

# Opening Lines

Fall 2008



## Opening Line

“It might be said that it is the ideal of the employer to have production without employees and the ideal of the employee is to have income without work.”  
(E. F. Schumacher)

## Your New Regional Sales Manager?

We would like to introduce to you the newest member of Continental Industries sales team: Rodney Ketter. Could he be your new sales contact? That depends. He'll cover our Mid-Atlantic territory with responsibilities



Rodney Ketter  
770.715.7779

[rketter@continentalindustries.com](mailto:rketter@continentalindustries.com)

for Delaware, Maryland, D.C., Virginia, and North Carolina. Rodney has spent almost 40 years in the HVAC industry. He started by working in the retail end of the industry and, from there, moved into the wholesale sector. He rounded that experience out with some work on the manufacturing side. For the last 10 years, he operated as a manufacturer's rep, representing a variety of HVAC lines.

His verdict thus far: “I love this territory!” He'd also love to hear from you (if you happen to be in that territory).

## Event Calendar

Last Month—To the 22 member companies of the KEY Wholesaler Group, thanks for meeting with us in Las Vegas.



Up Next—  
HARDI Fall Conference • Phoenix • October 25<sup>th</sup>–28<sup>th</sup>



HEATING, AIRCONDITIONING & REFRIGERATION DISTRIBUTORS INTERNATIONAL

We'll see you there!

And, it's not too early to plan for—

Our booth: #4122



Newsletter Sponsor

## Looking for an HVAC job?

Visit [HVACWebConnection.com](http://HVACWebConnection.com) and take full advantage of our user friendly search format for finding the hottest jobs in the industry.

Looking to hire an hvac professional, then post a job to receive resumes from top candidates within the HVAC Industry.



[HVACWebConnection.com](http://HVACWebConnection.com)

## Featured Partner—Behler-Young

You know that you've reached the pinnacle of market leadership when the mere mention of two letters, makes everyone think of you. Such is the case with "B-Y" or, more formally, The Behler-Young Company (<http://www.behler-young.com/>).

An 80+ year history of manufacturing and distribution doesn't hurt. But more than longevity, The Behler-Young Company has garnered its reputation through a vision backed by intelligent planning. It is a vision that has made B-Y the predominant distributor in Michigan.



The company began acquiring distribution branch locations as early as 1960. In 1989, B-Y sold its manufacturing operations and began to focus solely on distribution. A greater pivotal moment occurred in 1991 as Behler-Young purchased the

factory-owned Bryant branch in Michigan. Today, B-Y serves the entire state of Michigan and five counties in northwest Ohio with the Bryant and Payne equipment lines.

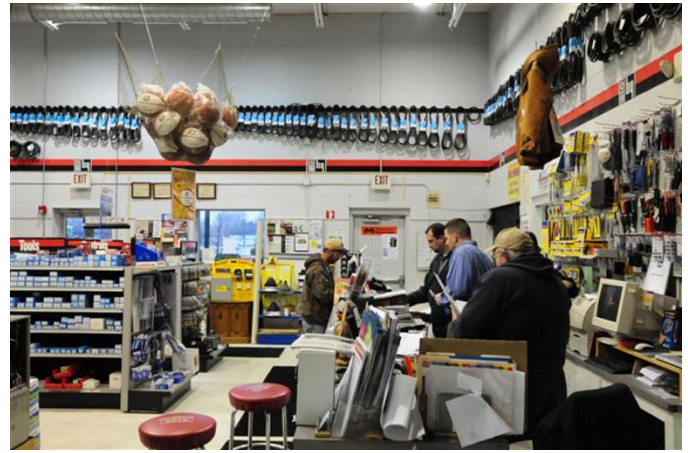
These lines, and others (including Continental, of course), are available through 14 branch locations throughout Michigan and an additional location in Toledo, Ohio. They are fed from the primary distribution center in Brighton, Michigan; a complex of 180,000 square feet.

The company ascribes much of its success to its distribution model, with technology, responsiveness, and "the best employees in the industry" all contributing.

The technology initiative uses comprehensive software management of operations. It enables online ordering with real-time access at each branch location.

Responsiveness is indicated in product delivery. When an order is placed by 5 PM, it will be loaded at 5 AM the next morning and delivered by 7 AM to just almost anywhere in the state of Michigan. Twenty-five company trucks, including 2 crane trucks, help ensure speedy delivery.

Behler-Young also maintains an ambitious training



Customer counter scene at the Taylor, MI branch

initiative for both dealers and employees. Two training centers, have served well in excess of 10,000 students with HVAC/R education. The Grand Rapids Training Center was opened in 1993 and the New Hudson (Detroit) Training Center began operation in 2002.

Because the centers are stocked with both traditional and emerging technologies, they are used extensively by other organizations, such as ACCA and AMCA, as well.

Employees are free to take any course offered and usually do so on Saturdays to avoid disruption to their work day. Training is also available online to employees and dealers. For example, each branch location has computers that employees can access during their lunch breaks. Completion of training courses is tracked and successful completion correlates to the employee compensation program.

