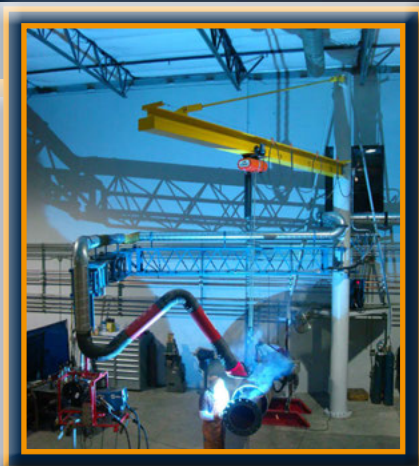




E. Robert Kent Award for Management Innovation

*Recognizing innovations that improve business operations
Honoring commitment to industry advancement*



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Every day, Americans find new and better ways to make their businesses run better, more efficiently and more profitably. Whether the innovations are to meet clients' and customers' requirements, improve a product or service, ease the labor burden on employees and/or grow profits, the resulting benefits strengthen companies and brighten their future. And, when those unique management ideas become part of an industry's culture, shared advances are inevitable and progress is achieved.

In 1990, the Mechanical Contractors Association of America, Inc. (MCAA) established a program to honor our industry's management innovations and the contractors that created them as well as their willingness to share their discoveries. The E. Robert Kent Award for Management Innovation, named for the renowned industry leader, recognizes unique ideas that improve productivity, enhance motivation, increase profits or achieve cost-effectiveness for the mechanical construction, service and plumbing industry. MCAA's Management Methods Committee administers the award.

The E. Robert Kent Award showcases ideas that are unique and effective in overcoming management challenges in mechanical, service and plumbing contractors' businesses. Winners have included a service software package that reduces paperwork and its associated costs and helps service technicians deliver more efficient service to their customers; a device that improves the operational efficiency and safety of pre-fabrication shops; a system for electronically managing project documents and records; a records and documents management and administration software program; a corporate safety program; and a Japanese-style management philosophy. What counts are results and how broadly they can be applied!

In keeping with E. Robert Kent's belief that the best ideas must be shared, award winners and their innovations are not only recognized and heralded by MCAA members but also by the industry as a whole through publicity in MCAA and other trade publications. And, when the innovation becomes part of the industry's culture, the whole benefits and advances.

The E. Robert Kent Award commemorates the spirit as well as the man who remains one of our industry's most revered and accomplished members. E. Robert Kent co-founded The Poole & Kent Company, a major mechanical contractor based in Baltimore, MD with operations along the East Coast. Mr. Kent was also well known for his many contributions to MCAA and the industry. He was the first chairman of the Management Methods Committee, which regularly produces bulletins and publications for MCAA members about business practices, procedures and issues. He was the president of the MCA of Maryland and of the MCAA. And, MCAA honored Mr. Kent twice for his contributions with the Distinguished Service Award in 1997 and the Lifetime Achievement Award in 1999. Mr. Kent's remarkable life ended in 2000.

Prior Winners

A selection of past winners of the E. Robert Kent Award for Management Innovation.

2014 – Stationary CNC Pipe Fabricator

Air Masters Corporation (Fenton, MO) designed and built a stationary CNC Pipe Fabricator, with assistance provided by Mathey Dearman, that will attach to the end of any pipe roller bed. The fabricator can be adjusted for steel pipe ranging from 2 ½" to 12" using a vertical linear drive actuator. Within that size range, the pipe stays on the pipe bed and is rolled into the fabricator. Then, a cut is selected on the computer—a straight cut, inside bevel, outside bevel, saddle cut or hole. The saddle will accommodate any pipe size within the 2 ½" to 12" range. The operator only has to electrically adjust the fabricator up or down (depending on the pipe size) to center it around the pipe being fabricated. The operator uses a computer to select the cut parameters and speed requirements. The device allows most small to mid-size HVAC and process pipe contractors to affordably fabricate their piping systems in their shop or garage. The Air Masters fabricator is 25' x 48" and uses two 60 amp plasma cutters—one on one end for the pipe bed cuts and one dedicated to the pipe fabricator. The equipment used to build this machine cost about \$30,000.

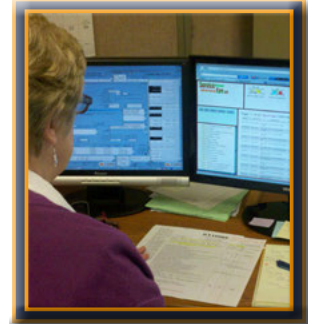
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2010 – Serviceeye

H.T. Lyons, Inc.'s (Allentown, PA) is a custom-designed service software system that was designed to reduce the costs of service technicians' paperwork associated with equipment maintenance, repairs and construction. A mobile data storage device allows technicians instant access to data on customers' service history and their equipment covered by H.T. Lyons. The system allows users to log onto serviceeye.net from anywhere to view the details of service activity immediately after work is performed, and live data is available remotely on working screens 24/7 to users on five parameters. Users may also post messages and action items to one another on a "bulletin board," assuring that critical communications are transferred to all concerned parties. Historic trend reports are also easily viewed on-screen. Service and repair data on each piece of equipment can be easily tracked, making replacement cost analyses and quantifying the cost of unreliable equipment easier and much simpler. H.T. Lyons estimates that Serviceeye saves over \$40,000 per year in unbillable labor costs.



