aSa Applied Systems Associates, Inc.

The REINFORCER

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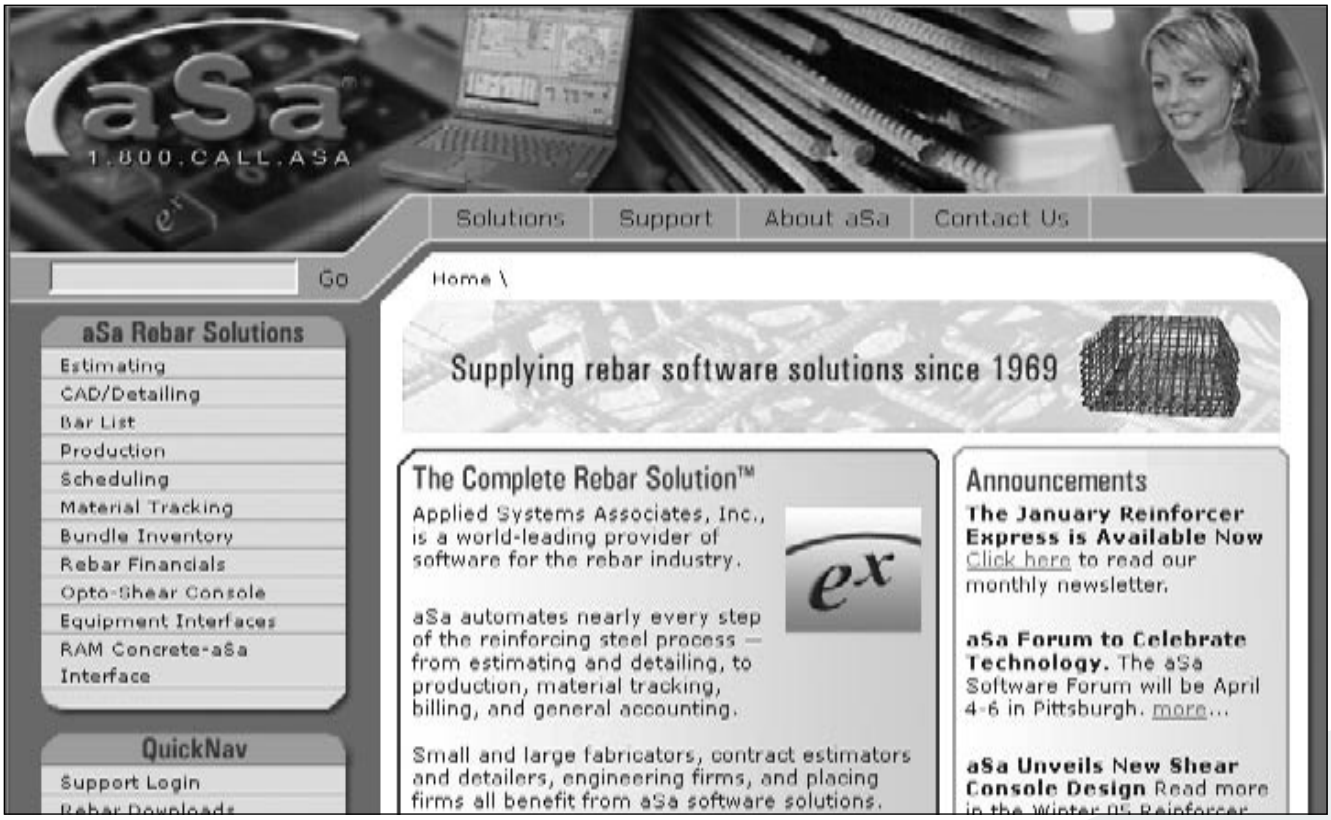

Visit Our New Home on the Web

Much more than a face lift, aSa's website redesign focused on specific user-centered goals, including easier navigation, better support, and more timely content.

Program downloads ... electronic versions of all software user guides ... sample illustrations of aSa forms and tags ... you'll find all this and much more on the newly redesigned aSa website.

In October 2004, aSa introduced a brand new www.asarebar.com. On the surface, the most striking difference from the old site is the cleaner, more modern look and feel. However, the redesign was much more than a face lift. In fact, the website was created from the ground up with specific user-centered goals in mind. One major goal is to provide visitors with easy navigation. Pulldown menus and navigation bars provide one-click access to nearly all of the site's pages. Plus, the site includes a keyword search and a site map.

