

WARM EDGE

DIGEST

Employees, dealers & vendors—all family at Anlin

You might think that a window manufacturer that's acquired three fully automated Lisec I.G. lines in the last year puts more faith in its robots than its people. But if that's what you think, you would be wrong!

Anlin Industries of Clovis, California, near Fresno, is all about people. In performing its mission to consistently provide standard-setting high-performance windows, backed by service "second to none," Anlin has reinvented the concept of "family" to include vendors, dealers and a tight-knit team of employees who work - and play - hard together.

Roots of the Vidmar family window business

Tom Vidmar, Anlin President, purchased Moore Insulation Service, a company founded in the early fifties, which provided and installed products that improved a home's thermal efficiency. Operating throughout California, the company's products included ceiling and wall insulation, storm windows and replacement windows. "As an installation company," explains Tom's son, Eric, Anlin Vice President, "our Moore experience of dealing directly with builders and home owners ingrained that 'personal touch' ethic, which we live by today in our dealings with employees, dealers and vendors."

Eric Vidmar, fresh out of nearby Fresno State University, transferred from Moore in 1990, when Anlin Industries Corporation was created as a licensed PVC window fabricator for CertainTeed Corporation. In less than a decade, Anlin had become the fastest-growing CertainTeed manufacturer in the nation, covering California and two contiguous states. By 1999 Anlin had been awarded "Business of the Year" honors by the City of Clovis, the California State Assembly and by Congress. In 2000, Anlin was named US (SBA) "Small Business of the Year."

Build on performance: Anlin brand-building began in 2001

When Anlin's agreement with CertainTeed expired in 2001, the company launched its new and improved brand, Anlin Window Systems, a line of window and door products engineered specifically for California climates where low U-Values and Solar Heat Gain are equally important. "We felt we had an opportunity to build on our early success," says Vidmar, "by creating our own Anlin-branded, energy-enhanced products that would be thermally superior to other replacement windows. Anlin's proprietary glass package, which we

call INFINITE, is the key behind our branding program. It consists of what we believe to be the finest twin-coat Low-E glass, combined in a high-performance 3/4" system with the best NO-Metal spacer and optional Argon gas fill." Cardinal Glass provides the twin-coat silver INFINITE glass. Edgetech provides the Premium Super Spacer® in a custom design with platinum color to complete the INFINITE glazing system. Anlin's name for the spacer is Platinum Elite.

"When we combine the INFINITE glazing system with custom Mikron vinyl extrusions, Anlin windows deliver the lowest thermal numbers available in a dual-glazed window," states Eric. Anlin's average window unit U-Value is .30 (.26 with optional Argon fill). Anlin's SHGC is .27 (or as low as .19 with tinted Low-E glass).

Two value-added Anlin product lines, made under one roof

The company manufactures a high-end window and door line and a mid-range line. "Our glazing system is the most important selling point for both lines," states Vidmar. Anlin has capacity for 3,600 units per day on three lines in a single shift. 95% of all windows are replacement windows and 52% are sliders, the California market's configuration of choice. The company also made 800+ bay and bow windows in 2004, and over 20,000 sliding glass PVC doors. Grid options include 5/8" flat or sculptured internal grids, and 1" sculptured grids. Beveled glass is another aesthetic option. Anlin products feature Truth and Roto hardware.

All products are custom made and delivered to dealers on Anlin's 17 tractor-trailers. During the December-January seasonal slow-down, Anlin goes with a four-day work week.



Eric Vidmar stands surrounded by three Lisec automated I.G. lines that Anlin installed in 2004.

While recently added Lisec I.G. automation equipment has reduced glass department jobs by one-third, workers are cross-trained so they can be moved into other departments as needed. According to Vidmar, the family-owned enterprise has not laid off anyone in over 20 years.

"At Anlin, providing our employees with a quality working environment is important to us," says Eric. "The entire plant is climate-controlled and workers hardly even break a sweat."



Anlin's Clovis, CA, manufacturing plant and company headquarters

In early 2004, Anlin completed a 101,000 sq. ft. plant expansion, bringing its total plant and office space to 187,000 sq. ft., all under one roof. Anlin's plant expansion included a new 7,500 sq. ft. cafeteria that features a full-kitchen menu, dining room and satellite TV for the employees. Future plans call for another 187,000 sq. ft. of manufacturing.

Anlin employs 300+ people in its single shift manufacturing operation. Four full-time salesmen call on Anlin's dealers across the state. Eight full-time service representatives handle any issues directly with dealers and sometimes, with homeowners. "Our workers are all quality people and we treat them like family," says Eric. "Few choose to leave and many have other members of their immediate families working for Anlin."

