

Member Spotlight: Classic Automation LLC

By Kevin Donahue
Director of
Membership and
Business Development



About Classic Automation LLC

Classic Automation LLC, which provides spare parts for installed control systems, was founded in 2003 in the home of Fritz Ruebeck, president of the company. "The business started out of necessity as I was laid off and wanted to stay in the area," Ruebeck said. As with many new businesses, the venture struggled at first. "We had the wrong business model. It started as an auction venue, but we soon changed to providing parts directly," says Ruebeck, whose previous job provided insight into the market for spare parts.

"Most people do not know what control systems are, or the extent that they are used in manufacturing and process industries," Ruebeck said. "Specialized computers are used to control machinery and industrial processes that make most things that we use every day. Control systems need to last for many years or even several decades. With just-in-time manufacturing, a failure of a single control

system module can be a critical emergency that stops production at an entire facility. Over 35 percent of Classic Automation's sales are emergencies that require parts to be shipped the same day. Over 60 percent of its orders are international, and it has sold direct to customers in over 65 countries."

Challenges

Like many growing businesses, Classic Automation, which employs 16 locally, is currently wrestling with space constraints. Ruebeck moved the business to its current location on Monroe Avenue in 2006. "At the time of the move, there were over 10,000 circuit boards in my house. The entire house was used for the business except my kids' rooms," Ruebeck said. Now, for the company that has been on the Top 100 list of fastest growing companies for the last three years, it seems another move is imminent. "Our business is currently capacity constrained," he said. "We need more warehouse space, office space, lab space, and parking. We have plans to move to a larger facility in the second half of the year."

Rochester Business Alliance Member

Classic Automation has been a member of the RBA for five years. "With over 99 percent



Employees of Classic Automation LLC

of our sales outside of New York state, RBA helps us be a part of the Rochester business community. In addition to the Top 100, we have gone on tours of local companies and have received assistance with export documentation. We also support the related efforts of Unshackle Upstate to improve the business environment," Ruebeck said. ★

Contact Info

Fritz Ruebeck, founder and president
Classic Automation LLC
795 Monroe Ave.
Rochester, NY 14607
(585) 241-6010
www.classicautomation.com

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