

# **ATN Success Story** **1st Quarter 2013**

**Client:**  
**Hydratech Industries**

**City:**  
**Robertsdale**

**State:**  
**Alabama**

**Zip**  
**36567**

**NAICS Code:**  
**333995 – Fluid Power Cylinder and Actuator Manufacturing**

**Client Size:**  
**75**

**Projects/Events:**  
**Hydratech – Quality Management System**

**Success Story Title:**  
**AU-ATN helps company grow sales and global client base**

## **Company Profile:**

Hydratech Industries (HI), located in Robertsdale, Ala., specializes in the design, manufacture, and repair of large-scale (large-bore, long-stroke) hydraulic cylinders. The company also assembles wind turbine components. Company products are used in various applications within the primary metals, scrap & waste, oil & gas exploration, mining, and alternative energy industries. The company's Robertsdale plant has been in business for 11-years and acquired from Cylinder Repair Components in 2010; presently it employs 75 full-time personnel.

## **Situation:**

Hydratech began as a local/regional manufacturing and repair operation to serve the large-scale hydraulic cylinder industry. As a fledging manufacturer, whose product requirements undergo stringent specification and quality requirements, the company needed to implement a quality management system in order to be competitive. AU-ATN was enlisted to assist in the company's early days and over time, and on a gradual scale, has helped the company develop a quality management system, develop its quality auditing and management skills, prepare for ISO audit, and attain ISO certification.

**Solution:**

AU-ATN's relationship and assistance is a story involving a growth relationship over the company's lifetime to-date. Initial work toward establishing an industry-recognized quality management system began in the 2003 timeframe. With AU-ATN assistance, Hydratech attained ISO certification in 2004, and after being purchased by its present ownership, was reaccredited in July 2011. AU-ATN's latest assistance has been in developing an NCR database -- an on-line system for tracking, trending and communicating non-conforming components. According to Hydratech officials, the assistance has been directly equated to the company's growth and international presence.

**Results:**

Results produced multiple impacts: Hydratech has expanded its employee base over this assistance period from 10 employees in the beginning, to a current employee base of 75 full-time personnel. The manufacturing and repair facility has expanded in physical size to about four times its original square footage. Additionally, its Robertsdale, Ala. plant houses the U.S. manufacturing centers for both the company's fluid power and wind power cylinder components. Sales have grown from about \$2 million annually to more than \$25 million annually. The company also now has manufacturing facilities in the countries of Denmark and China, in addition to the Alabama plant. Its client base now includes not only regional customers, but also, a number of Fortune 500 firms.

AU-ATN's assistance in the most recent addition to the quality management system – the non-conforming components (NCR) database – has helped the company improve its communication efficiency across the board. According to company officials, the NCR database has enabled Hydratech to better track and identify the causes of non-conforming product; to discover solutions and corrective actions; and to more efficiently and effectively share this information company wide.

Non-conformance is partly due to the changing environmental conditions, which can cause rust on the product, say Hydratech quality management officials. The problems involve finish issues, but solutions and corrective actions were difficult to determine and share across the international boundaries and the varying climate conditions. The new NCR database has made management and mitigation much more efficient and centralized, according to Hydratech.

**Testimonials:**

"I don't think that we could ever have achieved the progress that we have without the help of AU –ATN," says Hydratech Quality Manager Eric Blakeney. Blakeney adds that the company places a high value on the assistance and capabilities of ATN and plans to continue its already long-standing relationship with AU-ATN as the company grows its international market share.

Contact: Eric Blakeney, 251.947.5300; [esb@hydratech-industries.com](mailto:esb@hydratech-industries.com)

###