

ACME WIRE PRODUCTS COMPANY, INC.

“A *wire fabricating boutique — not a wire WalMart,”*
is how the owners of Acme Wire Products Co., Inc.
describe their company.

While they can't be everything to everyone, Acme Wire Products promises its carefully chosen clients personalized service, meaningful relationships and exceptional products.

premier wire fabricator in the United States. The current family members continue to carry on that vision and goal. They strive to live up to the phrase “Wire fabrications — from simple to sophisticated.”

The three siblings, who are part of a larger family group of seven children, each joined Acme Wire Products after working and developing competencies in other companies and industries. Mary, Michael and Edward function as a management team who, while having separate skills and responsibilities, work together to form a company that is strengthened by their shared purpose.

Based in Mystic, CT, the company focuses mainly on industrial applications, but also produces recognizable items such as wire grids, wire baskets, lacrosse masks and backpack frames used by firefighters.

“We offer a specialized service,” explains co-owner Ed Planeta. “Sometimes our clients need a service that we could provide, but which isn't part of our specific expertise. When that happens, we refer those people to our competitors or other companies in the metal fabrication industry. We don't worry about referring business to others because when the tables are turned, we get recommendations from those companies.”

In fact, Edward and Michael explain that helping potential clients identify the right wire or metal fabricator to fit their unique needs is one of the company's strengths, even if it means not getting a job right away.

“We're good at what we do, but we're not the best at everything. We focus on what we're the best at and we have the courage to turn down business when a better option is available for potential clients,” explains Edward.

What the company excels at is producing customized, three-dimensional, high-tolerance wire or metal parts. Family members work closely with clients to ensure that designs will fit their needs; they produce parts with superior weld integrity and dimensional accuracy;



PHOTO: FIERECK PHOTOGRAPHY

Wire products can be produced in a variety of colors and finishes.

Year founded: 1970

Location: Mystic

Employees: 45

Product or Service:
*Custom Wire and Metal
Components*

Web site: www.acmewire.com

Acme Wire Products, a second-generation family business founded by Edward Planeta Sr., and now owned and managed by the sibling team of Mary Planeta Fitzgerald and her brothers Edward and Michael Planeta, offers three-dimensional, precision wire components and metal fabrications.

Ed Planeta Sr., who founded Acme Wire Products, developed his fabrication expertise working for Artistic Wire Products, his father's wire fabrication business, and for Associated Spring Company. When he founded Acme Wire Products in 1970, his goal was to become the

and they test to guarantee that parts are strong and secure. Some clients need a one-time production run of 50 parts while others need one or more skids of parts produced every month. Either way, working with Acme Wire Products means every client gets top-quality products and service every time.

As Edward explains, the courage to focus on their strengths and turn down business that doesn't fit their niche allows Acme Wire Products to develop strong, meaningful relationships with the right clients.

"Because we are honest with ourselves and our clients, and are selective about who we work with, we truly value every client. We listen carefully to their goals and we design a process and a product that will meet their short- and long-term needs. Sometimes that means our company has to make investments upfront — either in equipment or technology or in our staff — in order to give clients what they need. That's just part of how we provide exceptional customer service," explains Michael.

Company president, Mary Fitzgerald, credits the UConn Family Business Program with why Acme Wire Products has been successful. The program motivated the siblings to implement an outside advisory board in 1999. This gave them a fresh outlook on the business, and also helped manage the transition when Mary and her brothers purchased the business from their father in 2000.

"We have gotten a lot of benefit from our relationship with the UConn Family Business Program. We have developed great contacts and have really appreciated the professional advice," she explains.

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Acme Wire Products' management team during a recent 40th Anniversary celebration. L to R: Michael Planeta, Edward Planeta, Sr., Mary Planeta Fitzgerald, Edward Planeta, Jr.

Mary and her brothers also talk about the firm's ability to evolve with their clients as a factor that contributes to their success. By carefully managing growth, keeping their overhead low, and recognizing the need for flexibility, they have been able to adapt as markets and technologies have changed, and they have invested in new capabilities to stay competitive.

"I'm proud of the fact that we do as much as we possibly can for our customers," Edward remarks. As he explains, the word "Acme" means the highest point and Acme Wire Products has been established as the standard for high-tolerance engineered wireforms for the last 40 years. "Staying true to our niche and staying honest with ourselves and our clients is what makes our success possible."