

DEALER PROFILE

**ATLANTIC WATER PRODUCTS
BATTLES ECONOMY,
EDUCATES CONSUMERS
TO GROW BUSINESS.**

RainSoft[®]

DEALER PROFILE:

ATLANTIC WATER PRODUCTS

It started with an ice cube. A RainSoft dealer sales representative explained to New Jersey beach restaurateur and bar owner Curt Wunder that as H2O freezes, air is compressed inside the cube to create the cloudy center. Having gained Wunder's attention, the representative noted there could also be impurities in the water – elements you can't see – which may affect whatever is served.

Wunder ultimately concluded that water purification would be good for his business. "I wound up buying the company in order to get a deal on a water treatment system," he jokes. That was 24 years ago when the fledgling Atlantic Water Products' (AWP) first owner, a nuclear engineer, decided to accept a job offer to run a nuclear power plant. Wunder jumped at the chance. He already was sold on RainSoft products with the industry's only Lifetime warranty and convinced that water treatment had a big future.

Under his tutelage, AWP (www.atlanticwaterproducts.com) sales quickly multiplied. Wunder added that he's had plenty of help from his team of about 50 employees, which boasts 13 sales representatives. Both general sales manager Tim Way and service manager Gus Pfaundler signed on 20 years ago.

Like nearly every business, AWP volume dropped after the economy nosedived in 2008, "but we've recovered and continue to do so," he says. With offices in New Castle, Delaware, and Mays Landing, New Jersey, AWP services customers in southern New Jersey, Delaware and areas of Pennsylvania south of Philadelphia.

In-home 'school' educates buyers

Today AWP teaches homeowners by conducting detailed, in-home water quality analyses, as the point of the ice cube-H2O impurities lesson continues to drive sales.



Curt Wunder was intrigued so much about water purification when he owned a bar and restaurant that he decided to sell the business and buy Atlantic Water Products in 1988.

"Better tasting, clean water is important to homeowners. We design our presentation around personal health and the household benefits of better quality water," Wunder said.

"However, nobody wakes up in the morning and says 'I need a water treatment system.' Newcomers to an area may notice the water is different than where they lived before, but if you were raised on chlorinated water, you figure that's how water tastes. Utilities do the best they can by adding chemicals to combat impurities, but they still deliver a hard, chlorinated product."

That's where Wunder feels AWP can make a difference.

"In contrast, our systems take chemicals out of the water and give people water the way it was meant to be. In homes, we do color-coded tests to show what is in the water so the family sees results right there at the kitchen tap. We review benefits of better quality water, from taste and fresher laundry to dollar savings in bottled water, household energy, soaps, detergent and more."

Wunder said clean air usually comes up in the conversation as AWP's whole house systems also include RainSoft air cleaning options. He mentions how indoor air quality is a major EPA (Environmental Protection Agency) concern. Buildings are relatively airtight nowadays and re-circulated indoor air can be 30 times worse than outdoor air.

Most homeowners opt for the complete package: water softener, reverse osmosis (RO) drinking water system and air purification. About four in 10 make a purchase on the very first sales call and punctuate a key point with Wunder. "The more a person knows about how our product can improve their life, the more likely they are to buy."

New iPad 'App' helps buyers see home-specific needs and system payback



A new iPad application from RainSoft could assist sales efforts even more. "They made it available in early June and it is part of the ongoing training for sales people," Wunder says. "While the current presentation books work well, a picture paints a thousand words. This iPad app adds a modern digital, more visual aspect that buyers respond to."

It also helps involve customers in the process, inputting their own household cost data, and seeing results instantly displayed. "The home-specific savings help show how they can have the best quality air and water without it affecting the budget. The cost savings usually pay for a system in less than 60 months."

The Home Depot and RainSoft's dealer network



Schools need new "students" to grow, and AWP draws from several sources. "Many leads stem from a RainSoft marketing partnership with The Home Depot," Wunder reveals. "We can display products and offer in-home water analyses to customers in their outlets. That's why we're affiliated with 16 stores in our area."

AWP also relies on methods such as direct mail and telemarketing. "RainSoft provides a lot of really good



Gus Pfaundler keeps the service department running smoothly and it's been that way since he joined AWP in 1992.

material - the best in the business - that we can tailor for our special needs, from lead generation to the sales presentation itself."

All of which makes the relationship with RainSoft a special one as AWP prepares for its 25th year of business in 2013.



General sales manager Tim Way is Curt Wunder's right hand man at AWP for the last 20 years.

"We sometimes kid about telling new dealers 'Welcome to the RainSoft family,'" Wunder commented.

"Dealers helping other dealers - it happens all the time. I recently spent a half-hour on the phone with a new dealer in Jersey. He had questions about marketing and evaluating worker performance. At RainSoft conventions, we usually swap ideas on ways to generate leads and incentivize employees, you name it."

"We're not competing against each other; every dealer has his exclusive territory," Wunder summarizes.

"RainSoft recognizes the value of the dealer network and supports all aspects of the business, including the lifetime warranted products. We learn from each other, customers learn from us, and an educated consumer returns over and over again."



About RainSoft

Headquartered in Elk Grove Village, Illinois, RainSoft, a division of Aquion, Inc., is an international company with over 150 authorized and independently owned dealerships in the U.S. and 20 other countries. The company is dedicated to producing the world's finest water treatment systems, all of them manufactured in the U.S.A. and backed with the industry's strongest lifetime warranties. For more information, visit RainSoft.com or call 1-800-RAINSOFT. To become a RainSoft dealer, visit RainSoftDealer.com or call 1-866-4RAINSOFT (866) 472-4676.