



Consistent Service You Can Trust
Askco Electric
 Jim Knapp, Owner



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Success Magazine: Jim, Askco Electric has been in business for over twenty-five years. What is the secret to your success?

JK: Having a good work ethic and surrounding myself with employees that share my drive and motivation to succeed. In order to really progress in business you must have a strong team, and we definitely have that.

SM: Yours is a family owned business. How long have you been involved in the daily operations?

JK: I have been involved since 1974. When we first opened everything was done manually. We had one customer and one full-time employee. We are now on our third computer system, we have eighteen full-time employees, and approximately four-hundred customers.

SM: What are some of the challenges to being a family owned and operated business?

JK: We face the same challenges that all businesses face. The biggest is controlling the overhead—health and business insurance are some of the difficult issues. Finding and keeping good hardworking employees is another. Another struggle is increasing our price margin to keep up with increased overhead, while still maintaining our customer base.

SM: How has your business changed over the past two decades?

JK: On the physical side, we added a loading dock with additional warehouse space and redesigned our counter area making it bright and customer friendly. On the technical side, we recently updated to a new computer software system that gives us a lot of flexibility we did not have in the past. We have expanded our customer base to include the Albany and Saratoga areas and have

added many new product lines from some great companies. The one thing that has not changed, however, is our excellent customer service.

SM: Whom do you service? Do you provide products for both residential and commercial clientele?

JK: We have a very diverse customer base. We provide products to the industrial, commercial, institutional, and residential markets. We have a large local inventory to support these markets.

SM: How have you secured such a positive reputation over the years?

JK: We have always supplied quality service and quality products, establishing great customer relations. We have employees who take pride in taking care of our customers and always go the extra mile to make sure they are completely satisfied.

SM: What do you do on a daily basis to ensure you keep that reputation and always improve?

JK: I try to never take anything for granted, paying attention to business and keeping my customers and employees the top priority.

SM: What has been the most rewarding experience of owning Askco Electric?

JK: This year we had our 21st Annual Golf Outing. This is a huge event that we host for our customers, raising money for various charities. For

the past few years we have played for the Juvenile Diabetes Foundation. We always have it in July—it is a great outing and the sun always shines!

SM: How do you ensure that your staff is up to date on all information on the latest products?

JK: We have lunch and learn sessions with our vendors as new products are introduced. Our vendors supply on-line computer training on many products and my employees keep updated on their own by reading the literature we receive. This type of product education, plus the hands-on training allows my staff to help our customers with any of their questions or projects.

SM: Why should a client trust Askco Electric for their needs?

JK: I feel that our customer service is exceptional. My employees treat all our customers with the utmost respect. We offer competitive pricing and stand behind all the products we sell. And one very key point is that most of our clients are repeat customers. That tells me that we must be doing something right!

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