Another major goal of the site is to be the ultimate online resource for clients enrolled in aSa's subscription service (support). The password-protected Support section provides program downloads, documentation downloads, our online KnowledgeBase, and other resources available only to supported customers. The aSa Contract Estimator-Detailer Directory and monthly Reinforcer Express newsletters are also available in the Support section.

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aSa's Home on the Web

Continued from page 1

In addition, the site is a timely source of aSa-related information. "Announcements" and "New from aSa" news blurbs appear on the home page. The site has a calendar of upcoming free Webinar training sessions and aSa events, and the News section includes news briefs and newsletter downloads.

Below is a brief guide to the website:

Solutions. The first section of our site provides information about all of the solutions we offer, including rebar software, business and financial software, CAD engineering software, computer hardware, forms and supplies, and training. Printable PDF brochures for our software products are also available on the Solutions web pages.

Support. Exclusively for clients enrolled in our subscription service, the Support section of the website contains a wealth of downloads and resource information.

About aSa. In this section, you can learn about our company, access news briefs and newsletters, click on our partner links, see our events calendar, and learn about our community service.

Contact Us. The Contact section contains an online form to request more information about aSa products and services. In this section, you can also get driving directions to our office or open the site map page for a "big picture" overview of the entire website.

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Letter from the President

Happy 35th Anniversary!

I was 3½ years old in 1969 when aSa was founded. Alan Colker, Elliot Greenman, and Jim Leib (my father) left their jobs with a consulting firm to start Applied Systems Associates. The company was later incorporated in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania on February 2, 1970 – the company's official anniversary date. As aSa's first president, Alan headed the sales team. Elliot and Jim were the tech guys. In the early years, it was difficult to sustain three full-time employees, so Alan left the company and Jim assumed the responsibilities of president and CEO.

The company's first customer was a growing fabricator headquartered in Tampa, Florida, called Florida Steel Corporation. Working with Corporate Industrial Engineer (later Tampa Division and Florida Region Manager) Clyde Roberts, aSa developed its first software application – a shearing program for rebar. Earlier in Jim's career, he had worked on a similar program for the Supply Division of United States Steel Corporation. Using this knowledge, he developed an effective algorithm that was the core of the shearing program. Thirty-five years later, upgraded versions of that same algorithm are still an important part of today's aSa Shearing application, and that same customer, Florida Steel (now Gerdau Ameristeel), is still an aSa client today.

During the last 35 years, it has been interesting to see changes in technology and changes at aSa. In the 1970s, aSa was a general software house creating products for a variety of diverse industries including chemical companies, shoe stores, barber shops, and of course rebar fabricators. As a kid, I remember going to the office with my dad and playing with the "keypunch" machine, typing my name onto punch cards. In the early 1980s, aSa decided to focus on its most successful product line, rebar software. At that time, aSa software was designed for Digital Equipment Corporation's PDP-11 multi-user mini-computers. In the late 1980s, aSa applications were converted to PCs with the DOS operating system. Ten years after that, aSa redeveloped all applications for the Microsoft Windows environment. Throughout that time, the company's product line expanded from Shearing and Bar List, to Estimating, CAD/Detailing, and Business Systems.

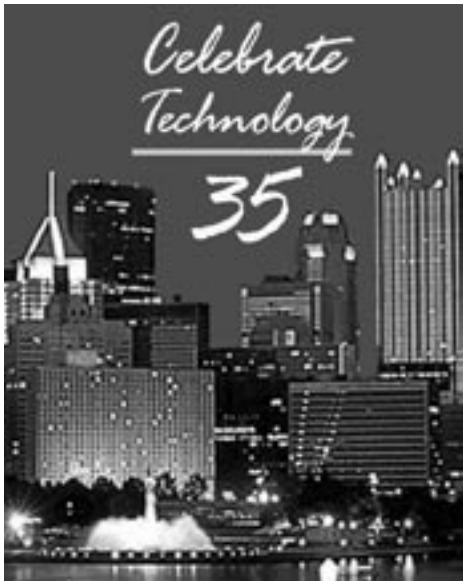
I attribute the company's success to several factors. First, customer feedback has always been and continues to be an essential component of aSa software development. Our first aSa User Meeting (Software Forum) dates back to 1971 and was attended by all five of our rebar clients. aSa clients have played an important role in contributing ideas and resources. Second, our dedicated staff takes great pride in providing the industry's leading rebar software applications. Many of the company's employees have been with aSa for 15 and 20 years – very uncommon in today's business world, especially for software companies.

