



Anixter History

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In 1957, two brothers, Bill and Alan Anixter, started a business with a \$10,000 loan from their mother. They had an idea that would ultimately change the electrical wire and cable business. Until that time, distributors and wholesalers had to buy cable in bulk quantities directly from manufacturers. Lead times were long, quantities were fixed and flexibility was short.

Those two brothers soon revolutionized the wire and cable business by having an inventory of cabling on hand. Customers could buy just what they needed. Anixter Brothers, as their fledgling company was known at the time, offered customers something they never had before: service. Customers saw the value in that service, and within the first year, the brothers had made \$300,000 in sales. By 1966, annual sales grew to \$10 million. The main customers were still the distributors and wholesalers. In 1967, the company went public on the American Stock Exchange. In 1968, the Blue Book was written.

The Blue Book is Anixter's manual that describes the way Anixter treats its employees, customers and suppliers. In the early 1970s, Anixter decided that if it wanted the company to grow it would have to reach out beyond its core customer base of distributors and wholesalers and reach out to the end-users of wire and cable. As the '70s continued, the demand for wire and cable continued to grow. To meet the demand, Anixter opened additional locations in the United States and Canada. The company opened its first European location when Anixter United Kingdom was formed in 1972. Throughout the late '70s, Anixter ranked as the largest distributor of electrical wire and cable in North America.

Another important time in Anixter's development started with the dissolution of a well-known company. In 1984, a federal court ordered the breakup of AT&T, which created new markets for voice and data

products. Responding quickly to meet these needs, Anixter filled the gap as a source where end-user enterprises, the new Bell companies and newly emerging installers could still find access to the necessary voice products. After the first BNC connector was sold, Anixter began to move into the data communications business, while still maintaining its reputation as the electrical wire and cable experts. By 1986, sales had reached another all-time high of \$650 million. In 1986, Itel, a NYSE listed holding company, bought Anixter. Four years later, on December 28, 1991, Anixter hit the \$1 billion mark in sales.

In 1989, Anixter, in response to customer requests, released the first version of its Levels program. The Levels program was the first-ever written performance specification for data cabling systems. Before the Levels program, customers had no idea whether the cabling system they purchased could support the 10 megabits per second Ethernet they were just starting to implement. In the 1990s, Anixter gave the Levels' specifications to the industry standards bodies who renamed them Categories. The Category 6 cable sold today is a direct result of Anixter's Levels program from 1989.

As the 1990s unfolded, Anixter began an aggressive international expansion program. Locations were opened in additional cities in North America and Europe as well as in a number of countries in Latin America, Asia and Australia. By the end of the decade, Anixter had operations in 41 countries. Also during this decade, Anixter acquired Pacer Electronics to expand its presence in the electrical wire and cable OEM marketplace.

In 1995, in an effort to help customers better understand the performance issues associated with an enterprise network, Anixter opened its Interoperability Lab in Mt. Prospect, Illinois. To this day, Anixter is the only distributor to have such a lab, and it is still the

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only one of its type to be certified by Underwriters Laboratory (UL). Today, it is located in the Glenview headquarters facility and is called The Infrastructure Solutions Lab. As the '90s ended, sales closed in on the \$3 billion mark.

As the first decade of the new millennium progressed, Anixter pursued growth on three important fronts.

Early in the decade, Anixter began to build a presence in the video surveillance and access control marketplace through the addition of new security product lines and sales specialists targeted to serve this market. By decade's end, Anixter was one of the largest distributors of security products in the world with sales in excess of \$650 million per year.

In 2010, Anixter continued to expand into the security market through the acquisition of CLARK Security Products, a distributor of security products and locksmith supplies to commercial, industrial and government entities throughout the U.S. Through this partnership, Anixter continued to position itself as a market leader in the access control and video surveillance markets in North America and internationally. Total combined physical security sales grew to \$1 billion in 2011.

Also in this decade, Anixter expanded into the OEM supply market through a series of acquisitions and consolidation activities that propelled the company to an industry-leading position as a global supplier of fasteners and other small components to original equipment manufacturers, with annualized sales of approximately \$1 billion.

Lastly, Anixter continued to expand its global footprint by opening new locations in Asia, Latin America and the Middle East.

Today, with approximately 8,000 employees and over 100,000 customers in 50 countries, Anixter's annual sales are approximately \$6.1 billion. Just as in 1957 when the Anixter brothers provided cables cut to length, Anixter continues to offer services that its customers just can't find anywhere else.

The future holds new challenges and opportunities, and Anixter is poised to offer its customers the products and services they need. Whether it's network cabling for the IP convergence of voice, video, and data; power, control or instrumentation cabling for a new industrial facility; or a production components supply chain program for an original equipment manufacturer, Anixter has the knowledge, commitment and expertise to help its customers remain productive, secure and future-ready.

A HISTORY SNAPSHOT

1957	1970s	1980s	1990s	2000	2002-2011
Industrial Wire & Cable	CATV	Data Cabling Network Products	Global Expansions Wire & Cable OEM	Telecom	Security Products Acquisitions to expand presence in the security, OEM and fastener markets