

Spring maker looks to future

GREENVILLE — When many businesses were being conservative during the recession, Fox Valley Spring Co. opted instead to take a chance, and it paid off.

In June, the company moved into 28,000 square feet of newly built space, which included a 3,000-square-foot office addition and 25,000 square feet of manufacturing space. Its entire facility at N915 Craftsmen Drive now measures 53,000 square feet and it still has plenty of room to grow.

On Thursday, the company hosted a Fox Cities Chamber of Commerce & Industry business after-hours event to showcase its renovation.

Russell Stang, who along with several investors launched the company in 1989, is optimistic growth his company now enjoys is sustainable.

"We've been able to bring in more equipment and added several employees, and probably will add another six employees over the next year," said Stang, the company's president and now sole owner of the business.

The equipment will allow the custom spring and wire form manufacturer to expand its capabilities and grow into other specialized areas, including stamping. Its products

have assorted applications, including lawn and garden equipment, furniture, medical equipment and the defense industry.

Its customers sell products around the world and opportunities are plentiful, said Charly Klein, vice president of sales and marketing.

Stang said long-term plans are to employ up to 60 people at his Greenville facility. Growth could involve acquisition of businesses that produce similar products or opening manufacturing sites either in the southeastern or southwestern regions of the country, Stang said.

"We're always looking for different businesses to buy, but making sure they still are similar to what we do," he said.

Planned growth strategies contributed to the company's success as the country was suffering through one of its worst recessions in history.

Klein said it's not uncommon for businesses

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to pull back when the economy is down and appreciated that Stang chose to **invest** and seek out business.

"Most owners would have cut back on advertising, marketing and sales, but Russ let us do the opposite," Klein said. "We hired another sales person and we were out knocking on doors when everyone else wasn't. A lot of our growth came because our customers saw us out there."

Future expansion will depend on the economy, Klein said.

"We want to grow as a company, but clearly the economy will play a factor in that one way or another," he said.

At a glance

What: Fox Valley Spring Co., Greenville

What it does: Custom spring and wire form manufacturer

Employees: 42 full time

Top executive: Russell Stang, president/owner

Website: www.foxvalleyspring.com

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