

## Family Owned Business Gains AAdvantage

For over fifteen years, the Hall family, under the direction of President Mike Hall, has strived for ultimate customer satisfaction by helping customers understand that tents and their accessories are a big investment. The staff at AAdvantage Tent Fittings believes that proper tent fittings are an important part of this investment and that is why the company is best known for its value added product, the AAdvantage Tent pole.

The unique design of this product combines technology, durability, stability, aesthetics, and ultimate economy to create an industry benchmark. The company enjoys a valued reputation with leading tent manufacturers, rental companies, special event companies, military prime contractors, and government buyers who represent procurement activities of Eureka Tents, Johnson Outdoors, Inc., Defense Supply Center Philadelphia and the United States Department of Agriculture.



Two generations of family members have moved AAdvantage Tent Fittings to the forefront of industry development. The purchase of a major tent rental company has given new team members unique insight as to the products that end users want. The AAdvantage product line has vastly expanded beyond tent poles and has become the after-market provider of choice among industry professionals. In September 2003, the company moved into a new, 3600 square foot modern building that provided room for

expansion, growth, and additional office space for current and future employees.

Under the leadership of second generation owners, Ben Hall and son-in-law, Brian Sylvester, a financial analysis was completed in Fall 2004 that examined opportunities that would increase customer base, sales, and net income for the company.



As the company prepared to celebrate its fifteen-year anniversary, the new managers felt that expansion was the key to providing increased long-term employment opportunities for family members and the local community. Success in the government contractor arena, as a prime and sub-contractor, indicated that the expansion plan offered solutions to cost and delivery issues for customers and would provide the foundation to create a long-term plan for continued business success and economic growth. Reports from the in-depth analysis indicated constructing the wood products manufacturing facility would create six full-time jobs and if plans for the new lighting division were implemented, at least another three positions would be created.

In preparing for the expansion, Mike Hall contacted the Manufacturing and Technology Small Busi-



ness Development Center at the The Ohio State University South Centers in Piketon. Jerry Driggs and Dave Boulay counseled AAdvantage in applying Lean manufacturing principals to the design of the new shop floor layout for maximum efficiency, to optimize product flow and prepare for future business growth. Dave and Jerry also helped Mike develop a training schedule to apply for an Enterprise Ohio training grant.

On August 27, 2004, a groundbreaking ceremony was conducted to celebrate the expansion (an additional 11,100 square foot manufacturing and office facility) at the current business location, 11661 Pleasant Valley Road, Chillicothe, Ohio. Local construction labor was acquisitioned to build both the existing building constructed in Fall 2004, and the new manufacturing facility.

Mike Hall is active in several community organizations, including being the current Board of Directors Chairman for the Chillicothe-Ross Chamber of Commerce and the Co-Chairman of the Chillicothe Ross Chamber of Commerce Business Growth Council. He has most recently been nominated for an SBA Family Owned Business award.

*AAdvantage Tent Fittings*  
11661 Pleasant Valley Road  
Chillicothe, Ohio 45601  
Phone: 740.773.3015  
[www.aadvantagetent.com](http://www.aadvantagetent.com)