

California Quest

SPRING 2004



ISO CERTIFICATION LATEST CALIFORNIA

The ultimate recognition



Vincent Trapani, President of USA Industries, with President George W. Bush.

USA Industries makes and remanufactures automotive alternators, starters, front-wheel-drive axles, and disc brake callipers. Started in 1985 with three workers in an 8,500 square foot building, the company has grown consistently over the years thanks to the determination and personal dedication of the owner and key individuals, together with an ongoing commitment to investing in people and equipment. Recognizing the advantages presented by economic policies, in 1998 USA Industries received a state grant to help finance a \$1.16 million expansion program.

This involved buying an alternator assembly line from a General Motors plant in Albany, GA, and moving it to Bay Shore, New York. It's one of the reasons why USA Industries is today one of the nation's leading re-manufacturers of automotive parts. Now with a payroll of 221 employees and over 140,000 square feet of manufacturing space, the firm continues to go from strength to strength.

On 11 March 2004, the company was proud to welcome President George W. Bush to meet the people with first hand experience of how tax cuts have helped small businesses like USA

"We have found that ISO certification has benefited us from a sales and marketing standpoint".

Industries grow into big success stories. During his special visit, the President was given a tour of the factory by company president Vincent Trapani. George Bush said, "When you hear about the entrepreneurial stories, you've got to be optimistic. These guys are hiring people. They believe the future is going to be better".

Indeed, the future looks bright for USA Industries. When asked the secret of their continued success, Frank Doria, Senior Vice President Sales and Marketing explained: "The growth of our company to national coverage has not been achieved by broadening our product range or as a result of acquisition but from expanding our horizons and territories. A couple of years ago we put a distribution centre in Dallas, Texas, and we recently opened another in California".

By remaining specialists in their select range of product lines (the company initials stand for United Starters and Alternators), U.S.A. Industries has ensured its ability to meet customer needs within its specific marketplace. At the beginning of 2003 the company confirmed its commitment to quality assurance when it achieved ISO9000 certification with the help of IMSM.

Frank Doria continued, "We felt it was important to be ISO9001:2000 certified. Not many of our competitors have it and we wanted to show both existing and future customers that we are concerned about quality and consistency. We have found that ISO certification has benefited us from a sales and marketing standpoint. It's something people are looking for and we want to make sure we meet everyone's standards.

Internally, because we have manuals and systems in place, everyone understands that we all have to do the job in the same, exact way - every time. Everyone is held accountable, including the management. We have a great team that's goal oriented, making the company very competitive".

www.usaind.com

Raising Standards

Founded in the UK in 1994, IMSM adds value to businesses by raising the standards of quality and environmental management systems.

For an affordable fixed fee, IMSM provides flexible, fully integrated solutions - from initial consultation and production of the manuals required to meet ISO standards, through to seamless certification and surveillance by our sister company, QAS International Ltd.

In short, together we make obtaining and retaining ISO simple and straightforward. We've already helped more than 5,500 small to medium sized businesses achieve ISO certification and we are always pleased to hear from existing and prospective customers.

Email us at sales@imsm.com

The future is bright in sunny California

IMSM has been introducing businesses throughout America to ISO9000 for nine years. Quest caught up with Michael Bright, Managing Director, and talked to him about the company's rapid expansion in California.

Q. What kind of businesses do you have as clients?

MB. Our clients come from many industry sectors, from electronics and computing to manufacturing and machine processing. They range from small entrepreneurs to medium sized enterprises.

Q. Why do you think these companies want ISO9000?

MB. When competing in one of the world's largest economies, it's important to maintain a competitive edge if you want to get on more tender lists. Achieving the standard says two things about a company: Firstly, that the business is committed to

quality and to building more valuable relationships with their clients who will be with them long-term. And secondly, it confirms that they have the internal systems in place, which means everyone knows what they are doing, and why. Many companies tell us that they are more efficient as a result of going through this process.

Q. But isn't it very time consuming? Surely businesses are reluctant to spare the time to analyse and document all their procedures?

MB. On the contrary, we find that many of our clients already have sound systems in place, which can be used as the basis for the manuals. Our assessors come in and objectively identify any gaps, suggest improvements and help to complete the documentation, according to the ISO standard.

Q. So you are saying that every business is treated individually.

Isn't that expensive?

MB. Every business is treated individually, but our service is not expensive as we use experienced assessors. They understand the needs of business and also have industry specific experience, which they apply to each job. As a result, we can offer a fixed fee, fixed timescale to clients, which they tell us helps them manage their budgets.

