



[www.crpindustries.com](http://www.crpindustries.com)  
USA | CANADA | MEXICO  
ISO 9001:2000 Certified



The Executive Bulletin is a new initiative for CRP and we welcome feedback.  
If you have any questions or comments, please call 732.969.2200 or write us at [bulletin@crpindustries.com](mailto:bulletin@crpindustries.com).

FALL 2008



## CRP INDUSTRIES EXECUTIVE BULLETIN



Welcome to the first installment of the CRP Executive Bulletin — a publication exclusively for customers and partners of CRP Industries.

This premiere issue is dedicated to recognizing the transition in leadership at CRP as George Schildge and Chris von Lenski ramp down their day-to-day involvement. We hope you enjoy reading the about these two important figures in the history of CRP over the past 40-plus years.





## A conversation with George Schildge

Over the course of 2008, George Schildge stepped down as President/CEO of CRP Industries, continuing as Chairman of the Board. He sat down recently for a question & answer session with writer Al Navarro. We present you with selected excerpts from that conversation.

**Q. In your 44 years with CRP, what would you say has been the biggest change?**

**A.** Besides our ever-growing supplier and customer bases, the biggest change has to be the technology.

When I started here, we kept inventory on a kardex. We had typewriters. We did not have calculators or computers, we had adding machines. My father (CRP founder Adam Schildge) had a calculating machine with little tabs on it. And you cranked it...the number of cranks was the number of times you'd multiply and divide.

Over time, the machines got bigger. Our first real computer system took up an office the size of the conference room....but then they got smaller yet more powerful. Dan (Schildge, George's son and the incoming President) brought in our latest computer system, an ERP system, which is more sophisticated than anything we could have imagined back in our adding machine days.

So, I guess the biggest change is the technology and how that lets us handle more parts and provide better service. When we were in the tire business, we handled 200 parts. Now we do over 10,000 parts — maybe even 12,000? It's only possible because of technology. And now, with paperless technology and radio frequency ID tags, it's all great stuff. Great for the company and great for our customers.

**Q. Looking back at your career at CRP, what would you say has been your biggest contribution to the company?**

**A.** That's simple. My biggest contribution is Daniel Schildge.

If you have a family business, your succession is important, unless you want to sell your business. And Dan is trained, motivated, and has all the ability and skill level to carry us forward — perhaps in different ways.

We might not be the same company forever. We're sure not the same company now as when I started here. We went through a big transition...90% of our business was tires, and that is completely gone. But we're still here.

That successful transition we made in 1978 is something else of which I'm very proud. The work we did at that time to diversify and develop additional suppliers — Chris von Lenski played a big role in that.

**Q. CRP was founded by your father, Adam Schildge. Did you always know you would go into the family business?**

**A.** Yes, I did always think I'd go into the family business. Back in those days, it was probably more expected for the next generation to follow family tradition.

When I started, my father expected me to do a lot of the client and supplier entertaining. Relationships were very important to my father — and they are still very important to me and to CRP as a company.

But equally important is performance...and when it comes to this, Dan has a much better feel for that sort of thing. He's much better about analyzing and optimizing operations, customer service, performance, etc.

For example, before Dan came to work here, a recurring large order from one of our biggest customers would take a week to a week-and-a-half to get out the door. Now, it comes in via EDI on a Tuesday and it's ready to ship Wednesday afternoon — and the orders are even larger now. That's all Dan. Since coming here in 1998, he's modernized CRP in many ways.

**Q. What advice do you have for Dan and the next generation of CRP leadership?**

**A.** For starters, always become friends with your customers and suppliers. Communicate well. Develop trust.

Second, be energized by change. My generation of leadership was energized by change. In 1978 when we got out of the tire business. Again in 1981, when we diversified even more — finding additional suppliers.

And third, look for new opportunities and grab them. Here's a quick story about spotting opportunity...very early in my career, I had sold a piece of equipment to Exxon in Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

When they started using that extruder, they flew in 16 drums of gear oil from a German company named Optimol. When I saw that, I thought "If the biggest oil company in the world is using some other company for gear lubricant, I need to know about that company." And so I wrote to Optimol. And that led to representation and one of our most successful joint ventures (which was eventually sold to Castrol). See opportunity, and seize it.

**Q. One final question. You seem to have enjoyed a great career and have made friends with customers, suppliers, and co-workers alike. So what's your secret?**

**A.** I just told you. [Schildge laughs.]

Well, there's another saying, "Nothing is as old as yesterday's order." You can't rest on your laurels. Ever.



## Chris von Lenski: A portrait of loyalty

Even in his transition to a senior advisory role at CRP, Chris von Lenski is burning the midnight oil.



