



BUSINESS OF THE YEAR

Becht Engineering Co., Inc. Liberty Corner, Somerset County

Charles Becht IV, President



Becht Engineering Co. laid down high standards as quickly as it lined up projects after its founding 45 years ago.

Among the company's first big jobs was the design of a fiberglass plant in North Carolina. To reduce overhead and keep the project profitable, founder Charles Becht III tapped part-time help on nights and weekends. The move saved money, but it meant Becht often had to work around the clock.

On another early project, Becht Engineering overcame objections from a builder convinced the firm's design for a garbage transfer station would never work. It did—and it set a new standard for garbage transfer systems.

The company has grown and shifted its focus since it opened its doors in 1964. But innovation and hard work remain cornerstones at Becht Engineering.

Charles Becht III built the firm to serve architects and the building sector. His son, Charles Becht IV, joined the company in 1986 and quickly made his presence felt by bringing the same entrepreneurial spirit as his father.

The younger Becht established a business within Becht Engineering to serve the power industry and the process sector, which includes refineries and chemical plants. Services are geared toward improving safety and profitability.

Innovation continued in the next decade. Becht Engineering began tapping technical specialists who had retired but were interested in keeping a hand in their former industries. The practice has allowed Becht to find the right experts to meet any challenge that comes its way.

The firm is still evolving. In 2005, it created a logo to reinforce its brand among clients and prospective employees. A new slogan, "We Solve Problems," underscored the firm's conviction that it can handle whatever problems clients throw its way.

Three years ago, Becht added seasoned professionals from the refinery industry to help short-handed organizations run safe, efficient

projects on budget and on schedule.

The resulting growth over the last few years has handed the company a challenge as great as any faced by its clients. Business textbooks are littered with examples of companies that let growth get out of control.

To keep from becoming yet another casualty, Becht invested in financial systems, cultivated strong banking relationships and took measures to improve cash flow.

In addition, the firm developed a flexible staffing model that mixes full-time professionals with part-time experts who contribute their knowledge on an as-needed basis. Technology also has allowed the company to deliver services remotely and cut down on travel costs.

Becht Engineering measures growth in more than dollars. Its employees enjoy unlimited opportunities to advance professionally and, as a result, stick with the company for the long term.

A staff engineer with an idea, for example, became a division manager and then president of a spin-off company, Helidex. The company provides aluminum helicopter-landing platforms for ships and offshore installations around the world.

Another employee, who was hired as an office manager, now directs a major activity for the company, a promotion she earned for her dedication and accomplishments.

Indeed, developing the next generation of company leaders is one of the goals identified by Becht executives during strategic planning sessions held in late 2008.

Other goals include reaching sales of \$100 million in 2013, diversifying the business to boost revenue from intellectual property and expanding geographically. Becht aims to snag assignments in China and Australia and open offices in England and the Asia-Pacific region.

The list wouldn't be complete if it didn't include a desire to maintain the entrepreneurial spirit and small-company atmosphere that have helped make Becht a leader for nearly five decades. ▀



Becht Engineering Co., Inc. – Fast Facts

Year Founded: 1964

Products/Services: Consulting for the process and power industries.

Mission/Value Statement: Becht Engineering provides technically excellent engineering services, project management and engineered products. We are the company a client will go to when they need the job done right. We are a growing and profitable company, responsive to client needs, committed to excellence and poised to capture new and interesting opportunities.