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MADE IN AMERICA

BY TI STAFF



Reshoring at Peerless-AV Sets An Example for the Industry

Why we brought “Made in America” back home



Several months ago, Peerless-AV received a call from the White House (yes, *that* White House). Aides there had been alerted to the company’s activities in bringing all offshore production back from China to the U.S., and wanted details on what was involved. The fact that Peerless-AV is on the White House’s “reshoring” radar is a clear sign that it’s at the very forefront of the movement.

Since June 2011, Peerless-AV’s entire portfolio of 3,200+ display mounts, projector mounts, digital signage kiosk enclosures and Ciel fully-sealed outdoor TVs has been manufactured on-site at the company’s 323,000-square-foot headquarters in suburban Chicago.



Walt Snodell, Chairman

The firm purchased that Aurora, Ill. facility in 2009 in order to return all production to U.S. soil after four years of outsourcing 30 percent of its manufacturing to China. In a bid to eliminate offshoring-related quality and supply chain problems, Peerless-AV invested \$25 million to expand its factory floor from 225,000 square feet to 300,000—as well as purchase equipment ranging from die-casting presses to a 600-ton stamping machine—to handle the jobs that were coming back home.

Today, the only Peerless-AV products that are still manufactured overseas are electronics like the PeerAi Pico Broadcaster—the first wireless digital signage solution that broadcasts HD content to an unlimited number of digital TVs within a 350-foot radius. Eventually that product and other leading-edge Peerless-AV wireless connectivity and broadcast solutions may carry the “Made in the USA” label as well.

For customers, the return to the U.S. means improved quality control, no overseas shipping delays, faster response to special requests, and faster time to market to meet the emerging needs of the professional

installation and integration community. Innovative new products can now be designed, engineered, tooled, prototyped, manufactured and shipped from under one roof without the fragmentation and time lag associated with splitting the operations among multiple locations.

For the local economy, Peerless-AV’s reshoring initiative means a doubling of the company workforce to more than 500. Over 250 new full- and part-time U.S. jobs have been created since the firm abandoned its Chinese operations.

Since tool and die making is a dying trade, many of the new jobs have included on-the-job training through an apprenticeship program that Peerless-AV launched in conjunction with the Tooling Manufacturing Association to fill those positions.

“Bringing manufacturing back to the U.S. increased our unit costs by 10 to 15 percent because American wages are so much higher, but we were willing to maintain our selling prices and take smaller margins because of the benefits of bringing the work back home,” said Peerless-AV President John



Potts. “It was the right decision for our workforce, for the installation and integration professionals who count on our products, and for the end customers who need them.” ●

Peerless-AV, a Peerless Industries, Inc. company, is a leading designer, manufacturer and distributor of Made in the USA audiovisual mounting, accessory and digital content delivery solutions for commercial and residential applications. For more information, visit peerless-av.com.