Q. What are your plans for the future?

MB. In addition to ISO9000 we are introducing other international standards, including ISO14000 for businesses that want to provide evidence to their customers and staff that they have a responsible environmental policy in place. And we are constantly looking at new ways to add value to the service we provide. For instance, we recently joined the American Society of the Plastics Industry,



demonstrating our commitment to supporting companies in the important US plastics sector.

www.imsm.com

All systems go



ARI's Silicon Valley headquarters.

Aries Research Inc was founded in 1989 in Fremont, at the heart of Silicon Valley. Today, with offices in USA and Japan, this international company is at the forefront of the network-computing business. Over the years, ARI and its products have gained a reputation for superior reliability, outstanding service and support, meticulous attention to detail, and the ability to meet and exceed even the most demanding of requests. As a result, the company has delivered customized technology

solutions to some of the most sophisticated and discriminating organizations around the world. ARI has worked on a wide range of projects from workstations on NASA's Space Shuttles to cluster servers for the Japanese municipal government.

On 1st January 2004, the company demonstrated its commitment to quality and continuous improvement when it successfully achieved ISO9000 certification.

As Systems Engineering Manager, Steve Wang, told Quest: "Aries Research is a Systems Integrator and Value-Added Reseller, specializing in custom-built SPARC and PC platforms, as well as custom

software solutions. ISO certification demonstrates to our current and future customers that Aries Research is committed to excellence. It has allowed Aries Research to tap into previously unavailable markets, which see ISO certification as a requirement for doing business".

Steve explained that although ARI began the process with a degree of apprehension, they found that IMSM's expert guidance dispelled their fears. "We had many concerns about ISO9000 as we had previously attempted, and failed, to achieve ISO certification. The biggest concern was the amount of time,

money, and paperwork required for certification. IMSM helped overcome these concerns by reviewing the entire process in a simple, and easy to understand format. They showed how the ISO requirements could be shaped to conform to our existing processes, instead of changing our processes to fit into the ISO requirements".

Being registered for ISO9000 has already proved beneficial for Aries Research Inc. Steve added, "We recently won a bid on a new account to integrate and test systems for a local computer hardware vendor, and being ISO certified is what made the difference".

www.ari.com

"...has allowed Aries Research to tap into previously unavailable markets".

Visit www.imsm.com to download more case studies...

Uninterrupted commitment

Established in 1975, Fakouri Electrical Engineering Inc. (F.E.E.) is the largest independent power protection specialist in the USA. Based in Rancho Santa Margarita, California, F.E.E. today provides uninterruptible power supply solutions for data and telecommunications centres and other critical power environments, nationwide.

Their experienced and knowledgeable engineering team is unmatched in the industry, providing single-point

responsibility to ensure projects are completed professionally and on time.

"...empowered the company and enabled them to achieve certification."

Fakouri Electrical Engineering offers customers a full range of services from design, engineering and installation to preventive maintenance and emergency repairs - all backed by an ongoing commitment to quality assurance that has empowered the company and enabled them to achieve ISO9000 certification. For further details visit.

www.fee-ups.com



Dear Mr Wright,

I'm sending this correspondence in deep appreciation of your employees' dedication and professionalism in assisting us through the ISO certification processes.

Paul Wenger, your local representative, showed a tremendous patience and excellent communication throughout the entire processes.

Jenny Penlington was an absolute pleasure to work with! Jenny was able to take our complex mess of flow charts, forms and procedures and within days produced a quality and procedures program that clearly and precisely reflected our company structure. Jenny, also in a very elegant fashion, trained us how to implement and use the procedures.

David Marsden with his unique way of doing a quality audit was a tremendous asset. As he audited us he made you feel comfortable and at ease, we never felt threatened as to the outcome. As he uncovered areas of concern, he would make recommendations which gave deeper enlightenment within the ISO system and also provided options to better shape our company.

We are looking forward to a long ISO relationship.

Thanks again!

*Philip McAndrew
Executive Vice President
Fakouri Electrical Engineering, Inc.
Rancho Santa Margarita, California USA*

Vital Source

As one of the world's largest independent stocking distributors of electronics components, Vital Source has a diverse inventory of over 1 billion parts, and annual revenues of \$50 million. With its headquarters in Lake Forest, this financially strong company serves only distributors, so reliability is key to their success. It's vital that they maintain the highest levels of service, delivering the right products at the right price, on time, every time. Hence the organization is designed to work effectively around the clock and around the globe. Their broad network of product experts, based in offices throughout the US and overseas,

work as a team to ensure customers get what they want, when they want it.

