

TechniGraphics ‘gold standard’ in security data

By LANCE WHITE
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Last year, TechniGraphics was called the ‘crown jewel of Wooster’ by the city’s director of administration.

This year, because of its dedication to quality, TGS has gone from a crown jewel to being the ‘gold standard’ of Homeland Security data. According to Dee Vaidya, president of TGS, that’s how its biggest customer refers to the Wooster-based multinational company’s geospatial data that conveys information via visual information systems.

It’s clear from talking with Vaidya, recognition of TGS’ quality by customers is a point of pride. With an ISO 9000 certification, a status that requires rigorous adherence to quality procedures, ‘TGS is one of an elite group of manufacturers,’ said Daryl L. Revoldt, who worked in Ohio’s Department of Development during the Taft administration.

Revoldt has joined TGS as director of government relations, and he hopes his contacts in Columbus and Washington, D.C., will help Vaidya continue to grow TGS, which the company has done plenty of in the past year. While continuing its focus on digital mapping, TGS has expanded into Product Lifecycle Management, an effort initiated by Steve Nichols, director of PLM Business Development.

According to Nichols, PLM is a process in which 3-dimensional product data is created, managed and used in computer simulations as a product evolves from cradle to grave. The product can be a consumer, industrial, defense product or an architectural structure.

In the future, Vaidya hopes TGS itself will become more involved in the capture of digital data using high-end 3D computer aided design (CAD) software. For now, the company helps customers such as aircraft manufacturers and government agencies to deploy the software in their facilities to design new products or analyze simulated structural data.

With TGS’ assistance, customers not only see how a product or structure looks upon assembly but how it might be produced or react in certain situations. For example, Nichols has a video demonstration showing the integration of the data into a virtual production facility, complete with moving robots and people.

One customer of TGS is the Department of Homeland Security, and TGS has helped the agency gather reliable information from across the nation. These data help pinpoint critical infrastructure. From that level of information, TGS can then zero in on a certain structure, such as a building, and give a 3D visual representation of that building starting from simple, digital map data.

Using the high-end 3D software, TGS helps the client view the building from a variety of angles, both inside and out. The customer can then use this information to predict such things as bottlenecks in production or safe evacuation routes.

TGS also is finding new customers through the U.S. Department of Defense's National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency and the Multinational Geospatial Co-Production Program, an effort by a group of friendly nations from around the world to produce high-resolution digital maps of areas of mutual interest.

One of the MGCP members wanted to map an area of interest and 'NGA brought them to us and introduced us,' Vaidya said. 'Now we've won a major contract.' Vaidya hopes TGS' ability to do more sensitive work in Wooster will lead to more government contracts and more jobs locally.

The new PLM business has led to an expansion of its workforce. Over the past year, TGS has added about 100 employees from acquisition of two PLM operations. Although those employees do not work in Wooster, TGS now has operations in seven states as well as The Netherlands and India.

'TGS provides real employment for the community,' Revoldt said. After hiring recent graduates from Ohio's universities for both mapping and PLM, Vaidya said TGS trains the new employees for what customers need. 'We make them aware of customer specifications and teach them to perform the quality of work necessary to meet those specifications.'

In the past year, TGS has also added senior staff. In addition to Revoldt, Vaidya brought in Jim Cleveland from Hudson as vice president and general manager, PLM, and Bob Adamov from Cuyahoga Falls as vice president for human resources. Meisha Lutsey, already with the company, was appointed vice president and general manager, GIS.

In addition to providing jobs, TGS is also active in the community in other ways. Vaidya said the company is a strong supporter of Relay for Life, and it has been generous in its support for the new Wayne County Public Library and for the College of Wooster's Kauke Hall renovation.

Vaidya's support for community is not surprising considering the support he and his wife, Mary, who is executive vice president at TGS, received from the community, especially Don Noble and his family. 'Dave still brings Alice through,' Vaidya said, referring to Don Noble's wife and son and clearly showing an appreciation for the support they provide.