

# PROFILE

## ALLTITE, INC.

By Russ Willcutt



Over the past eight years this company has earned its reputation as a “total bolting solution” provider, also pioneering mobile calibration services and online tool tracking.

**IN 2003 TWO BROTHERS** who were both employed as representatives for a leading manufacturer of torque and bolting tools decided that it was time to launch a business of their own. "Andy and I had been working in this field for many years by then, and like anybody we'd come up with ideas of our own along the way," according to Tom Smith, CEO of Alltite, Inc. "So that's when we decided to join forces and see if our ideas were really as great as we thought they were."

The concept involved establishing Alltite as a provider of total bolting solutions, supplying a range of cutting-edge hydraulic torque tools, equipment, and accessories for sale or lease as well as offering training, program evaluation, and outsource services. Initially targeting the petrochemical industry—in addition to natural gas, power generation, and others—the company was soon involved in a number of wind farm projects. "What we found in all the markets we serve, but with wind in particular, is that there was a definite need for an all-inclusive quality program around bolting," Smith says. "Customers wanted someone to address all aspects of bolting such as tool sourcing, procurement, custom kitting, torque and tension training classes for wind technicians, and calibration equipment and services. The response was very positive, especially with our wind clients, and we've seen wind rise from about 5 percent of our annual revenues in 2004 to about 40 percent today. It's definitely our fastest-growing market sector."

The success of Alltite's approach led to advents such as MobileCal, a second company complementing the original model. "In 2005 we pioneered the concept of assembling a calibration lab in the back of a mobile laboratory and traveling to our customer's facilities or job sites to calibrate their torque wrenches, gauges, and other tools," Smith explains. "To further strengthen this approach we began a three-year process that resulted in accreditation by the American Association for Laboratory Accreditation, or A2LA, which assures customers that our quality system meets the requirements of ISO 17025 proficiency testing while also supporting the validity of our documentation and test results."

Not only does MobileCal provide convenience, it also improves the overall efficiency of its customer's operations. One example Smith shares involved a customer with 20 sites spread across the United States. MobileCal was able to organize its

van routes in such a way that it had visited all the sites and calibrated the company's entire fleet of tools and equipment within four weeks of receiving the order. Records and certifications for each individual tool were also loaded into TorqueWare, Alltite's proprietary calibration software. The cloud-based portal makes all calibration records and certifications available online via secure customer login, also tracking each individual tool in terms of its physical location. Features include reminders of upcoming calibration dates for each tool, as well.

Joined together these capabilities power the company's Partner Program, which is a system-wide evaluation of a customer's operations with the goal of increasing efficiencies and providing quality assurance. Although the program can be tailored to meet any customer's needs, it generally involves an assessment by Alltite and MobileCal, taking inventory of a company's tools and equipment and providing an estimate of the site visits that will be required. Once approved, calibration is conducted according to schedule and the results entered into the TorqueWare system. All training, maintenance, and certification is then handled by Alltite and MobileCal as part of the package, with the customer enjoying access 24/7 online.

In addition to these services Alltite offers specialized wind kits, which it maintains and makes available for immediate shipment to its customer's job sites. As an alternative to actually purchasing the tools, Alltite offers a leasing program including automatic tooling upgrades as new technologies and designs become available, eliminating the well-known problem of tool obsolescence. In working with its customers to develop customized kits Smith says the company takes a "non brand-specific" approach, making them aware of the tools that are available and the pros and cons of each.

Smith says these programs were developed specifically for wind energy, but they've served as a model for similar systems offered to its customers in other markets. It is also harnessing its expertise in assisting community colleges to develop curricula for technician training and is a member of AWEA as well, contributing toward related standards development. "We're not just here to capitalize on an emerging market," he says, listing customer such as GE, Alstom, and Xcel Energy. "We see ourselves as a contributing member of the wind energy industry, and we will continue supporting its growth throughout North America." ✎