Quality management has always been a priority and this was confirmed when Vital Source achieved ISO9000 certification within just a couple of months. Sid Mohasseb, Chief Executive Officer of Vital Source, told Quest: "IMSM have done a good job in terms of structure

and processes. Everything went very smoothly. Of course, part of that has to do with how organized you are to start with. At Vital Source we care about ISO's basic elements - quality and control - so we already had procedures in place. The best thing that ISO did for us was put it in a consistent

format. ISO certification certainly gives us more credibility. There's a certain comfort factor for our customers - and our customers' customers - knowing that we don't just claim high standards of quality control, but that they're verified by a third party. This is important as Original Equipment Manufacturers often define that the everyone in their supply chain is ISO certified".

"ISO certification certainly gives us more credibility".

www.vitalsourceinc.com



or call Howard Paul in LA on (0)310 643 4593 - today

The right chemistry

Medical Chemical Corporation was founded in 1954 to manufacture and distribute laboratory reagents and clinical stains in the Los Angeles area. Specializing in parasitology and infection control, the company provides a wide range of products for the medical and veterinary industries - everything from detergents and disinfectants to diagnostic test kits. They also manufacture special order chemicals for custom applications.

Located in Torrance, MCC firmly believes that their employees are responsible for their continued

success. Over the years, the company has grown consistently by offering quality products at competitive prices, prompt delivery and backed by a first-rate customer service.

Recognizing that ISO certification allows their team to provide the high level of quality that their customers demand, Jose Arias of Regulatory Affairs told us: "We found that just about every one of our new customers would immediately ask "Are you ISO certified?" We found that IMSM was very accommodating to all of our certification needs. The process



was quite easy and we had a representative helping us all the way through. MCC can now confidently let all of our customers know that we adhere to the ISO level of quality".

www.med-chem.com

Quick Quotes

“Becoming ISO certified has allowed MPC to quote to companies that require their suppliers to be ISO compliant.”

Hans Hamm, President of Molded Plastic Consultants, Ontario, Canada.

“Knowing that we don't just claim high standards of quality control - they're verified by a third party. This is important as Original Equipment Manufacturers often define that everyone in their supply chain is ISO certified.”

Sid Mohasseb, Chief Executive Officer, Vital Source, California, USA.

“Supplying some of the UK's blue-chip manufacturing companies, we regarded it as important to assure them of our high standards of procedures and management.”

John Ryland, Managing Director, REM Systems Gloucester, UK.



Securing ISO success



Bolt Products Inc is a leading distributor of all types of standard threaded product and fasteners - from bolts and ball stud fasteners to nuts, pins, rivets and screws. Established in 1947, the company carries a huge inventory of fastening products that provide high quality, low cost solutions for manufacturers across the USA and around the world.

Over the years, Bolt Products has secured an enviable

reputation for delivering a quality service. Their knowledgeable team helps customers to make the most informed choices - assisting engineers in product design and offering buyers guidance with cost effective purchasing.

In August 2003 Bolt Products underpinned their commitment to quality by successfully achieving ISO9000 certification, guided by IMSM. Vice President, Gary Cornell, told Quest: "We decided to go for ISO because we realized it would be of benefit to both our customers and ourselves. Although we had concerns that the process

was going to be too rigid and wouldn't fit with the way we run our business, it was actually much easier than expected. There were just a few minor changes to be made. Our Assessor, Keith Pyett, was very helpful and responsive. I'd recommend anyone considering ISO9000 to go ahead. It has certainly helped a lot with our supplier relations." Mr Cornell explained, "Implementing ISO makes us look at everyday operations and how we can make them more efficient. It's an ongoing process of improvement".

www.boltproducts.com

Mission quality control

Established in 1988, Argosy International Inc. is a worldwide distributor of composites, specialty chemicals and materials for the aerospace industry. Headquartered in New York with warehouse facilities in Gardena, California, the company also serves the electronics sector and general industry. Being responsible for ensuring that time and temperature sensitive materials are transported according to

"Our mission is to increase our customers productivity..."

international travel regulations, specification requirements and good industry practices, Argosy has always operated under quality management systems.

In 2002, keen to attain the credibility of a 3rd party audit, the company decided that IMSM offered the most cost effective solution to gaining ISO9001:2000 certification and AS9100:2001 compliance.

www.argosychemical.com



Argosy's Judy Gauland accepting ISO registration certificate from IMSM's James Goldstein.

Exhibition dates...

March 31- April 2
Globe 2004 Vancouver

April 19-22
Subcon NEC

April 24-26
British American Business Conference NEC

May 4-6
Cebit Australia Sydney

May 10-13
IFSEC NEC

September 22-23
East Midlands Mfg Manufacturing Derby

October 20-27
K2004 Dusseldorf