

Pace names new CEO, grows site

Smith succeeds Kehoe, who in 1969 founded the electronics firm

By **ANDREA DECKERT**

Pace Electronics Corp. has a new CEO and is expanding its headquarters in Sodus, Wayne County, to include assembly lines.

Dawn Smith was named CEO in December. She succeeds Patrick Kehoe, Pace's founder and president, who retired. Smith has worked for Pace since 1997 and most recently was vice president of sales and marketing.

Pace provides original equipment manufacturers with electronic components and subassemblies; turnkey manufacturing; packaging and logistics; state-side buffer warehousing; and U.S. project management, service and support. It serves makers of security and safety products, lighting and other consumer products.

The company—which began in 1969 as a component distributor for Panasonic Corp.—employs 26 people in Sodus and roughly 1,000 in other places around the world. Pace has annual sales of some \$40 million, and Smith expects that number to grow.

The largest group of workers—approximately 800—is in China, where the company has had an electronics manufacturing plant since 1999. Pace also has an opera-

tion in Hong Kong, warehouse facilities across the United States and a network of representatives throughout North America.

Two new assembly lines and a third to come are expected to result in seven new employees.

In her new role, Smith is involved in all aspects of manufacturing, including vendor selection and qualification, the startup of new manufacturing programs and customer audits. She also acts as Pace's lead salesperson for the majority of its top customers.

Smith is focused on expanding the company and developing partnerships in new markets, she said.

Alan Zimmer, chief financial officer, said Smith's experience gained during nearly 16 years at Pace has prepared her to lead the global organization.

Helping to increase revenues was the expansion of its China facility a couple of years ago, which added capabilities.

A more recent effort to expand sales coverage in the United States by adding representatives is also boosting business, Smith said. And she recently redesigned the firm's website and sales literature.

"We are already seeing new potential," she said.

The company recently added three local workers after completing a 10,000-square-foot expansion at its Sodus facility. The space is being used for labeling, packaging and assembly, with two assembly lines, as



Photo courtesy of Pace Electronics

Dawn Smith, CEO of Pace Electronics

well as storage.

A third line will be completed in March, adding three more workers. An electrical engineer also has been hired.

Smith said the expansion allows Pace to broaden its offerings in the United States. The assembly lines meet growing customer demand for products assembled in the United States, and the storage gives Pace more room for customers' inventory.

"We are committed to making improvements that will help us to better serve our growing customer base," she said.

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