Playing together, staying together

"We plan both regular get-togethers and special events throughout the year," says Eric. Employees have "family days" at a water park, video game arcade, monthly "safety" barbecues and fishing trips. Anlin also holds an annual Christmas Party that brings employees, dealers and vendors together to celebrate and win prizes.

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Anlin, continued from page one

Dealers happy to be Anlin family partners

Just as Anlin employees are far too happy to leave the family, apparently most dealers feel the same. Eric Vidmar cites almost 100% dealer retention over the last ten years. "Our philosophy is to put the dealers' and their customers' interests first," he explains. "We make sure we're number one in products and service. For example, it's an Anlin goal to have the best lead times in the industry." Standard delivery to dealers is three days. Vidmar notes, "25% of Anlin products are produced within 24 hours."

Anlin dealers enjoy territorial protection in the extremely competitive California market, as the company focuses on dealers' business growth, "rather than saturating the landscape with dealers." Factory phone lines are open 12-1/2 hours each day for dealers and homeowners. The Anlin website (www.anlin.com) is a "consumer information resource" for homeowners shopping for windows. According to Vidmar, a successful Anlin dealer is usually one that:

- Possesses a "value-added selling culture"
- Promotes the Anlin brand
- Supports Anlin with the majority of its product purchases
- Sells, furnishes and installs Anlin products with a strong commitment to professionalism and customer satisfaction
- Meets Anlin's dealer volume and growth goals

Marketing partners: Anlin and dealers

Vidmar observes, "It takes a lot of marketing to sell the high-end niche. That's why Anlin offers its dealers uncommon marketing support." The company provides free merchandising displays, product samples and cases for qualifying dealers. There is also a generous co-op advertising allowance based on accrued dealer purchases that leverages Anlin participation in newspaper, radio and TV advertising, as well as home shows. In addition, Anlin literature is provided without charge to qualified customers.

The Anlin transferable lifetime warranty is another important dealer marketing tool. And it's not prorated like competitors' warranties.

Other tools include Energy Star and NFRC window labels and California Forced-Entry Certification.

How Anlin sees its future

"Anlin is the largest single-plant replacement window manufacturer in California, where we enjoy at least 15% annual sales growth through our existing dealer base," says Vidmar. "Future growth may come by adding new products like the swinging French door we plan to introduce in the second quarter. We are also looking at producing a new composite window system. Anlin is, in addition, considering geographic expansion into neighboring states, but we are committed to central production from Clovis. Another key decision we will face in the next several years will be whether or not to develop a high-end new construction product line. Either way, Anlin will continue to build close relationships with employees, vendors and dealers. When all are in sync, we are unbeatable.

'Quality Windows from Our Family to Yours' is more than a company slogan, it's the Anlin Way of Life."

Why Anlin chose to partner with Edgetech and Lisec

"Change is an important part of our culture," said Anlin's Eric Vidmar, as he looked over the three Lisec automated I.G. production lines installed in 2004 as part of a major plant expansion program. "We constantly look for new ways to improve our products and output. This decision was the biggest single equipment purchase in Anlin's history."

Anlin had been assembling I.G. manually using Swiggle® warm edge spacer for four years before switching to Super Spacer last September. "While we felt Swiggle's thermal performance was certainly acceptable, we tested Platinum Elite Super Spacer in our window system and determined it was nearly 10% more efficient."

The company has always taken pride in the speed and precision of its manual I.G. line, but eventually became convinced that it was time for a radical change in how it put glass together. Anlin recognized Lisec as offering world-class robotic equipment for window assembly and soon became convinced that the combination of Edgetech Super Spacer and Lisec automation represented the "quantum leap" change it was seeking.

"Each Lisec line is capable of producing 1,000 to 1,200 units per day," notes Vidmar. "But perhaps more important, we are very impressed with the consistency of the output that reflects in better quality windows and doors and fewer remakes."

While output is always important, quality always comes first, according to Eric. "Going with Super Spacer represented not only value-added quality to us, but we also admired its aesthetic edge over Swiggle. When it comes to aesthetic values, there's really no comparison. Swiggle spacer has a 'shim shadow' or 'roller coaster' appearance. Super Spacer gives us precision 'square edges' and 90-degree corners. When you combine that with the Super Spacer Platinum Elite design and color we have chosen to replace light gray Swiggle spacer, we are very pleased with the change and improvement to our INFINITE glazing system.

"Both Edgetech and Lisec have been extremely helpful in getting our three automated I.G. lines up to speed using Super Spacer. As we come to the end of the 'learning curve' on mastering new equipment, materials and procedures - we feel both companies are part of the Anlin family and hope they feel the same."

Anlin SafeGuard Warranty Labor Coverage

No other window manufacturer—regional or national—matches Anlin's policy to handle dealer and even homeowner complaints with direct factory service, including replacing products at no charge during the first 10 years after purchase. "When we say we stand behind our dealers and their customers, we really mean it."