Additionally, B-Y has an extensive outside sales force. To keep them busy on the road, the company also has five employees dedicated to quoting projects.

The synergistic glue for these people and resources is an executive team that carefully considers industry trends and plots a strategic direction. Recent course changes included greater penetration of the commercial market

(continues on page 3)



(Featured Partner, continued from page 2)

to offset the anticipated residential slump and a move to more “parts and pieces” to deal with the dynamics of the repair versus replace market.

In summary, the B-Y model is characterized by top-notch and properly trained employees, customer responsiveness in both delivery and access to quality training, the right application of technology, and leadership with a strategic vision. It works.



B-Y's Warren, Michigan branch

## A Peek Inside

Below, department supervisor, Mario Alvarez, prepares a massive 400-ton press for the operations of the day.

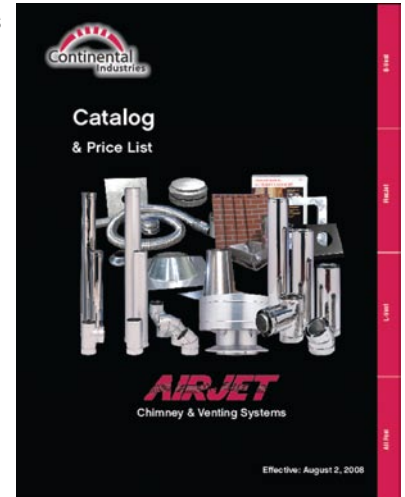


## New AirJet Catalog

Available this month, is our new and anxiously awaited AirJet Catalog & Price List. With more than 100 pages, this document is a one-stop shop, so to speak, for any information that you could want for the complete AirJet line.

The document includes two major sections: a Catalog section and a Reference section.

The Catalog section consists of neatly organized tables with product descriptions, part numbers, weights, carton quantities, retail pricing and photos. It is organized by the major portions of the AirJet line: B-Vent, Flex Jet, L-Vent and All Fuel.



A Reference section follows the catalog section and makes critical dimensional data available to you as well as instructions for using the contractor-friendly Snap-Lock design.

Request hard copies through your Continental Sales Manager or Customer Service Representative. A soft copy (pdf) is downloadable from the Continental web site (authorized login required).

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## Sweeps with Heart

Colby Hostedler was in a pickle. On a service call to Milton, Delaware for a wood stove and vent inspection, Colby, of Clean Sweep Chimney Service (Milford, DE), had noted serious safety concerns. His CSIA (Chimney Safety Institute of America) certification and NFPA (National Fire Prevention Act) training were in overdrive. He had told the home owner that the entire system was simply in too poor of a condition to be safely used.

“We’ll have to use it or freeze to death,” the home owner explained. Colby then discovered that this single mother managed a home on very limited income from cleaning houses, while providing for two disabled daughters. She did so without any government assistance.

As Colby explained the heartbreaking story to his father and Clean Sweep owner, Ernie Hostedler, creative wheels began to turn. Soon he put the word out on the discussion board of the National Chimney Sweep Guild (NCSG).

That’s where Dale Howard of Regional Chimney Supply, an AirJet distributor, saw the need. Before long, he was volunteering, along with several others. (And contacting us so that we could have a chance to participate.)

Then, on August 16 of this year, the resources and volunteers that Ernie had organized came together to perform a significant act of charity: the removal of the old system and the installation of a new wood stove and venting/chimney system.

For their time, generosity, and compassion, we extend our thanks to this ad-hoc team. Way to sweep!



Employees of Bylers Stove Shoppe, Matt & Rick, remove the old venting system and prepare the floor for the new wood stove



Colby Hostedler prepares the chimney surround as Lawrence Green prepares for its installation.



Skip and Tyler Cresswell prepare the ceiling for the new stove pipe and venting system installation



Project Lead, Ernie Hostedler deals with a member of the local press. (Oh well, somebody’s gotta do it. Right Ernie?)



From the ceiling cover (base support) through the attic and to the top of the cap—it's all AirJet.

**What it took:**

**Ernie Hostedler, CSIA, Clean Sweep Chimney Service** (<http://www.delawarechimneysweep.com>): Organized project, donated his time and time of his crew (**Colby Hostedler, Lawrence Green**), donated miscellaneous components, and fed the entire team.

**Skip Cresswell, CSIA, Ace Chimney Sweep** (<http://www.acechimneysweeps.com>): Donated his time and that of his son, **Tyler**.

**Dale Howard and Gary High, Regional Chimney Supply** (<http://regionalchimneysupply.com>): Donated their time and miscellaneous components. Photos also courtesy of Dale Howard.

**Bylers Country Store and Stove Shoppe** (<http://www.bylers.com/stove-shoppe.html>): Donated floor protection and the time of two employees (**Matt & Rick**) for delivery of new stove and installation assistance on remainder of job.

