

QUEST

SAFETY PRODUCTS



PROTECTING WORKERS



ANY ENVIRONMENT

Quest Safety Products is a trusted partner with the right safety supplies for any environment. The company brings vast safety knowledge, personalized customer service and a range of products on which its customers have come to depend.



Written by Jessica Ferlaino

Quest Safety Products is a designer, manufacturer and distributor of safety products and industrial supplies. The company's focus is on PPE, fall protection, and protective garmenting.

As safety and risk mitigation increases for industries across the board, the role of Quest Safety Products has become ever greater. Customers rely on safety distributors as a consistent supply chain partner. If a product is critical to a company's safety, Quest stocks it in its warehouse. Many other items are drop-shipped to customers directly from the vendor.

Sam Yadav, president and managing principal, explained how Quest Safety Products' size is positive for its growing customer base. "Because of our size and customer focused orientation, we are able to respond to customers' needs quickly. Big box companies are usually unable to give customers individual attention and fast turnaround.

"We recently moved to downtown Indianapolis from one of the suburbs to better serve our largest customers. When issues arise we can respond quickly with necessary products. We will

figure out how to make it happen, and they all have access to me because it is important to me personally that we meet their expectations and protect their workers."

Though the company's history dates back to before Yadav acquired it, Quest Safety Products has changed under new leadership.

"I bought Quest twenty years ago. I was brought in to help them increase sales, as they didn't have a very strong sales force at the time, and one of the things we did was to start understanding who our customer was. It was a good operational team, but they weren't focused on how to service the customers."

"Our goal is partnering with companies to protect their workers in any environment."

In 1997, with a modest team of six people, Quest Safety Products sought out new opportunities, building from its strength in the construction industry. "We did a really good job of stocking what they needed, understanding that market and being a technical expert and we started growing," Yadav noted. The company's success has come from listening to the needs of the customer and developing a supply chain with multiple layers of support, including an e-commerce and mobile platform.

Quest goes out of its way to ask the customer what is important to them and the common answer is: technical expertise, a consistent supply chain and quick response—three things Quest is well-placed to deliver.

For Yadav and his team, "that quick response showed customers that they could trust us; they saw that we were going to take care of them, that we would return calls quickly, and that we would deliver when we said we were going to deliver." With increased trust came additional growth.

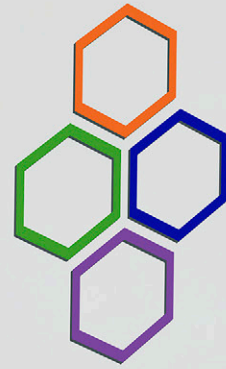
Quest Safety Products, a registered minority-owned business enterprise (MBE), expanded its focus, products and services into the construction, electrical/utilities and pharmaceutical markets. It also serves industrial, manufacturing, nuclear, environmental, life sciences and food processing customers.

The company's diverse product availability is vital to the protection of its customers' workers, products and facilities. The company carries everything from personal protective ►►



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► equipment (PPE) and disposable protective apparel to fall protection, confined space solutions, clean room equipment and traffic control supplies. Its products do more than keep people safe; they provide an excellent return on investment.

Yadav provided an example of the kinds of costs savings and value Quest Safety Products brings to its customers. “We had a situation where a customer was using a wonderful disposable garment, and it did a great job for them. What we came to find out was, they were overprotecting the workers for their current need. That overprotection was needlessly costing the customer money,” he said.

“If we can’t find the product to fit their needs, we’ll develop a product around their specifications.”

“By auditing the needs of the environment we found that workers were using single-use garments that would last eight hours but were needed for only thirty minutes shifts. Quest designed a single-use garment that was more appropriate for the timeframe needed in that environment, at a large cost savings. The new garment also provided more comfort for the workers and increased productivity overall due to the design.”

Serving customers means so much more than just making a sale; it means focusing on the people, understanding the safety and workplace hazards and identifying products and solutions to address various needs.

“It isn’t about Quest selling more product. It’s Quest showing that we’re an integral part of our customer’s ability to provide a safe work environment and do it in a quick manner. That’s an example of what we do in the marketplace,” noted Yadav.

