

MEMPHIS BUSINESS JOURNAL



MBJ

SMALL BUSINESS AWARDS

Presented by: COMCAST BUSINESS

MICHAEL GALLAGHER, PRESIDENT

COMPANY

Centro Inc.

VITALS

What company does: Centro Inc. is a specialty distributor and sales representative company. For our customers, flow control of fluids, solids and gases is critical to the success of the manufacturing process. Centro sells a range of products from commodities to highly engineered, technically sophisticated products that are applied in a range of industries. The company is organized into six product-focused divisions, each providing specific services to customers and resellers in process industries such as refining, food and beverage, chemical, pulp and paper, power, and automotive and general manufacturing. Key products include valves, compressed air products, steam products, mixers, gauges, instrumentation, pumps, filters, level controls, automation products, liquid and gas flow meters and temperature control products.

Background: Gallagher has a B.S. and an MBA, Marketing & Business Admin-

istration, from Plymouth State University. He has more than 30 years of experience in sales and as a distributor in several large industrial companies.

Current number of employees: 97

Year founded: 1970

Website: centromemphis.com

BUSINESS MOVES

Motivation to start company: To remain in Memphis and put to use the best practices I had observed over my career in large companies.

Source of idea: It's the secret wish of many corporate managers to run their own business and develop something special.

Original number of employees: 38

BIG PICTURE

Current state of growth: By 2001, Centro had plateaued, when the company was acquired. Since then, the company has grown through a combination of acquisition and integration of complementary companies, entry into new geographies, development of new markets and key product line additions.



ELLEN COLLIER | MBJ

Most challenging obstacles: Growing the Centro culture, dealing with the impact of an aging workforce, finding and developing the next generation of great employees, and keeping the company focused on the future even during difficult times

How company has demonstrated excellence in its field: We have succeeded based on our ability to work with our

customers to provide more than just products. We help them achieve their goals, so we get a large share of their business because of the help we provide and the breadth of product offerings.

Future plans: To use our compressed air division and filtration division to gain a significant share of the automotive and tier 1 support manufacturing market regionally.