

with **Dan Seger**
Perry Technology Corporation



GS: *Could you tell me about the company's beginnings?*

DS: Perry Technology Corporation, which was originally known as the T.M. Perry Company, was founded by Thomas M. Perry, who was a physicist by education. He was involved in Naval ordinance development during World War II, and he found a need for precise and unique gearing that would fit in his inventions of proximity fuses and ordinance deployment fusing mechanisms. When he wasn't able to find what he needed, he started up a little shop in his basement to make the gears himself. After the war, he continued his gearing pursuits and eventually got involved with companies like Hamilton Standard, developing gearing for control systems and slowly starting to build the business. Well, the business really took off, and in 1955 he built a 7,500 square foot facility right across the street from his home and started manufacturing all the gears that he had helped Hamilton Standard to design.

GS: *It's interesting that a physicist started a gear manufacturing company.*

DS: That's true, but it helped make the company what it is, because he became known for his ability to manufacture odd gears with difficult geometries that others wouldn't tackle. He would take on high-helix internals and face gears, and he even developed new manufacturing methods and held many patents. He earned a reputation as being able to do that kind of work, and his son, Lans, who took the company over in 1985, has tried to carry that reputation forward.

GS: *How has he gone about retaining, and building upon, that reputation?*

DS: When Lans took over, he wanted to grow the company, and he found that he needed to diversify and develop a larger customer base. So he went after manufacturing higher quantity gears and products along with the lower quantity, more complex ones, while still placing the emphasis on the quality and precision that Perry has always been known for. He also added new CNC capabilities including high production auto-loaded hobbing, shaping, inspection, turning, four-axis machining, thread, and ID-OD grinding. We now have three locations, with 83,000 square feet of facility space, and we employ 80 people.

GS: *Aren't you still involved primarily with aerospace, and don't you have some big projects in the works?*

DS: Yes, and the joint strike fighter program is a big one that's coming up in the future. Everyone's hoping that that's going to be the replacement fighter for the older ones around the world. It's supposed to be a huge program. We're involved with some systems that are currently being used on other military aircraft that it's rumored will be used on the joint strike fighter. We've also been involved with the large commercial aircraft manufacturers, Airbus and Boeing. But smaller planes are in demand these days, too. With more and more business travel, people are traveling shorter distances. There is a worldwide need for regional jets, which we've also been involved with.

GS: *What do you enjoy most about your work?*

DS: I enjoy working with customers on new designs and being able to offer them technical advice that helps make their product a success. Because when they're successful, we're successful. I also enjoy the experiences that working in this industry provides. I took a tour of the space shuttle *Endeavor* while it was in the hangar in Palmdale, California, where they manufactured all the space shuttles, and that was exciting. I got to walk up on the scaffolding and touch it and take a look inside. During the same trip I was watching B117 stealth fighters flying in and out of the adjoining airforce base. It's been wonderful, the experiences that being in this industry has offered me—things I've seen that other people haven't. That and knowing that the components we manufacture are used in the most highly sophisticated mechanisms found in the world today. 📺

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