An Introduction to a Truly One-of-a-Kind Company

Why We do it

John Henry Foster, our founder, lived by the motto, "if you take care of the business, the business will take care of you." This philosophy, with proven success, is carried on by everyone at John Henry Foster today. With a sense of duty to our empowered employee-owners, trusted vendor partnerships, and deserving customers, we strive to have a growing, permanent presence in the industry.

Employee-owners

As an ESOP, JHF employees own the business. The success of the company ensures long term benefits for employee-owners and our families. Sharing a deep commitment to excellence and priding ourselves on performance lends to overall happiness and career satisfaction. We strive to be the best in the industry and keep JHF around for future generations.

Trusted Vendors

We are proud of our longstanding, successful relationships with our suppliers—many starting with the founding of John Henry Foster. We view our vendors as partners and attribute much of our success to the mutual dedication we share. Sustaining our business helps sustain the success of our partners.

Deserving Customers

Delighting customers has been "why we do it" since day one. We know our customers have a choice. When they choose JHF, we want to impress them with our ability to provide solutions no one else can…in a way no one else will. Our goal has always been to maintain lifelong relationships with our customers.
What we do

At John Henry Foster, we are everyday innovators. Our solutions are inspired by our customers and carried out by people with a passion for doing things better. We continually invest in and grow our capabilities and our talent to take on even the most complex industrial applications. Representing leading industrial manufacturers, John Henry Foster supports a wide-variety of applications and operations with high-quality, innovative products.

So, what do we do at John Henry Foster? The better question is, what won’t we do? We strive to understand and meet the needs of our customers. When others say, “no”, John Henry Foster says “yes” because our ultimate goal is to help our customers do business better.

Integrated Solutions

More than just sales of components, JHF ensures complete solutions by offering expert engineering, sales, service, assessments and repair services for all aspects of industrial operations. We separate ourselves from the competition with cutting edge equipment, unmatched capabilities and dedicated expertise. From air, water, oil and vacuum technologies, John Henry Foster can provide solutions for even the most complex applications.

Comprehensive Product Portfolio

John Henry Foster is the Midwest’s #1 provider of pneumatics, hydraulics and compressors. We also specialize in material handling, industrial automation, industrial and assembly tools, hose, electronic controls and custom assemblies. Representing industry-leading manufacturers, we carry high quality products and components critical to various operations.

Founded by One Man...

John Henry Foster was a “pull-yourself-up-by-the-bootstraps” entrepreneur. In 1928, at the age of 23, he began his career as a traveling manufacturer’s representative, selling pneumatic equipment out of an Airstream trailer. He took pride in having what his customers needed when they needed it — “You can’t sell from an empty wagon” was more than just his favorite saying, it was a way of taking care of business. John Henry Foster’s personal goal was to create a lasting impression on his customers... and he succeeded.

Changing times called for a different business model so he established a permanent address for his business. While the addresses changed as the...
Dedicated Expertise
Our dedicated sales, service and engineer specialists provide complete support. With expertise in all aspects of industrial operations, our team aids with application assessments, product recommendations and custom design, technical assistance and troubleshooting.

Immediate Availability
With over $8 million of the most critical components on our shelves, an on-site retail store and a streamlined logistics network, we have the right products at the right time. Offerings such as 24/7, emergency parts and service, Vendor Managed Inventory and rental/leasing options, ensure downtime is not an option with JHF.

Employee Ownership
As an employee-owned company, all JHF team members have a vested interest in our customers’ success and the reputation of JHF. Providing real solutions and cultivating loyal, trusting relationships ensures JHF’s growth and sustainment and guarantees customer satisfaction.

How we do it
Separating ourselves from our competitors
At John Henry Foster, we understand that telling a good story, doesn’t produce results. Because of this, we continually invest in capabilities that separate us from the rest. Our dedication to our customers’ success, as well as our own, drives our passion for saying, “yes” when no one else can. So how do we do it?

Empowered Employee-Owners
John Henry Foster has grown from one man to a company of over 165 dedicated employee-owners. From recruitment to retirement, we understand the importance of having people who reflect the values of our company. With a cultural fit, thorough and relevant training and the confidence to make decisions, John Henry Foster employees are empowered to be customer advisors and industry experts.

business grew, John Henry Foster maintained his motto, “if you take care of the business, the business will take care of you.” Upholding strong values and building loyal relationships with employees, customers and the manufacturers he represented, John Henry grew the company and continued to invest in it’s success. Growing the company wasn’t enough for the entrepreneur — John Henry’s goal was to represent the number-one product lines in pneumatics, hydraulics and air compressors. To accomplish this, he adhered to the idea that acquiring talented people led to attracting quality product lines. Our founder’s philosophy still imbues John Henry Foster Company today: Best People, Best Products, Best Customers.

Starting from one man to an employee-owned company of over 160 dedicated employees, JHF has succeeded in becoming the Midwest’s number one distributor of pneumatic, hydraulics and air compressors. We still believe you can’t sell from an empty wagon and today, the empty wagon is a 100,000 square
Industrial/Assembly Tools
vested interest in the satisfaction of our employees. All employee-owners have a Plan (ESOP), to give back to their dedicated established an Employee Stock Ownership ownership of John Henry Foster Company in 1983)

Cutting-Edge Facility
We don’t turn away business, we expand to accommodate it. Our state-of-the-art, 100,000 square foot building was built to provide the solutions our customers demand. With inventory of over $8 million of crucial components and capabilities such as a 20,000 square foot paint booth, two 5-ton overhead cranes and even an on-site retail store, John Henry Foster is capable of delivering results unlike anyone else in the industry.

Industry-Leading Manufacturers
Our successful, longstanding partnerships with industry-respected suppliers ensures high-quality products and dependable service. This allows us to focus on our core competencies and grow the business. Benefits are experienced by both John Henry Foster and our vendors and are passed down to our customers in the form of reduced costs, increased efficiency and communication and continuous improvement.

Innovative Technology
Advanced equipment and tools including CAD, the latest solutions software, CNC machinery, a Tuxco Cylinder Servicer and custom test stands allow John Henry Foster to provide unrivaled solutions. Add to this our in-house specialists—including a certified ASME welder and skilled operators and assemblers—there is so much we CAN do.

Foot facility stocked with over $8 million in inventory. Investing in JHF and its employees is still a top priority. In 1984, Bob and Kathy Gau (who took ownership of John Henry Foster Company in 1983) established an Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP), to give back to their dedicated employees. All employee-owners have a vested interest in the satisfaction of our customers and JHF’s success as a whole. We continue to add quality, passionate people and top-rated products to grow our business. Today, we have more capabilities and talent than any other industrial solutions provider in the area and we constantly evolve to meet the needs of our customers.

Changing times called for a different business model so he established a permanent address for his business. While the addresses changed as the business grew, John Henry Foster’s personal goal was to create a lasting impression on his customers... and he succeeded. His customers... and he succeeded. "You can’t sell from an empty wagon"...Carried on by a Company with a Purpose
As our capabilities and business grow, our mission remains the same — we’ll do everything in our power to have what our customers need, when they need it. At John Henry Foster, we want to leave a lasting impression on our customers as well as to provide for our employee-owners. To accomplish this, we simply follow our founder and honor his motto, "If you take care of the business, the business will take care of you." The philosophy passed down from our founder and carried on today, drives our unique business approach. From hiring the right people for the company, ensuring goal alignment with our suppliers and genuinely interacting with our customers, John Henry Foster takes care of every aspect of our business and our customers'. Trained with thorough programs, equipped with state-of-the-art tools and motivated by empowerment every employee works to deliver outstanding customer experiences and solutions.

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