The sales representatives at Quest Safety Products participate in over 150 hours of safety equipment and OSHA regulations training. They regularly coordinate demonstrations, training sessions and product audits to make customers aware of the advantages of having the right product and equipment.

“We have seven salespeople working in the Midwest and Northeast on a regular basis. They also travel out to the Southeast and West Coast, and then we have another twenty people

who are operational: customer service, accounting, purchasing, warehouse, IT and marketing housed here in Indianapolis,” said Yadav.

As a newly relocated employer in one of Indianapolis’ Historically Underutilized Development Zones (HUD), it is a goal of Yadav’s to increase the number of employees from this zone. The goal is that between thirty-five and forty-five percent of workers will be from this zone, offering people the opportunity to learn through meaningful employment and enabling Quest to get closer to the communities it serves.

“It’s really exciting. We’ve been in downtown Indy for four months now, and you can see the calibre of individuals we’re attracting who are excited because they didn’t have this opportunity before. The other thing is we’re closer to all of our customers, so they get to see how we’re trying to help build a community so it’s sustainable.”

As a member of Safety Marketing Group (SMG), one of the largest safety buying groups, Quest has robust buying power, manufacturer support and on-time distribution capabilities.

“If we can’t find the product that will help them, we’ll develop the product,” said Yadav proudly. “Over twenty percent of our sales are because of niche products that Quest has developed along the way.”

One of these products is Quantumwear suits. Quantumwear is a disposable garment that addressed a shortcoming of other disposable garments currently on the market. A gap in ►►



TG Jobsite
Photo credit: Christopher Whonsetler

“The company’s success has come from listening to the needs of the customer and developing a solution with multiple layers of support.”

▶ garments, between the zipper and the respirator, could leave a person vulnerable to contamination in certain environments. The previously accepted solution to that problem was using a piece of duct tape to cover the area, which Quest and many customers viewed as unacceptable.

“We developed a patented neck closure system that covers the exposed area of the user,” described Yadav. “We also added patented straps to the exterior of the suits to enable users to remove the suit without contaminating themselves in the process.

Quest Safety Products also coordinates training related to products, applications and best practices. Education and training is extremely important to ensure a culture of safety is adopted.

“While we sell product, we coordinate free training. A lot of our large contractors have safety week on-site events. We become a part of that safety week program and bring in subject matter experts on the areas that the contractors want to cover. We build and support safety incentive programs, offer cost savings, and also coordinate site audits and fall protection inspections for our customers,” said Yadav.

Quest Safety Products has become a true partner to customers in every regard. A fine example of its commitment to developing associations with customers is its work with Gaylor Electric, one of the largest electrical contractors in the Midwest and one of Quest’s most valued relationships.





Warehouse
Photo credit: Christopher Whonsetler

“One of the things Gaylor wanted to do was build a partnership with a safety company that would service all their locations throughout the United States but, more importantly, be a technical resource,” Yadav explained. Quest, in turn, benefitted from Gaylor’s growth.

Going above standard service for its customers, Quest Safety Products has come together with its group of fifty-two distributors to launch a network called Safetynetwork.me, an online platform where customers can gain access to information, best practices and educational resources.

Quest Safety Products is also part of Safeopedia.com, a free online product and resource tool that has a group of the distributors from Safetynetwork.me backing it. Safeopedia.com

has generated a great deal of activity and interest, approaching 100,000 views per month.

Continuous progress plays an important role in Quest Safety Products’ success and information is gathered and evaluated in order to identify potential areas of improvement. Warehouse product cycle counts are one way for Quest to ensure consistent service when it is needed most.

“Quest’s products do more than keep people safe; they increase productivity and provide an excellent return on investment.”

“Why that is so important is that we’re protecting lives, and if they don’t have the product in the right size and the right dimensions, in terms of safety, that worker might not be able to work that day, and that’s not good for our customer,” Yadav explained.

“Our motto: we help you protect your workers in any environment. It is an important part of our philosophy and our culture here. We know, at the end of the day, that’s what we do for our community, for society, and I think it’s a noble goal. This is what our customers expect from us,” acknowledged Yadav. ■

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