

Manufacturer Spotlight

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Merit Brass Continues To Grow With Single-Minded Customer Focus

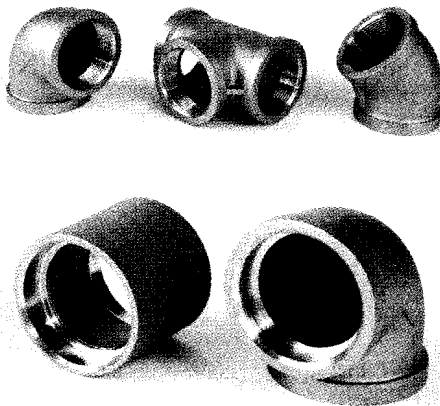
Established in 1937, Merit Brass' name is almost a misnomer. While brass and chrome-plated nipples, fittings and pipe remain extremely important to its business, Merit has also grown to be North America's leading producer of stainless steel nipples and a leading master distributor of stainless steel pipe, valves, fittings and flanges. With manufacturing capabilities in Cleveland, Ohio and distribution centers in Reno, Nev., and Dallas, Texas, Merit's able to offer the most important item it has to sell – service – on a national basis.

"Service is what is and what will always set us apart from our competition," says company President Marc Schlessinger. "My grandfather instilled this in everyone from the very beginning and all of our associates have always placed our customers first, which will always be the key to our success."

As part of Merit's commitment to customer service, processes and procedures are constantly being monitored and measured by Merit's ISO 9002 quality registration. "We measure everything that relates directly to customer service and satisfaction," says Edward Waters, vice president/operations. "We're confident that our non-conformance rates and fill-rates compare favorably with anyone in this industry. But as our own worst critics, we're never satisfied. Our

focus is to continuously drive fill-rates up and error-rates down."

Merit Brass has managed to grow even during challenging economic times in a very competitive industry. Alan Lipp, executive vice president, attributes this growth to continuously satisfying all customer needs and earning their confidence. "The current economic realities



make it imperative for wholesalers to operate more efficiently," Lipp says. "They're looking for trouble-free quality, service and exceptional turns. We believe that our customers' success and profitability is directly proportionate to ours. We've managed to develop many long-term relationships that are based on their trust in us to help them get the job done and to treat them right."

Merit Brass is focused on offering wholesalers the most comprehensive package of non-ferrous piping products and recently added a full line of import, investment cast M.S.S. SP-114 150-lb. stainless steel fittings (socket weld and threaded ends) to complement its package of 150-150-lb. standard pattern stainless steel fittings. Michael Charna, vice president/sales, views the M.S.S. SP-114 product line as an ideal addition to Merit's robust stainless steel product line. "We take great pride in making what we believe is the finest pipe nipple in the world," Charna says. "We can't afford to sell anything that's not up to the quality of our nipples and we've worked very hard to find vendors that share our uncompromising standards. With the addition of the M.S.S. SP-114 fittings, we are now a true, one-stop shop for the very best quality stainless steel fittings and nipples."

Value is what Merit was founded on and what the family management team believes is the key to its continued growth and success. The entire organization is focused on setting the industry's standard for the highest total value of goods and services, as evidenced by the company's value proposition: To enable our customers to deliver superior service to their customers through on-time, in-full and as-ordered products and services.

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