

Cannon Storage Systems

Quality service with a family touch

By Matt Morgan

Vern Cannon has his own way of doing business, and it works. Cannon Storage Systems, a national turnkey building supplier and construction-service company, has had a steady stream of business since it opened its doors 22 years ago. As Cannon's methods are passed to his children, the company enjoys continued growth and success.



twice and used him again." Hollingsworth, who has facilities in Texas, says Cannon makes time to fit existing customers in his schedule for add-ons and new phases. "He had a good product at the better price," she says. "They're real nice and they did a good job."

Cannon says his company has never lost a customer to another:

It was 1979. Cannon, a commercial contractor at the time, was asked by a customer to construct a self-storage facility. Back then there were no guidelines—no industry trade magazines or tradeshows—and the Self Storage Association was in its infancy. Cannon performed his first survey on labor for a self-storage project and finished the job. Gauging the company's success in a burgeoning industry was easy. "The calls never quit coming in," Cannon says.

"We've completed every job since 1979 ahead of time and on budget," Cannon says. A track record like that speaks for itself. "I think that is one of the keys—that when customers call our office, we can turnkey their projects for them. We can design the site, design the buildings, design the heat and air," he continues. "Most of the developers who call us like one-stop shopping. They don't have to look for other crews. We not only sell them the material, we put all our own material up."

The company also takes a no-nonsense approach in its dealings. "What we tell you is what you're going to get," says Cannon's daughter, Star, who moved from the company's headquarters to open and manage a brand-new field office in Arlington, Texas. "We don't sugar-coat it. We tell you if we think your project's going to work or if it's not."

Cannon Storage Systems is also selective about its business associates. "We don't do every job that comes our way," Cannon says. "We don't build the cookie-cutter self-storages. We don't build the little metal ones that go up in everybody's backyard. We only build those that are quality projects, where the people are going to be around a long time, because we invest a lot of time and effort into each project."



A Cut Above

What sets Lawton, Okla.-based Cannon Storage Systems apart is its commitment to quality and customer service. "We're perfectionists," Cannon says. "I realize you can't reach perfection, but you can strive for it. Everyone working for me knows that." The company is also willing to travel, and that factor helped in the early days when few companies did.

Eighty percent of Cannon's new customers come through word of mouth, he says. With a number like that, there must be plenty of satisfied facility developers out there. Nancy Hollingsworth is one. "Originally, we went with Cannon on the recommendation of someone else for whom he had built," she says. "Then we added on