### **Not literally, of course.**

For this 40-year veteran of CRP, the days of all-nighters are a thing of the past. But in the first weeks in his new role as Senior Advisor, Chris von Lenski is already putting in twice the number of hours he's scheduled to be in the office. Habits built over decades of service are hard to break.

Chris first came to CRP as a trainee from Germany in June 1968, and worked in Carteret, New Jersey for a short time before being transferred to CRP's new office and warehouse in Fremont, California. Although at the time CRP's core business was tires, Chris helped CRP expand into other types of auto parts for the West Coast market.

When Chris came back to New Jersey in 1974, he brought back a vision of expanding CRP's non-tire business on a national scale. He also brought back a new bride, whom he met in an English class. He was German, she was French — but they shared a love of America and its native language. They've been married for 36 years now, another telling testament to Chris' point of view on loyalty.

### **Regarding his loyalty to CRP, Chris had this to say:**

"The relationship I had and still have with George Schildge is probably the reason I've stayed here for almost my entire career. The chemistry and the trust between George and myself has been very important to me.



I've had many job offers over the years, but it just felt right to stay. Some bigger companies tried to lure me away...but I felt I'd just be a number somewhere else, one of thousands of employees...at CRP, I felt I had a personal relationship with the president of the company. Not only is he a boss, he's also become a dear friend."

Chris even credits George Schildge with saving his life. Back in 1999, Chris was diagnosed with a very serious illness. George knew someone in New York who was a leading specialist and made an appointment for Chris. This led to Chris being included in a drug trial and he has been healthy for years. "If it weren't for George, I might not be here now," he recounts.

As he starts to spend more days out of the office, Chris plans to use some of this newfound free time supporting the legacy of his father, Dietrich von Lenski. "My father was a renowned breeder and trainer of the Trakehnen horse breed. He is credited with helping bring back this championship line of horses after World War II, when their numbers had dwindled down as low as 100."

When Chris is asked if he has any words of advice for the next generation of CRP leadership, he takes a minute, then replies, "I came to America from Germany with \$25 dollars in my pocket. And I've been able to build a good life here for myself and my family. Be careful with your money, and always keep track of your return on investments."

## A third generation of Schildges leads a strong executive team.

Now that George Schildge and Chris von Lenski have transitioned out of their roles as the day-to-day leaders of CRP, there are big shoes to fill. So CRP added more feet.

The executive management duties for the Automotive, Industrial, and Perske business units that were handled by George and Chris are now split among four very capable individuals: Daniel Schildge, Abraham Garweg, Michael Palm, and Kevin Stock.

Here is a brief snapshot of each of these men.



**Dan Schildge, President:**

The grandson of CRP founder Adam Schildge, Dan has served as CRP's Chief Operating Officer since 2002. He previously served in the U.S. Navy, where he was a member of a submarine crew and earned the rank of Lieutenant.

**Abe Garweg, VP of Product Development:**

Abe came to CRP in 2002. He has over 25 years of auto parts expertise under his belt, and brings a uniquely qualified perspective to what customers want — because he was a CRP customer himself for many years!

**Mike Palm, VP of Marketing and Sales:**

Mike came back to CRP in 2005, after rising to the position of Director of Worldwide Marketing at Berlitz, an international leader in language instruction. He actually began his career at CRP back in 1986. The company is happy to have him back.

**Kevin Stock, VP of Finance:**

The newest member of the CRP Executive Team, Kevin joined the company in 2006 from chemical giant Celanese. He started his career in public accounting at Price Waterhouse.



## We're moving a few exits down the turnpike.

This summer, CRP broke ground for a new headquarters. The facility will be located in South Brunswick, New Jersey, less than a mile from Exit 8A on the New Jersey Turnpike.

"We had already expanded our current facility three times, and it was time to find a property that would meet our needs now and well into the future." says CRP President Dan Schildge.

The 8.2-acre (32,375 sq. meter) site will host a 101,000-square foot (9,400 sq. meter) corporate headquarters and warehouse distribution facility. Construction management is being handled by J.P. Petrucci Company and is scheduled for a March 2009 completion date.



## Quality has a new name: REIN Automotive.

In 2008, CRP started shipping the first parts carrying the REIN Automotive name. Starting with CV Boot, Wheel Bearing, and Axle Boot kits, the REIN Automotive line covers a wide range of OE quality car components.

The road to getting the REIN Automotive brand rolling was intense and fast-paced. It took a collaborative effort between Product Development, Purchasing, Sales, Marketing, and Operations to make it a reality.

"We're all very excited about the launch of the REIN Automotive brand and feel it will be an important piece of business for CRP. Like the popular Meistersatz line, it was developed in-house at CRP and fits perfectly with our image of quality." says Mike Palm, VP of Marketing and Sales.

