath says she is always inspired when she meets with Dan Hanson, president of [Eagle Technologies Group](#). Dan has a unique intellect, big-picture insight and entrepreneurial savvy. It's not just what he has to say about business, but what he has accomplished through "practicing what he preaches".

Eagle Technologies Group—A Hanson Company, located in Bridgman, was founded in 1953 as Weldun Tool & Die Company, a "fix-it" shop serving four or five manufacturing clients. Today, they design and build automated assembly and test systems for a global market in a wide range of industries including automotive, pharmaceutical and healthcare, food processing, consumer products, green energy and the military.

Technology has played a major role in the companies' success. In 1979, designs were done with a dozen workers on a drafting board. What once required a hundred skilled employees can now be done by 3 or 4 on a computer, reducing project time from a year to mere weeks.

But new technology was not the key to success. The key was finding ways to incorporate that emerging technology into the products and services customer needed. Listening to what the customer has to say and monitoring how they are doing has been a key business indicator for Eagle. Dan says, "If you have sick customers, your business cannot be well. Current customers are our biggest indicator. We always attempt to understand their forecasts of business."

According to Dan, "It's all about relationships", attributing the company's success to building strong relationships not only with customers but vendors as well. Technology has contributed to improvement of both the speed and quality of the parts and materials received from suppliers and greatly improved communication.

Dan points to the nine-year business relationship with Secant. Because Secant understands his needs, he values the opportunities Secant has provided to improve business processes and prepare for whatever comes next.

Dan says "We always are looking for opportunities. Leading edge technology is what we do for a living... We built some of the first power steering, followed by some of the first ABS braking, automotive air bags, etc. Today all those technologies are standard on cars. High volume (plus, customer desire) allowed them to become standard items."

So what is on the horizon for Eagle? "Today's "electives", which we currently are working on, include hybrid products (battery, motor, etc). Will these things become standard in the future? Only time (and customer desire) will tell." Dan adds, "Emerging technologies can start out low-volume but often turn high-volume." Dan credits Eagle employees as the reason their company has been able to recognize potential opportunities and put it to work.

When asked what businesses he looked to as role models, he replied, "I know I'm a news junky, so following trends of what companies are doing comes easy. I guess I'm most interested in what didn't work (for companies). The recent recession, has given me plenty of reading." He says he has several customers, with whom he is very impressed—some automotive clients have retained their skill sets and others have not. He says, "Those that have, understand what it takes for them to be successful." Dan also points to some customers who are breaking the mold or leading the charge in their respective markets. He says, "Those things are admirable."

Finally, we asked Dan what kept him energized and excited to go into the office each morning? He says, "We get to see some of the newest technology, both from our customers, as well as in the things we create—it's the toolmaker in me."