

VanZandt Controls, Eagle Automation combine for broader scope of products

Combination takes companies to next level

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Midland-born VanZandt Controls is joining forces with Fort Worth-based Eagle Automation in a combination that will give the new entity 200 employees and 12 locations servicing Texas, New Mexico, Colorado, Oklahoma, Wyoming, Montana, Kansas and Arkansas.

“We offer life-cycle solutions for customers,” said Don Maness, who is serving as chief executive officer. The combination will allow the merged company to move further up the ladder, he said.

“And the cool thing is, it’s woman-owned,” he added. Featheringill Capital in Birmingham, Alabama, will be owner alongside management, and Liz Pharo is managing partner of Featheringill.

Lance VanZandt, who had founded his company in 2015 and built it up to \$6 million in revenues in two years, will serve as executive vice president, sales.

Said Maness, “Lance had grown to the point he needed more backing and help running the business.” So VanZandt brought in Larry Richards to serve as chairman. Now, continued Maness, “by joining with Eagle, he moves up another level.”

VanZandt said owning a business was his dream since he was a child. Whereas others wanted to be firemen or policemen, “I wanted to be married, have children and own a business. This is how God led my steps.”

In building his company, he worked to develop customer service.

Observed Richards, “Lance has strong views on how customers need to be cared for.”

The sales force is a reflection on him, said VanZandt. “With our sales group, there’s no excuses. There’s no tools they’re lacking, there’s no knowledge they’re lacking. If they’re not successful, they have no one to blame but themselves.”

That was one of the things that drew Eagle to the company, said Maness, calling the sales force top-class.

“Now they have a broader range of offerings to go to the customers with,” said Maness. Both corporate names will be retained.

VanZandt distributes, packages and services automated valves, flow measurements and instrumentation products for the energy, chemicals and other industrial markets. Eagle, founded as SCADA Products in 2000, provides measurement and automation solutions through systems integration, services, application engineer, control panels and board repair.

Richards chimed in that VanZandt also had a strong safety record and maintained a 98 percent on-time delivery record even through the pandemic.

The men say the combined Eagle-VanZandt offerings can help a customers’ ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance – initiatives especially amid efforts to reduce emissions.

“There are lots of ways we can help customers with ESG,” said Maness. “It’s here to stay.”

Those efforts include swapping out pneumatic devices – valves or instruments. VanZandt said he recommends switching to either total electric or utilizing air compression instead of processed gas.

Still, VanZandt said customers shouldn’t expect the companies to stray far from what they are known for.

“The things we do, we want to be intentional. We want to stick with the core and being the best we can be at that,” he explained. “If you lose focus on what you’re good at, you can have issues.”