As I celebrate my 10-year anniversary as aSa president, we are growing with a new vision of innovation and creativity. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of our clients for placing their confidence and trust in aSa. We are working very hard to deliver the very best products – to help you run your business better. I hope you will join me in Pittsburgh, April 4-6, for the aSa Software Forum, to learn more about aSa software and to help us celebrate our 35th anniversary. Again, my sincere thanks for your continued interest in aSa products – we couldn't have done it without you!

Scott D. Leib
President

'Celebrate Technology' at aSa Software Forum 2005

Join us in Pittsburgh April 4-6 as we honor our 35-year history and design the future of aSa rebar software.



This year, aSa celebrates its 35th anniversary as a company. And you're invited to the party. The 2005 Software Forum, April 4-6 at the Sheraton Station Square in Pittsburgh, will be a celebration of technology.

To commemorate where we've been, the forum will feature a historical display complete with hardware, sales materials, user guides, tags, and other items from the company's past. Additionally, an awards dinner will honor special customers and employees who have helped shape aSa and rebar software technology over the years.

In addition to recognizing our past, the forum gives us an opportunity to plan our future. Main meetings will focus on demonstrations of new features and planned enhancements to aSa applications. The general sessions will also provide plenty of opportunity for attendees to share ideas that will help us design the next generation of aSa software.

Concurrent with the main meetings, workshops, product demos, and Q&A sessions will be held in the hotel's smaller meeting rooms. These sessions, designed for smaller groups, repeat over the three days allowing attendees to build a schedule based on their needs and interests. The forum will also feature hospitality suites and optional Estimating and CAD/Detailing training sessions.

Back by popular demand is an Industry Expo (called Vendor Fair in 2003). Rebar equipment manufacturers will be on-hand to answer questions and give presentations about their products. New this year is the addition of concrete accessory suppliers, who will also participate in the forum's Industry Expo.

For the complete forum schedule, meeting descriptions, online registration, travel information, and more, please visit the forum web page at www.asarebar.com/forum.

aSa's Complete Rebar Solution™ was on display at World of Concrete 2005. Greeting WOC visitors at the aSa booth, from left: Scott Leib, Michele Albert, Dave Grundler, Linda Scolieri, Jeff Cochrane, Sharon Iannone, Scott Pattison, Jack Lucot, and Tim Berg.

World of Concrete

aSa showcases new solutions at the industry's top trade show January 18-21 in Las Vegas.

Each year, aSa uses the World of Concrete to showcase its entire product line and to highlight new features and enhancements. This year was no exception as trade show attendees got a first-hand look at:

Estimate Placing Labor - automatically calculates labor hours for material installation. See page 6.

Bundle Inventory - tracks on-hand inventory and heat/mill cert information using bar code scanning technology.

Version 5 Shear Console - smaller footprint and infrared monitor highlight improvements to aSa's popular shear controller. See back cover.

aSa's 20-Year Club

Five employees celebrate two decades of service and reflect on their roles at aSa.

Michele Albert

Hire Date: May 3, 1982
First Project: Programming Cash Receipts Screen in DOS Commercial
Current Title: Director, Business Systems
Reflection: I'm very glad for all the opportunities I've been given and all the lasting friendships I've made. People I met on DOS installations years ago I'm still friends with today. I have soared with the eagles and hooted with the owls.

Linda Barker

Hire Date: September 8, 1985
First Project: Programming Customer Listing Report in DOS Commercial
Current Title: Senior Software Consultant/QA Analyst
Reflection: Looking back over my time at aSa, I would have to say that the primary reason I stayed on is that I was never asked to compromise principles or standards when dealing with customers. The company philosophy and mine were always in sync: deal honestly with the customer and put them first, because there wouldn't be an aSa without them. Customer service was always one of the most rewarding aspects of my job, and I have, over time, forged relationships and collected fond memories that I will always value.

