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Frank Stiebel and employees of Stiebel Eltron Inc. outside the company's North American headquarters in West Hatfield, Massachusetts. The company is 92 years old.

PIONEERING SPIRIT GUIDES STIEBEL ELTRON THROUGH THE AGES

Company continues leadership in water-heating technologies

Two brothers continue their family's legacy without hesitation, compelled to see the big picture and committed to producing high-quality products.

The Stiebel Eltron Group has been in business for 92 years since its founding in 1924 by Dr. Theodor Stiebel, father to Frank and Ulrich Stiebel, who run the company today. Their father invented simple immersion water heaters, which revolutionized water heating and increased personal comfort at the time. Since then the company continued to develop many advances in water heating technology.

Today, the private \$520 million business has 2,800 employees. Water heaters remain its biggest seller. With a primary focus on wholesale distribution, the company operates from several worldwide locations, including one based in the United States and two in Germany, where the business launched.

"It's very fulfilling to imagine the small startup company in 1924 and then to see the worldwide company it has grown into," said Frank Stiebel, who works from the United States. His brother, Ulrich Stiebel, who still lives in Germany, oversees the company from there.

Stiebel Eltron United States headquarters in West Hatfield, Massachusetts is the sales, service, distribution and spare

parts facility for the Western Hemisphere. The operation has been located in North America since 1980.

Of his father, Frank Stiebel explained, "His impetus was good engineering and high-quality products and we are still following those high principles today. Simply, the best."

He added, "It is incredibly rewarding and also a bit humbling to know that so many people both depend on their livelihood for the company and also take pride in what they produce."

The generational links at Stiebel are still going strong with Elenora "Ellie" Stiebel, Frank Stiebel's daughter, working for the company.

"Not only have I learned a lot about the industry from my father, Frank, but also so much about business values and interpersonal relationship," said Ellie Stiebel. "We both bring a unique generational approach vital for modern business. Although I never met my grandfather, his innovation, courage and pioneering spirit inspires me to persevere through the pain-in-the-butt moments and also to enjoy the most rewarding accomplishments."

Frank Stiebel said he has no doubt that his father would be pleased to see his vision alive today and continuing on into the future. The family has learned that by working hard

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The Stiebel Eltron factory in Holzminden, Germany is the company's largest plant and oldest facility, and is headquarters for the worldwide group



Frank (l) and Ulrich Stiebel, sons of the founder of Stiebel Eltron, are co-owners of the company.



Theodor Stiebel, founder of Stiebel Eltron, and his wife Margret at an early 1950s trade fair to showcase their revolutionary water-heating equipment.

at making superior products, good things will come, he said. "Quality and the best technology go hand-in-hand," Frank said. "You can't be a success at all on the cutting edge of technology with goods that are not quality. And you can only go so far with high-quality goods that are not the latest technology."

Today, Stiebel Eltron has five manufacturing plants around the world specializing in producing market favorites, including whole house and point-of-use tankless electric and electric tank water heaters, heat pumps for domestic hot water and climate and more. There are two plants in Germany. The Holzminden plant primarily manufactures metal work and fabricates products. The Eschwege plant manufactures plastic parts. There are additional plants in Slovakia, Thailand (specializing in shower units and tankless water heaters) and China (specializing in electric space heaters).

The Temptra Plus whole house electric water heaters have a little gadget—called Advanced Flow Control—invented by Stiebel. "Nobody else has this and it helps elevate our product from the merely superior to the uniquely superior," Frank Stiebel said.

He continued, "Our Mini point-of-use water heaters are so well engineered and constructed that their failure rates are as near zero as a complex product can be."

Further, "Our Accelera heat pump water heaters are the

culmination—so far, as we never stop improving product—of research and development on tap water heat pumps that we started in the mid-1970s, long before almost anybody else."

Stiebel Eltron is known for high-quality, well-engineered products. The primary focus in product development has been on products that use less energy, are much safer and give the consumer higher levels of comfort, according to its website. This philosophy is still very much evident at Stiebel Eltron today. Stiebel Eltron is regarded as a very successful company in the environmental control and system sector of the industry.

Julius Goodman, head of marketing at Stiebel Eltron, stated, "One of the hallmarks for the company is customer service. The quality of the products is phenomenal, but we wouldn't be where we are without superb customer service."

Frank Stiebel's advice to his peers in the industry, or those just starting out with a dream, is, "You have to make very high-quality products and then everything else will follow, including commercial success."

He added that the company's success is rooted in "always pursuing the latest in engineering, being innovative, not resting on the limits of our products but always moving forward and pushing the envelope and making better and better products. Quality is very important."

To learn more, visit stiebel-eltron-usa.com. ■