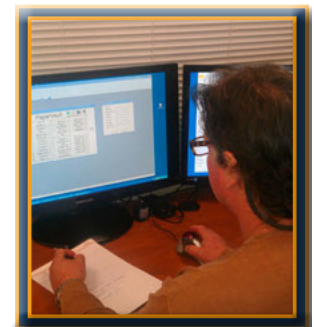
2008 – Articulating Welding Boom

Shinn Mechanical, Inc.'s (Kent, WA) Articulating Weld Boom was an innovation developed specifically for the company's new pipe fabrication shop. The boom is of lattice-style design, constructed of steel, extending from a 201-inch diameter steel column, and is comprised of three sections with pivot points between each section. This design allows the working end to move and be placed within a 30-foot radius of the base. A welding machine is suspended from the end of the boom; mounts for grinders are also included. The boom is fitted with electrical wiring for the welding machine, power for the grinder/convenience outlet, compressed air, argon, welding gases, water cooling for the weld torch, and a plug-in for foot control of the pipe positioners. Shinn fabricators may perform any type of welding, including TIG, without cords or hoses on the floor. An addition feature—a point-of-use exhaust hood—removes gases and smoke, filters the exhaust and recirculates the cleaned air into the shop. The innovation promotes operational efficiency, safety and improved environmental quality of the worksite.



2007 – PaperVault®

DPW, Inc. (So. San Francisco, CA) designed PaperVault to be an integrated communications, document and task management system that optimizes the ability of a subcontractor to manage more jobs, more efficiently and more profitably. The customized software package was initially used to log in jobs, bids, and change orders. It was also equipped with an easy-to-use document retrieval system. As DPW's business changed and grew, the system adapted to meet new challenges. A key feature of the system is a series of counters that signal staff to work on tasks requiring their immediate attention. Once a task is completed, the counter is decremented, but other counters may be activated requiring action from other staff. The counters help staff manage their daily workload and keep the work flowing efficiently. PaperVault enables DPW management and staff to visually see how work is flowing across the company, what tasks need to be completed and where potential bottlenecks may exist.



2005 – Electronic Project Manual System for Managing Projects

Gross Mechanical Contractors, Inc. (St. Louis, MO) developed a Project Management System that uses an electronic Project Manual which incorporates in-house procedures and forms that are accessed from the company's Intranet. The system is comprised of a sequential series of steps or tasks that need to be implemented during a specific timeframe. The process begins at the pre-construction stage of a project and ends after the project is closed out. Recurring documentation related tasks, such as current schedules and budget reports, are monitored at intervals to identify trends which are reported to appropriate staff. Gross Mechanical dedicated part of its Intranet for the system. An Internet browser, such as Explorer, allows users to access pertinent information through a series of sequential links to programs, such as Microsoft Excel, Word and Outlook, Primavera Project Planner and Scheduling, QuickPen Estimating and Tool Management, GEAC StarBuilder, etc.

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2002 – P.A.C.T. Safety Program

Nooter Construction Company (Bensalem, PA) developed P.A.C.T. (Positive . . . Awareness . . . Coaching . . . Teamwork) to make safety the centerpiece of its corporate culture. Introduced in 1996, P.A.C.T. was gradually incorporated into the company's operations over a six-year period. An important feature of the program is the Score Card, which is used for recording and rating each element of safety performance for each project, including incidents (recordable, near misses, and totals), supervisor and skilled craft workers' training, jobsite safety, inspections, surveys, lessons learned, and regular client and employee meetings. The card helps supervisors and employees assess performance, progress, and areas needing improvement. By the end of 2001, safety had become a top priority of every Nooter employee, a fact reflected in the company's Recordable Incident Rate, which dropped from 6.7 in 1996 to 1.89.

Earn Recognition For Your Innovations

Eligibility

The E. Robert Kent Award for Management Innovation is open to all MCAA member companies, including associates and manufacturer/supplier members. Eligible innovations do not include:

- commercial products
- programs and projects sponsored by local affiliated associations (these nominees should be considered for the MCAA Best Practices Award)

Entry Procedures

Please complete the nomination form and attach it to each submission. Include information describing the nature of the innovation and its objectives, how it was implemented, the tangible results, and any other pertinent details. Supporting materials directly related to the innovation (photos, charts, videos, drawings, etc.) are welcome.

The entry form and all supporting materials must be received at the MCAA office no later than the announced deadline for the current year's award.

Judging

The judges are members of MCAA's Management Methods Committee. Criteria used to evaluate submissions include:

- Uniqueness of the submission (in relation to current business practice)
- Technical merits of the submission
- Potential applicability of the submission to contractor and service businesses
- Completeness of the submission information

Award

The winner of the E. Robert Kent Award will be honored during MCAA's annual convention. Winners receive a handsome trophy, the recognition of their peers, and publicity in MCAA and other trade publications.

More Information

For more information, please contact Ann Mattheis at MCAA, 1385 Piccard Drive, Rockville, MD 20850, phone 800-556-3653, fax 301-990-9690, or e-mail amattheis@mcaa.org.