Tim Berg

Hire Date: December 2, 1985
First Project: Programming a stand-alone Varying Bar application
Current Title: Vice President, Business Development
Reflection: I've had the opportunity and privilege to visit many rebar shops in North America and parts of the world, to gain first-hand insight into the production process. Through my travels, I see how aSa software helps companies produce more with less — more estimates, more bar details, and more steel with less man-hours. Our products can do this because they are innovative and intelligent, and because they connect to shop machinery providing automated fabrication. I enjoy meeting people and helping them do their jobs better.

Cathy Friend

Hire Date: March 4, 1985
First Project: Programming schedules for Interactive Detailing
Current Title: Vice President, Software Development
Reflection: For me, it's about the people here. It's about working as a team ... rallying around challenges together. Team effort is what lets us overcome obstacles and develop products that our customers rely on every day to run their businesses.

Frank Zambotti

Hire Date: May 21, 1984
First Project: Programming in DOS Commercial
Current Title: Director, Systems Integration
Reflection: Long ago, aSa made a commitment to research and development ... to keeping the company at the forefront of technology for the rebar industry. It has been interesting to see the evolution of aSa software from the DEC microcomputer environment, to PC-based DOS systems, to the Windows applications of today. I don't know where technology will take us 20 years from now ... but I **do** know that we are committed to being there.

Family Business U
to Improve Produc

Whitacre Engineering takes advantage o
of integrated aSa Scheduling, Shearing,

The LePages are the fourth family to own Whitacre Engineering since the company was established in 1920. Over the years, the business has found success by adapting to changes in its industry. For example, Whitacre was originally founded to engineer, distribute, and install a clay tile flooring system, but the operation transitioned into reinforced concrete as the building industry changed. More recently, the company is adapting by taking advantage of new technology — particularly aSa production solutions.

Whitacre Engineering is owned by brothers Keith and Todd LePage. Keith explains that they looked carefully at "software and equipment" when making decisions about improving operations.

Whitacre Engineering works closely with rebar placing companies to provide "seamless service" to its customers. Above, ironworkers install rebar fabricated by Whitacre.

Uses aSa ction

f new technology; sees the benefit and Opto-Shear Console solutions.

Above, at Whitacre's Ohio facility, an employee automatically updates on-hand inventory by scanning bar coded bundle tags with a radio frequency scanner. The Bundle Inventory application, aSa's newest module, integrates with aSa Production and Material Tracking to record and track heat/mill cert information. Below, a Whitacre shearman fabricates steel by following the aSa Opto-Shear Console's on-screen prompts. Whitacre recently installed aSa controllers in its Canton, Ohio, and Syracuse, New York, fabricating shops.

"Historically, shop procedures haven't changed drastically over the years, but software has improved greatly," says Keith.

Whitacre, which is located in Canton, Ohio, and Syracuse, New York, has used aSa Bar List and Tagging software since 1995. Recently, Keith and Todd made the decision to add aSa's Shearing module, as well as three newer aSa applications: Scheduling, Material Tracking, and Bundle Inventory.

According to owner Keith LePage, Whitacre Engineering invested in aSa Shearing software because it allows users to optimize easily and efficiently, yet is flexible enough to handle unexpected run-in work. He goes on to say that even shear operators with little experience can achieve great results with the aSa Opto-Shear Console.

Keith explains that his company had looked into optimization programs in the past but found applications "either too complicated to use or not able to easily accommodate run-in orders." He says that aSa Shearing is a good solution because it "allows us to optimize but has the flexibility to break in with quick orders. It gives us a degree of latitude in the work we do."

"Reducing scrap is important in this time of rising steel costs," Keith points out. He notes that although Whitacre's use of Shearing is "in its infancy," he can see the potential for improved shop productivity. He adds that aSa Scheduling is "great for communicating" and that it "helps us to plan ahead so that we can get the good numbers from optimization ... to get the yield we want."

aSa Opto-Shear Consoles were recently installed in Whitacre's Canton and Syracuse shops. (A second console will be installed in Canton in 2005.) Keith says aSa controllers "remove barriers to allow shearmen to achieve great results." He explains, "With the aSa consoles, you can take someone off the street and get him up to speed (in minimal time) because the information is right there in front of him. Otherwise it could be months or even years before you have confidence in a shearman's ability."

