

A Conversation with ...

Paul Tardiff, Co-Owner Coast Compressor Company Huntington Beach, California

Since 2002, Coast Compressor has been providing compressed air service and sales for a wide range of industrial customers in southern California. We spoke with Co-Owner Paul Tardiff about his approach to business.



Tell us something about how you got started.

Coast Compressor started in September 2002 as a “garage business” that we ran right out of my house. My co-owner, Sherri Rice, and I both came from the air compressor industry. She had experience in purchasing and operations, so she managed the office. I had experience in sales plus turning wrenches was not new to me, so I sold equipment and worked on machines. We each emphasized our strengths and I think that’s what got the business growing. Within a year we moved into an industrial building and hired some employees. Today we have 10 employees and serve customers all around southern California in industries such as pharmaceuticals, medical devices, semiconductors, and paint shops.

When did you start working with Atlas Copco?

January 1st 2011. Before that we worked with some competitive brands, but the support and products we receive from Atlas Copco, with access to a much fuller product range, made the switch a great business choice for us and we have not looked back since.

What made you go into business for yourselves?

We started a business because we thought we could do things just a little bit better by giving customers what they’re looking for at a competitive price. Because I was in compressor sales I knew about the competition, which is huge in our industry. I’m still in sales, accounting for about 70% of the total for Coast Compressor. But in my experience service is what keeps customers. We can service any brand of rotary screw, reciprocating or scroll compressor.

What is the secret to your success?

We run our business on a personal relationship basis. Our long-time customers stick with us, and we bring in new customers by responding and reacting to their needs quicker and better than the others. When there is an opportunity to respond, like when a customer is down or needs additional equipment or is having a problem with moisture in the system, we work to respond faster and do the job better than the competition.

What do you think about the new GA VSD+ compressor with the patented vertically aligned motor design?

At first glance I think there’s an excellent opportunity for Atlas Copco in the lower horsepower VSD models. In California we have one of the higher energy rates around, so customers are looking for compressors that cost less to operate. We do MBox installations and provide customers with energy audits and assist them with rebates from power providers. That helps promote the sales, especially in California. If we can show that kind of return on investment in this new product, it gives to our business, but most importantly is provides our customers with an excellent product.