

Niles Industrial Coatings

Award-winning Service & Safety for Over 55 Years

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Ryan Niles, CEO of Niles Industrial Coatings (NIC), is implementing innovative real-time technology into the company's daily operations, something he says his competitors are lacking.

"No one else in the country, maybe even the world, is doing what we're doing at NIC," explains Ryan. "When my guys go out in the field I can see exactly where they are, what they're doing, when they clock in and out and estimate how long it will take them to complete a job. The industrial painting industry is

relatively unsophisticated, but we're using this technology to our advantage."

Ryan has grown the Michigan-based company his grandfather started in 1958 into a leader in innovation and safety. "My grandfather and his sons founded NIC originally as Genesee Painting, growing it into the No. 12 largest painting company in the U.S.," he shares. "We were later sold to Kenny Industrial in 2000, which for quite some time, supported big names in the auto industry such as General Motors Corp., Ford and Chrysler."





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A Father-son Duo of Success

“I founded NIC in 2002 and began supporting large industrial clients like Dow Chemical and American Electric Power,” continues Ryan. “When Kenny Industrial went bankrupt in 2003, we bought back all of the Genesee Painting assets from the company and we’ve been serving an array of different commercial and industrial customers ever since.”

Years after its founding, the family-owned and -operated company remains stable. “I originally wanted to go to medical school after earning a degree in medical technology, but I came back to work with my father,” reveals Ryan. “I began to run the company in 2002. In 2005, I wanted to move the office and my father disagreed. It was the one and only disagreement we’ve had over the years, but he stepped aside and let me make the decision. It was his way of passing the torch, he said, ‘I might not agree with you, but I trust you and the decision is yours.’”

After years of learning from his father, Ryan knew he would always have his support, but it was time for him to take charge and make a few mistakes. “He said, ‘If you have a problem, don’t call me,’” recalls Ryan. “I obviously knew he would be there but it was his way of letting me do it on my own. But that’s the key to a good leader; making mistakes and learning from them.”



Now, Ryan's father works as a site manager with Dow Chemical, and the father-son dynamic has proven to be a huge success. "We have a great partnership," says Ryan. "Not a lot of family businesses work out that way, but my father and I work well together."

The father-son duo has expanded NIC's reach throughout the U.S. and Canada. "We're based in Fenton, Mich., but we now have four locations overall; two in Michigan, one in

Florida and one in Illinois," shares Ryan. "We're up to about 300 employees."

The company works with a broad range of commercial and industrial clients alike, providing valuable painting, as well as scaffolding through sister company Niles Plant Services (NPS), in addition to special coatings, concrete floor coatings, lead abatement, caulking, fireproofing, hydro blasting and sand blasting. NIC also delivers restorative and decorative painting services to ensure any clients' needs are met.

Real-time Management and Award-winning Safety

As one of the country's largest commercial and industrial painting contractors, NIC is leading the industry not only in performance, but also in safety and cutting-edge technology. "We have the advantage of real-time visibility," explains Ryan. "I can log in to our system, pull up a site and see a green dot, which shows me exactly where someone is working. I know when my crews arrived, signed on; even when they took lunch. This ensures our productivity."

With a name known for productivity and safety, NIC has been awarded some of the largest painting contracts in the nation. "We're currently at the University of Michigan Football Stadium," reveals Ryan. "We began this \$5 million job in April 2013 and its set to complete Aug. 16, 2013. We have 70 guys working every day to pull it off; it's a major undertaking for a short time period."

The company's reputation has earned it big-name clients such as Dow Chemical, General Motors, Caterpillar, U.S. Steel and Hemlock Semiconductor Group. "We really don't have to do a lot of advertising," admits Ryan. "Our reputation gets clients to come to us, but our safety and quality is the biggest selling point."

Not only is NIC well-recognized for trusted service, the company also has an award-winning safety record. "We recently received the CREST Award for 250,000 hours of work without a single incident or injury," notes Ryan. "Union contractors from all over the country submit their hours to qualify; I'd say over 1,000 contractors nationwide applied... and we won."

After 55 years in business, NIC has grown into a well-respected industry leader. By implementing real-time visibility, Ryan is able to monitor productivity and ensure his crews are operating efficiently and delivering the best quality work possible. The team at Niles Industrial Coatings continues to serve a wide range of commercial and industrial clients with a unique approach to a standard industry. •