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History of KJ Electric

After 26 years of selling electric motors for other people, in 1981, Ken Jacobs bought out his boss and acquired an antiquated electric motor distribution and repair service with two business locations in Syracuse and Binghamton, New York.

At the time of its purchase, the facilities of the new “KJ Electric” were deteriorating, much of its inventory was obsolete, and its repair shop was running on makeshift equipment. All record systems were unorganized and accounts receivable problems regularly exceeded 90 days. In Jacob’s opinion, the company’s 11 employees were achieving far less than their potential. Annual revenues were less than \$1 million.

The external environment facing Jacob’s new business was even less friendly. New York State’s manufacturing recession was just beginning. The company’s largest customer, a \$100,000 per year account, would close its Syracuse operations in 1983.

Through wise investments in his own employees, state-of-the-art equipment, and strategic manufacturer relationships, Jacobs slowly built KJ Electric from the ground up.

To begin the turn-around, Jacobs implemented a program of hands-on employee training, including after-hours product training meetings. As employees developed skills, they were asked to teach others – everything from product characteristics to customer service. As KJ Electric’s manufacturer relationships grew stronger, it became a standing policy for the distributor’s staff to also be regularly trained by the manufacturer’s engineers. Today, all the staff members at each of KJ Electric’s facilities still regularly attend weekly “Monday Night Training Meetings.”

To date KJ Electric has a strong partnership with all of their manufacturers. In total KJ Electric distributes for over 40 different manufacturers. Some of the accolades KJ Electric has been awarded include the following, listed below.

-Since the beginning of their partnership together **Fuji Electric** has named KJ Electric as one of their top distributors. KJ Electric has become one of the Premier distributors of Fuji Electric VFD’s.

-KJ Electric was award *Preferred* and *Elite Distributor* status with **Eaton Electric**. The strong partnership between Eaton and KJ Electric, has made KJ the Elite distributor when it comes to VFD’s and OEM Controls.

-**Danfoss Drives** has named KJ Electric *Distributor of the Year* multiple times, out of all distributors in North America. Danfoss as well named KJ Electric to *The Danfoss Gold Club of Distributors*, a distinction only given to the top 2% of Danfoss’ nationwide distributor network.

-KJ Electric has been named one of **Siemens**, *Distributor’s of Excellence*, for receiving Elite Status in their sales programs.

-The partnership between manufacturer **Teco-Westinghouse** and KJ Electric is very strong. KJ Electric has been named among Teco-Westinghouse’s *Top 10 Distributor’s* multiple times, for

showing outstanding sales performance. KJ Electric is also ranked as the *Largest Teco-Westinghouse Distributor* in the Nation.



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-**Marathon Electric** and KJ Electric have had a partnership since the start of the company. Marathon awards KJ Electric annually among their top distributors and a premier distributor for Marathon motors.

From the beginning of KJ Electric Ken Jacobs realized that he'd need to overhaul and expand his existing facilities to be able to service industrial customers to the level they would require. To date, Jacob's expansion—which still continues today—is the equivalent of a \$10 million investment in property and state-of-the-art equipment.

In 1988, KJ Electric opened a branch in Rochester, NY.

In 1989, KJ Electric moved its **Corporate Headquarters** to its present location on East Molloy Road in Syracuse. The 130,211 sq. ft building houses 91,594 sq. ft. of distribution warehouse, a 19,402 sq. ft. motor remanufacturing/repair shop, a 9,305 sq. ft. UL-approved Industrial Control Panel Fabrication Shop and the company's centralized administrative offices.

The same year, KJ Electric opened its **Albany Branch**, on Arrowhead Lane, in Cohoes—an 8,500 sq. ft facility which includes a stocked distribution warehouse and a motor repair shop. In 2014, KJ Electric moved and expanded the Albany facility to a new location at 146 Railroad Ave. The new facility is 18,000 square feet includes a warehouse, repair shop and administrative offices.

In 1991, KJ Electric built and moved into its new **Binghamton Branch** facility, on Corporate Drive—a 24,920 sq. ft distribution warehouse and motor repair shop.

In 1993, KJ Electric opened its **Buffalo Branch** on Fire Tower Road in Tonawanda. The expansion of the branch's preexisting building from 6,000 sq. ft. to 30,000 sq. ft. – to enlarge the branch's distribution warehouse and add a new state-of-the-art, on-site motor repair/remanufacturing shop was completed in January of 2000. In 2013, KJ Electric expanded the Repair capabilities in the Buffalo facility, adding on new equipment and several new employees.

In 1995, a new **Rochester Branch**—including a 15,000 sq. ft. distribution warehouse and motor repair shop was opened on Pixley Industrial Parkway Extension.

KJ Electric is proud to be a concrete business in Upstate New York and in the Syracuse community, with a history of over 30 years and experience that exceeds in total over 400 years collectively.

Today, KJ Electric primarily distributes electric motors, drives, controls, motor parts, and power transmission products. The company specializes in motor repair, motor remanufacturing, servo and electronic board repair and industrial control panel fabrication. As a privately owned company, KJ Electric employs a staff of 122 and generates revenues in excess of \$22 million annually.