**Copperfield Chimney Supply** (<http://www.copperfield.com>): Donated the new Napoleon wood stove.

**Lindemann Chimney Service** (<http://www.lindemannchimneysupply.com>): Donated the R-CO chimney surround.

**Continental Industries** (<http://www.wellyoushouldknowbynow.com>): Donated the AirJet All Fuel Chimney system.

If you'd like to learn more about the National Chimney Sweep Guild or the Chimney Safety Institute of America, check out the following sites:

NCSG: <http://www.ncsg.org>

CSIA: <http://www.csia.org>



Kneeling (L-R): Skip, Ernie  
 Standing (L-R): Tyler, Colby, Gary, Matt, Dale, Lawrence (in witness protection behind Dale), & Rick

## Pick Any Two

By Ben H. Dorsey III

There are many areas in which companies can shine. Three, however, Quality, Service, and Price, have stood the test of time as being the fundamentals.

Conventional wisdom holds that a given company can only survive and thrive when offering no more than two of the three. It's the "pick any two" mentality. Often, a company will stand on just one. True, some companies try to break the mold and shine in all three arenas. They may even appear successful for a time. But in the end, at least one will fold. In my experience, no company can consistently offer all three—the finest quality and the best service at the lowest cost.

And that's understandable. Trying to maintain excellence or market leadership in all three areas is a tremendous drain on corporate resources. Further, there are natural "rivalries" that take place between the three titans of market success. Price and quality, for example, are often enemies.

(Gives a whole new meaning to the phrase, "mind your ps and qs" doesn't it?)



You might challenge yourself in attempting to discover the model used by various businesses.

Spotting the ones who operate on a single value is easiest. It's not hard, for example, to spot the "low price leader." By the same token, some companies are clearly driven by a singular mission of quality or stellar service.

Spotting those walking on two legs is a bit more challenging. Often, I find that the company itself is not aware that it has settled into a two-pronged approach to its market. And then there's the added complexity of companies who have identified their approach and are heading that way but not quite there yet.

How about your company? What's your approach to business success?

Us? That's easy:

Quality has been a foundational principle at Continental. We are passionate about it. That's not to say we're perfect. But continual improvement is alive and well here.

We have focused a good deal of attention on improving our service. We have the delivery component down pat.

And we've put the professionals and practices in place to be attentive to other customer needs.

Last but not least, we have proactively lowered our costs and increased our efficiencies in order to bring price-competitive products to the market. We know that this competitiveness is essential for **your** business success.

Yet, we will never be the low-price leader. Doing so would place us on an irreversible path to unacceptable quality and service. That is not our model. Instead, we prefer to discuss "value."

In most industries and particular markets therein, there is always this price-value tug of war going on. We prefer to lend our hands to the value side. While the "how much does it cost"



question is always valid, others become important when considering value. For instance: "How many returns and complaints am I going to get from that clearly inferior product?" Or, "How much more can I make as a result of higher turns due to more reliable delivery?"

But lest you think that I'm trying to pull a fast one on you, let's conclude by reverting to our original three: Quality, Service, and Price. The only question remaining is this one: In the long run, which two are most important to you?

### Sidebar

I use a similar model in evaluating my own work projects. On one memorable occasion several years ago, I was in a meeting with my boss and several other, more senior, professionals and managers discussing upcoming projects and priorities. An air of unrealistic expectations seemed to be settling in the room. Then, something I had read prompted me to stand, walk to the white board, and write: "FAST • CHEAP • GOOD."

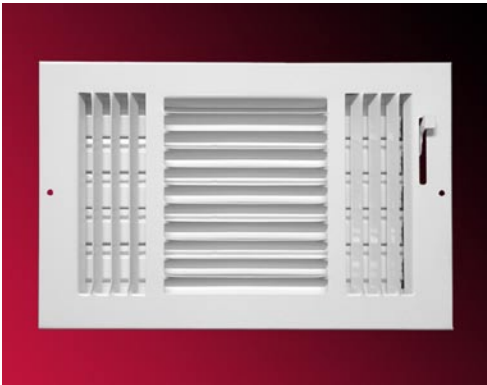
Then I turned to the meeting attendees and said: "Pick any two. If you want it fast and cheap, I can do it. But it won't be good. Oh, you want it good? And you want it fast? I can do that. But it'll cost you. You say you need to hold down costs and you need it to be good? I can do that too. But it'll take some time."

Now, I know what you're thinking: Did I get a reference for my next job? ☺

Actually, though, the gamble paid off. I was still employed and we left the meeting with more realistic expectations of deliverables.

## Featured Product—23 Series

Residential sidewall products are among the most visible of HVAC components to end users. This is the place for both good looks and solid performance. Enter our 3-way sidewall register, the 23 Series.



Available in both steel and aluminum (A23), this product sports 2 louvers per inch (1/3" spacing also available) in a 3-way deflection

pattern. Free area and effective area are maximized in our design, which includes patented innovations. The one-piece, wraparound collar provides superior rigidity. And the spring-loaded multi-shutter damper means that there will never be a customer callback for "noisy" registers.

We wrap it all up with in an electrocoat finish—guaranteed for complete coverage and long-lasting durability.

Crawl onto the world wide web to learn more about these and other Continental sidewall products. The spotlight is simply too bright for you to risk using our competitors' products!

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### Closing Line

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Before you criticize someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticize them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.

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Climate Change