



Jim Donnellon, Barnes Dennig and Tom Grote Jr., Grote Enterprises

## Proud history, bold planning, bright future

### As Dyer enters its second century, it found a valuable partner in Barnes Dennig

In its first 100 years, the T.J. Dyer Company helped build a small city of offices, plants, hospitals, hotels and stadiums. Many of Cincinnati's iconic structures have Dyer craftsmanship in their veins, including the Carew Tower, Great American Tower, Great American Ball Park, Children's Hospital and the Cincinnati Zoo.

The expertise, financial strength and good name that the mechanical contracting company built along the way figured to make Dyer a force well into its second century.

The company's leaders were not content to rest on their resume, though. So they invested a significant amount of time and money to become skilled in the latest technology; they implemented a strong control system to improve labor productivity; and they re-focused on the products, services and geographic markets that formed the foundation of the company generations ago.

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“We made that sacrifice, that investment, because we realized that it is the climate of the industry,” said Dave Davis, Chief Financial Officer of Grote Enterprises, the management services provider for T.J. Dyer and Cinfab.

Around the same time that Dyer committed to upgrading its controls and its capabilities, Grote Enterprises switched accounting firms – from a large, international firm to Barnes Dennig, a local firm with a number of clients in the construction industry.

“We are grateful to be able to serve a company with a proud history and a forward-looking leadership,” Barnes Dennig director Jim Donnellon said. “We are proud of our own history of serving the business community in Greater Cincinnati, so we really appreciate the longevity and high quality of the Grote legacy.”

Davis said Barnes Dennig’s commitment to client service was a key selling point in 2005 and remains so in 2011.

“You always get the feel that (the large, international firms) are only interested in their bigger clients. The rates keep going up, and you don’t get the level of personal service,” Davis said. “The level of turnover with their people, that was a concern, as well. Even 25 or 30 years ago, that was the concern with the bigger firms – you feel like you’re not getting the appropriate attention that you’d like.

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*- Grote CFO Dave Davis*

“That’s what we like about Barnes Dennig. Jim Donnellon has been the audit partner from the beginning, and most of the staff has stayed the same. There’s a level of continuity that we probably wouldn’t get from a larger firm. And then there’s the ability to have contact with the firm as often as you’d like, that responsiveness that you wouldn’t get from a larger firm.”

While Barnes Dennig handled the company’s annual audit and tax-return preparation, the management of Grote Enterprises initiated strategic changes that have positioned Dyer and Cinfab for continued success. They now have 3-D drawing capabilities, and they utilize Building Information Modeling (BIM), an information-sharing system that connects the architecture, engineering and construction phases of a project.

“We’ve been ahead of the curve on that, on a local basis,” Davis said. “Because of that, we’ve been able to do the larger jobs.”

They also have kept an eye on emerging trends in the construction industry, such as the growing popularity of pre-fabrication, and they are prepared for another shift in technology and strategy.

Despite the challenges of a recession, Dyer and Cinfab are as financially strong as ever, with a comfortable backlog of projects.

“We’re as good as we can hope,” Davis said.

