

CCIS C & C INDUSTRIAL SALES

COMPLETE FINISHING SYSTEMS, SALES, SERVICE, PARTS, INSTALLATION, TRAINING, & DESIGN

January 15, 2004

ANNOUNCEMENT

C & C INDUSTRIAL SALES AND RITCHIE AUTOMATION JOIN FORCES IN THE INDUSTRIAL AND AUTOMOTIVE PAINTING INDUSTRY

The two owners of Indianapolis-based Ritchie Automation, have teamed up with another key individual in the painting equipment industry and together they have acquired C&C Industrial Sales (CCIS), headquartered in Nashville, TN. The three partners have formed a parent organization that will own and operate Ritchie Automation and CCIS. Ritchie Automation will remain in Indianapolis and CCIS will remain in Nashville. Combining the offerings of Ritchie Automation and C&C Industrial Sales is of major importance to the industrial and automotive finishing industry. As of January 2nd, 2004, paint finishing customers have one source for everything from parts, service and supplies to sophisticated turn-key finishing systems and advanced paint shop management software.

Joining Jerry E. Ritchie and James C. Foster, the owners of Ritchie Automation, is Wade H. Hickam, a former executive with ITW's Automotive Finishing Group, who left his post for this opportunity.

For over a decade, Ritchie Automation has been a leading company in the finishing industry, providing design, development, and integration of automated painting systems for various industries, including the automotive market. Ritchie will continue to provide these products, which range from stand-alone control systems to complete automated painting lines, both robotic and non-robotic. The association with Tennessee-based CCIS will increase Ritchie's presence in the South and Southeast US for its traditional automation services. The South and Southeast US is seeing significant growth in the number and size of industrial and automotive plants being opened.

CCIS has been a painting equipment distributor and systems provider for the past twenty-seven years, with the majority of its customers being located in Tennessee, Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. CCIS offers a wide range of top brand finishing products and replacement parts. Jerry E. Ritchie, President of Ritchie Automation, sees CCIS as a perfect complement to the existing business, and stated, "Joining Ritchie Automation and CCIS under common ownership and management is a tremendous benefit to our collective customers. Ritchie Automation and CCIS will provide custom engineering, consulting, and systems integration for customers while CCIS' distribution arm will provide the parts, supplies, specialty items, and after support service. We are creating one of the most comprehensive one-stop finishing equipment companies in the industry."



C & C Industrial Sales
Complete Engineered Finishing Systems



Wade H. Hickam left his position as General Manager of ITW's Automotive Finishing Group to become the President of CCIS effective Jan. 2, 2004. As a senior manager of sixteen years with ITW, a global leader in the painting and finishing equipment industry, Mr. Hickam earned the recognition of being one of the industry's driving forces. His knowledge of the painting industry, the markets it serves, and the equipment and technology used within it, make him the ideal person to lead CCIS into the future. He is excited about this move, stating, "My experience in the industry has taught me the importance of providing reliable, innovative, and cost-effective equipment and service to end users. CCIS, along with our sister company, Ritchie Automation, will insure that these things are made available to our customer base."

CCIS's previous owner and founder, Keith Clodfelter, is retiring after forty-four years in the industry (twenty-seven years at the helm of CCIS). He is very excited about the new management team that is owning/running the company he has built. Mr. Clodfelter stated, "Every business owner wants to see their company continue to be successful long after they have left it, but not everyone is afforded that opportunity. I feel very fortunate that my business is going to be run by such experienced and highly respected individuals as Wade, Jerry, and Jim. I am extremely comfortable with them and I know our customers will appreciate their experience and integrity." Mr. Clodfelter will continue with CCIS in a consulting capacity for a period of time to insure a smooth transition.

For more company information, visit www.RitchieAutomation.com and www.CCISinc.com.