Speaking about his company, Keith stresses the fact that Whitacre is more than simply a material supplier. "What sets us apart is our ability to provide seamless service," says Keith. "To meet the contractor's demanding schedules, we closely coordinate quality placing drawings, fabrication, and delivery with qualified placing subcontractors. This minimizes the scheduling required by the contractor's project manager," he adds.

Whitacre supplies material for projects in northern and eastern Ohio, northern West Virginia, western Pennsylvania, and central Upstate New York. High-profile projects have included Cleveland's Jacob's Field, Browns Stadium, and Rock'n'Roll Hall of Fame, as well as the Syracuse Carrier Dome. Currently the company's largest project is the AEP Mitchell Power Foundation in Moundsville, West Virginia, a 4,000 ton job.

Estimate Placing Labor Tool

Companies that provide rebar installation services will benefit from newly released Placing Labor screen.

Estimate Placing Labor, a new component of aSa Estimating, automates all calculations associated with developing a bid for material installation. The system is completely flexible. You define the characteristics of your placing crews, their capacities for placing different structure types (such as footings, foundations, and beams), and their labor rates.

The Estimate Placing Labor utility is included with all versions of aSa Estimating *e*^{x} beginning with v6.2 Service Pack 6.

The system applies your custom placing values to material entered using the main Estimate Entry screen to derive placing labor totals. The totals are grouped by segment, allowing you to easily organize values for the base bid and for all alternates. Within each set of auto-calculated totals, you can adjust the bid by fine-tuning crew information, rates, or man-hours.

The Placing Labor software also:

- considers overhead, profit, taxes, and other customized values that affect your bid.
- calculates placing labor for mesh and other accessory items (in addition to rebar and plain round steel).
- develops material pricing for installed and FOB material.
- produces a clear, concise report containing all of your installation and material pricing breakdowns for a project.

On the horizon. aSa is currently in the design phase of an enterprise job tracking and costing solution. When development is finished, new applications will allow companies to: track jobsite installation; specify labor hours and rates in the Job Pricing module, which flows to Sales Order and Invoicing; and compare estimated material and labor values to actual, real-time costs.

New Thermal Tag Printing Options

We're now supporting the Zebra Z4Mplus printer as well as select SATO models. We've also partnered with a national service provider to offer maintenance plans on our thermal printers.

Zebra Z4Mplus. aSa is now offering the Zebra Z4Mplus thermal-transfer tag printer. The Zebra prints on narrow-style aSa tags (03T3500NS - tags fan-folded on the narrow end) and is an alternative to the SATO CL412e. A cutter is not provided with the Z4Mplus.

Thermal printer service plans. aSa has partnered with a national service provider to offer convenient maintenance service plans on its SATO and Zebra thermal tag printers. Recommended one-, two-, and three-year plans include on-site next business day maintenance on aSa-supplied printers. Separate plans are available for new printer purchases and for printers that are more than 60 days old.

Contact us. If you are interested in purchasing a thermal tag printer or a printer maintenance plan to protect your investment, please contact aSa for pricing and additional details.

SATO Zebra

TECH TIPS

Commonly asked questions answered by aSa's IT staff

I'm not sure if I'm backing up my aSa *e*^{x} data properly. Give me an overview of the process.

"Backing up" your aSa *e*^{x} data is really a two-step process: 1) Creating "backup files" from your databases and 2) physically copying those files, plus any other important files, onto a storage device. Both steps can — and should — be **automated** so that backups aren't accidentally forgotten. The steps should also be run **daily**; this way, you'll never lose more than one day's worth of work if you encounter a problem with your system.

Step 1: Because of their dynamic format, databases cannot be copied like regular files can. Therefore, you need to use a utility that takes a "snapshot" of your databases and creates files from that information. SQL database: use SQL Server backup utilities; MSDE database: use aSa Backup/Restore.

Step 2: Set up a daily automated procedure to copy selected files and folders onto a storage device. Most commonly, files are saved to tape media using tape backup software. Be sure: a) that physical tape backups run after the database backup files are created (step 1) and b) that physical tape backups include the database files. Take your backup tapes off-site to protect against theft or fire.

