

Audubon: A firm on the move

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An expanded marketing campaign and the introduction of new products has helped a North Tonawanda company increase business by about 30 percent in the last year.

Audubon Machinery Corp., which moved this week into a new 40,000-square-foot facility on Wurlitzer Drive, credits expansion into the international market as another strategy that has helped push revenues to about \$5 million this year, with \$7 million expected next year, said Joe McMahon, president.

The company has 30 employees between two divisions: Oxygen Generating Systems International, founded in 1995, a manufacturer of oxygen generating systems for hospitals, fish farms, water treatment plants and industrial customers; and Schlyer Machine Co., acquired last year, a nearly 30-year-old firm that manufactures animal cages and rack washing machines and equipment primarily for research laboratories and hospitals.

The company was purchased in February 2004 by Chris Collins, whose financial backing allowed the company to invest in the marketing plan, add inventory and hire new people, McMahon said.

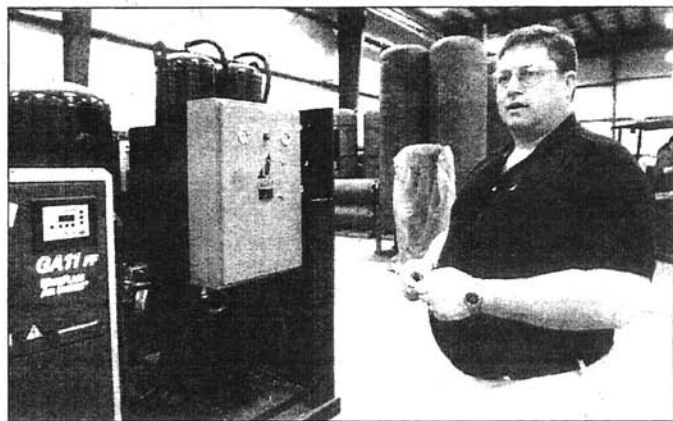
"In the last year, we've sold a number of machines in Iraq, and Africa has blossomed

for oxygen machines," McMahon said. "In our Schlyer business, which has traditionally been just North America, we're making our first international sales there and sold our first machine in Spain."

After moving to Amherst a few years ago and then outgrowing the space on John Glenn Drive, the company was not able to acquire the building. In March, it received assistance from the Niagara County Industrial Development Agency and the City of Tonawanda Lumber City Development Corp. to build on Wurlitzer Drive.

The new facility includes about 35,000 square feet of manufacturing space and will ultimately have a total of 8,000 square feet of office space once a mezzanine is completed on the second floor. The \$2.5 million project included a new 10-ton overhead crane, air compressor systems and boilers for testing the machinery.

Expanding its marketing into other coun-



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Joe McMahon shows off some of the new machinery at Audubon Machinery installed as part of a \$2.5 million expansion to North Tonawanda.

tries has helped the business land several new deals, including oxygen machines for water treatment plants and splash parks in Africa.

The growth on the Schlyer side of the business has been through expanding outside the research lab market, such as pharmaceutical companies, and hospitals.

"We used to focus exclusively on universities and research facilities," he said. "There's still opportunity we haven't really capitalized on, such as cancer research centers."