

Who is Napoleon Manufacturing?



Able Distributors is now the exclusive Chicagoland distributor for Napoleon HVAC equipment. If you're familiar with Napoleon, then this announcement has you excited, if you're not familiar with Napoleon, just read on and we promise you'll be excited by the end.

The next two days, we'll be posting blogs detailing all the amazing benefits and features of Napoleon furnaces and cooling equipment, but today is going to be a combination of history lesson and introduction. Napoleon is in the midst of expanding their presence in the United States and our customers have a ground-floor opportunity to become dealers for the most exciting, innovative forced air equipment available today. So, who is Napoleon Manufacturing and what makes their equipment special?

Humble Beginnings

In 1969, Wolfgang Schroeder and his wife Ingrid emigrated from Germany to Canada. By 1976, Wolfgang was manufacturing steel railings in Barrie, Ontario, Canada at a small fabrication business they had started. Wolfgang, who brought a technical engineering education from Germany, and his wife Ingrid built their first wood burning stove in 1979 using metal that Ingrid transported on the roof of her car. By 1981, the name Napoleon was implemented and Wolfgang was making the first of his many industry innovations in the form of a stove with a single door made from high temp. ceramic glass. Now, a few decades later, they are established as a global market leader in gas fireplaces. Napoleon offers a diverse selection of gas and electric fireplaces in order to appeal to every demographic across every application. They produce vented, ventless, and outdoor fireplaces as well as a litany of fireplace accessories.

Building Momentum

In 2001, after perfecting the fireplace in Canada and around the world, Napoleon decided to set their sights on expanding the product offering into another segment of the gas-fired appliance market: gas grills. By 2003, Napoleon had launched an entire new division dedicated to high-end gas grills and outdoor products. Again, in short order, Napoleon's dedication to design and innovation allowed them to redefine the industry standard for what a gas grill looks like and what it can deliver to the consumer.

In 2011, Napoleon took a look at the HVAC market and realized that no company was making forced

air equipment that lived up to Napoleon's unrelenting standards for quality and aesthetics. Understanding how to bend steel, design heat exchangers, and control fire made the opportunity to build their own brand of furnaces a natural decision for Napoleon. In five short years, Napoleon went from having no HVAC presence in Canada to securing a major segment of market share through uncompromising innovation.

A Recipe for Success

The major element in Napoleon's success across markets is their dedication to craftsmanship. At the end of the day, Napoleon doesn't produce a product that Wolfgang himself would not be proud to put in his home. Their focus on quality can be seen everywhere from their 1.2 million square foot manufacturing facility to the fact that they individually test every unit before it leaves the factory.

As a privately-owned company, Napoleon can prioritize design driven decisions that meet the unrelenting requirements for quality set by ownership. This mandate might be untenable at a less-organized company, but every aspect of Napoleon's business model has been refined over four decades. They have proven, time after time, that they are equipped to design, develop, and produce world-class products and to offer the after-sale support necessary to empower their dealers. Buying into Napoleon isn't a one-way street, they have gotten where they are by being the best, not just selling the most.

Napoleon Today

Now, in 2016, Napoleon is still owned and run by the Schroeter family with the same passion and attention to detail that Wolfgang started the company with back in his garage in 1976. They are recognized worldwide for producing a wide variety of design-driven consumer products such as gas grills, fireplaces, and now HVAC equipment with uncompromising quality and integrity.

With a firm grasp on the Canadian market and an expanding U.S. dealer base, Napoleon is poised to change the way that American consumers look at HVAC equipment. Wolfgang's track record as a visionary and dedication to craftsmanship ensure that Napoleon will continue to push the envelope when it comes to innovation, developing new technologies and improving existing ones. Don't forget to come back tomorrow for a complete breakdown of Napoleon's furnaces, including the revolutionary Ultimate 9700 Series, and on Wednesday for a rundown of Napoleon's condensers and condo packs.

If you want to get in on the ground floor of Napoleon in Chicagoland, contact Bill O'Brien to set up a discussion about becoming a dealer or stop by our Napoleon page, click "Become a Napoleon Dealer," and fill out the form!