Contact aSa's IT staff for help setting up automated database and tape backups.

We upgraded our server to Windows 2003 Server, and now DOS aSa isn't working properly. How do I fix the problem?

By default, Windows 2003 Server has tighter security settings than previous versions of the operating system. When using a Windows 2003 Server as a file server, make sure aSa users have Read, Write, and Modify rights on all aSa program files and folders.
HINT: When setting up security rights for a folder, check "Replace permission entries on all child objects ..." on the Security tab. This propagates the folder's rights to all files and sub-folders contained in the folder.

WELCOME

NEW aSa CLIENTS

Fabricators & Suppliers

Acier AGF Inc.
Longueuil, QC
Canada

Benkat and Son Steel
Ventura, CA

Border Construction Specialties
Tuscon Rebar
Tuscon, AZ

Carter Concrete Structures, Inc.
Stone Mountain, GA

Coen Steel Ltd.
County Galway, Ireland

Deerfield Builders Supply Co., Inc.
Deerfield Beach, FL

Power Poles, Inc.
Rio Grande, PR

South Pacific Steel Corp.
Kapolei, HI

Steel Services
Philadelphia, PA

Suncoast Post-Tension
Ontario, CA

Tycon Steel, Inc.
Victoria, BC
Canada

Did You Know ...

The complete Directory of aSa Licensed and Supported Contract Estimators & Detailers is available on the Support section of the aSa website.

Contract Estimators & Detailers

Kevin Endicott
Indianapolis, IN

David Jeronymo
New Bedford, MA

Laurie Inc.
Laurie Linville
Phoenix, AZ

Lineation
Juanita Dandurand
Anchorage, AK

Curtis McCulloch
Layton, UT

Neilsoft Ltd.
Sandeep Agrawal
India

Jesus Nunez
Plant City, FL

Paradigm IT, Private LTD
Anil Kumar
India

Rebar Engineering Services
Richard Kranzler
Spokane, WA

Orlando N. Rivero
Miami, FL

T L Murfrebar, LLC
Tim Murphy
Milwaukee, WI

Version 5 Opto-Shear Console on the Horizon

New technology gives the next generation aSa Opto-Shear Console a slimmer body and a screen that's easier to see and touch.

The newest aSa shear controller was unveiled in Las Vegas at World of Concrete 2005. In some respects, the console is very similar to its predecessor — operators will recognize the same smart interface, as well as the same easy-to-follow instructions, on-board optimization, and tag scanning abilities. Even the red cabinet is the same ... almost. The console box now has a smaller footprint — the new controller is 18" narrower front to back than the version 4 consoles in use today. The primary reason for the smaller cabinet is the console's new monitor. The controller now uses a touch LCD monitor. The new lighter, flatter monitor requires much less space to be mounted. Using the screen to make entries is also now easier because the monitor's infrared technology registers a "touch" without the need to apply any pressure at all to the screen. Because pressure isn't required, aSa expects the new monitors will last longer than the older touch screens.

A comprehensive user's guide is now available for the current version 4 aSa Opto-Shear Console. Download the guide from the Documents page of our website. Browse to www.asarebar.com/support. Log in, then click Documentation Downloads.

Automatic, Manual, Pause, and Toggle mode screens are the same as the newest version 4 consoles with one exception: the color scheme has been changed to use a gray background rather than black. The new scheme cuts down on glare for easier viewing. Contact aSa for more information about our shear console solutions.

A flat infrared touch monitor allows the newest version of the aSa Opto-Shear Console to be 18" narrower than its predecessor. The smaller footprint gives operators more work space around the shearline. Other improvements include a new interface color scheme that reduces glare. The optional hand scanner allows operators to load tag information into the controller's memory by simply scanning bar coded bundle tags.

Abra Payroll

Save big by bringing your payroll processing in-house.

If you're outsourcing payroll, you're already doing 95% of the work anyway. aSa can show you how Abra Payroll by Best allows you to process payroll in-house, eliminating the large expense of outsourcing.

Abra provides tools that make payroll changes easy and trial payroll runs trouble-free. The package comes with over 100 reports and automatically updates itself with the newest tax laws and regulations.

aSa is an award-winning Best Software reseller and Master Developer, authorized to customize Best products to meet specific customer needs. Contact us for more information.