

Spring 2000

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THE CHAMPION CHRONICLE

Welcome to the first issue of The Champion Chronicle, a quarterly newsletter designed to keep our customers and colleagues connected to the latest information and innovations within our company...and the many industries who utilize our underground cable handling equipment.

Harnessing the Power™ since 1897

As many of you are aware, OK Champion Corporation's longevity in the manufacturing business dates back to 1897 when Otto Knoerzer designed and manufactured equipment for the agricultural industry. What started as the Champion Potato Machinery Co. quickly earned a strong and solid reputation for developing ingenious equipment of quality, tenacious durability, and speed for industries other than agricultural.

From the development of sewer cleaners for cities and other municipalities in the early 1900s to presenting the first hydraulic conduit cleaner in 1965 to cater to the underground needs of power and communications companies, OK Champion's tradition of developing products to solve problems remains the number one priority of the company today.

For innovative solutions to underground challenges, rely on the company that has been harnessing the power to perform since 1897 – OK Champion.

A New Focus for the New Millennium

In the four years since we last published a newsletter, there's been some exciting changes at OK Champion: changes that have enabled our company to grow and to work more efficiently to better respond to the needs of our customers.

In July of 1996, **Paul Knoerzer** was named president of OK Champion and, armed with the right people and a solid strategic plan, was confident that OK Champion could create and sustain the momentum necessary to successfully launch the company into the next millennium.

One focus of the business plan was to work on the geographic expansion of the company's sales. At the time, **Harvey Reed**, Vice President, Marketing and Sales, and Paul Knoerzer both concentrated their efforts on new business development. After July of 1996, the focus of the sales structure changed slightly. Harvey's focus continues to be on sales development and networking with companies throughout the US. Now, however, Harvey's efforts are supported by two other OK Champion individuals: **Bob Fausto** and **Gary Elliott**.

Bob Fausto, who currently handles Inside Sales, joined the OK Champion team in the early 1990s as an automotive painter and, later, worked in the assembly department.

Expressing an interest in assisting customers and fielding sales inquiries that come into the main office, Bob assumed his role as Inside Sales coordinator in the early part of 2000.

Gary Elliott, who spent 17 years on OK Champion's production side prior to joining the sales team, directly supports Harvey's outside sales efforts. In addition to generating new sales, Gary also focuses his efforts on end-user trouble shooting, training, and product demonstrations.



Members of the OK Champion sales team, Bob Fausto (top) and Gary Elliott, help increase sales and provide product support to the company's existing client base.



Other than our sales force, another way that OK Champion products are sold is via dealers who specialize in selling "utility" equipment, i.e., vehicles outfitted for special purposes. Currently, we use about 10 dealers who have 25 locations throughout the country.

We're currently working with our dealer base throughout North America, focusing on areas that are "slower" than others – specifically the western and southeast portions of the U.S. We've also made some business contacts in Mexico and overseas, in an effort for OK Champion products to gain global exposure. OK Champion also sees opportunities for greater exposure in trade publications and trade shows.

"As we continue to focus on the power and telecommunications markets we are anticipating the growth trend to continue and are positioned to respond to customers in these markets..."

"Due to our various sales efforts and, in large part, to the 'boom' in the telecommunications field, we've experienced a tremendous growth in sales during the past couple of years," said Paul Knoerzer. "As we continue to focus on the power and telecommunications markets, we are anticipating the growth trend to continue and are positioned to respond to customers in these markets as needs arise."

Take a New Look at *Our* New Look



OK Champion

As you've probably noticed, OK Champion's got a new look. We officially adopted a new corporate logo in the past two months, and you'll soon be seeing it on everything associated with our company – from brochures, specification sheets, and customer communication print materials to our truck fleets and equipment.

When asked about the decision to change the company's look, Paul Knoerzer commented, "The new corporate logo is all a part of our efforts to shift our marketing focus toward the future." Knoerzer expanded by

saying that, while OK Champion has enjoyed a reputation for being a "solid" and "traditional" company throughout its 103-year history, the people within the company view themselves and the products they manufacture as truly innovative, dynamic, and progressive.

"We wanted to convey to the marketplace how we view ourselves and our products," concluded Knoerzer. "What better way than to redevelop our logo – a company's most widely recognized identifier – as the means by which we convey our image?"

INTRODUCING THE CP2000

Easier Access to Tight Conduit Environments

OK Champion is pleased to introduce the CP2000 – a cable puller designed to provide easy and effective access to challenging conduit environments.

For example, in many larger metropolitan areas, a large amount of cable occupies the existing conduits, and there is no vacant space within the ducts to pull and/or place new cable. Also, some conduit environments make it difficult to guide the cable in and out, due to tough access conditions.

Externally, the location of the manholes and the configuration of the ducts make guiding a winch line through the underground conduit a task difficult to handle – even with the most sophisticated pulling and placing equipment.

In response to requests from various utility companies, OK Champion's CP2000 offers a winch mounted on a crane with a pulling frame – an equipment design that would provide easy access to difficult underground networks.

The company's engineers designed the unit, and utilized an outside engineering firm as well. The first prototype has been built and is now being tested in-house and in the field. We've made some minor adjustments and product refinements, and the unit will be available for customer demonstrations within the next month.

For more detail and specifications on the CP2000, contact Harvey Reed at (800) 431-9192.



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