

Pittsburgh Rich History in Technology

When you think of where the largest corporate **headquarters** are based in the US, for most folks, Pittsburgh doesn't come to mind. The truth is, 11 of Fortune 500 Magazines "500 of the Largest Corporation" reside right here in Pittsburgh PA! From energy, to metals and coatings, from food to clothing, medical and financial services, Pittsburgh has it covered. The city of Pittsburgh has come a long way since the days of steel mills and heavy manufacturing that turned our skies yellow.

It's amazing what 40 years and a total renaissance will do for a city and its hard working citizens. Since 2000, Pittsburgh has topped the list for the most livable city six times and was recently rated as the best foodie city, beating out cities like New York, San Francisco, and Austin. There have been many high tech startups in Pittsburgh over the last 25 years that have made it to the top of their industries because of the work ethic in its people that you simply can't bet against. So what led to this complete rebirth of a soot covered steel town? If I had to wager a guess, I would say a big part of the transformation was largely due to our amazing universities and the talented individuals they produce.

For example, Carnegie Mellon University, recognized as one of the top universities in the world has become an amazing technology incubator that has launched over 1000 startup companies, with the intent of keeping its best and brightest right where they belong. Many of these companies have become global leaders in their space like Adobe Systems, Body Media (Jawbone), Juniper Networks, Lycos, MAYA Designs, Dynavox Systems, SUN Microsystems, FORE Systems/ Marconi, and many more. But talent and book smarts is not enough. You need to start with a solid foundation of deep family values, unwavering ethics, a deep desire to work hard for what you earn, along with a city that you actually want to live in, and perhaps start a family. Pittsburgh is grounded in these basic principles and that's why it's become a destination city, a place to start a business, raise a family and set down roots.

Sadly, this was not always the case. Even with Pittsburgh being recognized for our global talent, and boast some of the nation's top universities, when our young graduates finish at their university of choice with technology, engineering, or biology degrees, many of them leave taking their education and more importantly their passion and entrepreneurial spirit with them to other cities like NY, Dallas, Atlanta, Chicago or LA. Why, because there was nothing keeping them here, there were no real high technology companies or tech manufacturing that was worth staying for or didn't offer a competitive advantage to other larger more progressive cities.

With Pittsburgh steel mills once producing over 66% of the nation's steel and 30% of the world's combined steel output, even exceeding the annual output of all German and Austrian firms combined, we still didn't have a back up plan for the next generation. Pittsburgh has always been an amazing place to live and has been so instrumental in the building of this country's infrastructure that it's hard to imagine where we would be today without Pittsburgh's great mills and blue-collar heroes, but today we are so much more than that. Pittsburgh is a technology city, a city that is just as instrumental in building our global technology highway as our grandparents and great grandparents were at building our cities, and highways through mountains of dirt and stone. Where am I going with all of this? Pittsburgh isn't done with its contribution to technology and today we are still pumping out great high tech companies and we are still showing the world our resolve, tenacious work ethic and appetite to build things that matter.

One great example of this can be found right in the heart of Pittsburgh's North Shore. Dawar Technologies is designing, manufacturing and integrating some of the coolest technology in the market. Technology used in every industrial, consumer, medical, military and automotive market by recognizable names like, Apple, Motorola, Garmin, Microsoft, and pretty much every automobile manufacture in the world. It's a technology taken for granted unless it stops working and when it does; your life seems to fall apart. You start to hyperventilate, you breakout into a cold sweat and your heart starts to pound out of your chest. For you millennials, imagine not being able to text your BFF the latest celebrity breakup or you can't play the endless number of games on your smart phone or tablet like Angry Birds or Candy Crush. When your touch screen fails in the middle of tweeting your favorite political jokes, you feel hollow inside, your world comes to a crushing end and you look for that proverbial "safe place" Okay so maybe it's not that bad.

Capacitive or resistive touch screens (sensors) is the product that allows you to interface with all of your devices and lets you input all of your texts, tweets and emails without a separate keyboard. It's the input method that lets you play all of your online games on your smart tablet with multiple touches or a swipe and is a bit of high technology that most folks never think about when it works.

There are a countless numbers of suppliers that make this technology but not many can say they manufacture it in the US and only one can say they do it in Pittsburgh PA. Established in 1883, Dawar understood that to be successful, you need to be present, you need to be the expert that your clients need you to be and you need to offer a service that will never be commoditized. Dawar is a small company with clear focus on the future, but nimble enough for course corrections when needed. We made sure that all of our engineers, sales, marketing and executive teams are located in the US where our support is in the same time zone that our customers are located in and since many of our products are customized to our customer's needs, this strategy has been incredibly valuable and successful.

Ultimately, to be successful in a market that is changing more rapidly than one can image, you can't simply rely on your ability to manufacture a product and you need to think beyond the sensor and offer your clients other services like integration of the sensor to the LCD with either perimeter tape bonding or full optical bonding, electronic design services and even help with procurement. Many companies over the years have streamlined their internal teams and are looking for suppliers to help off-load some of these internal tasks.

Until recently, if you wanted to see this kind of manufacturing it was easy enough. All you needed was a contact in China; a passport; a VISA and enough time to travel 14 hours by plane and then two hours by car. If that's what you feel you need, we can provide that since we have our own 100K square foot state-of-the-art large volume manufacturing facility in China that offers all of the advanced manufacturing capabilities you could want. Or you can drive or fly to Pittsburgh, take a tour of our 47,000 square foot high-tech design and manufacturing facility that boasts a Class 10K cleanroom and Class 100 lamination process along with full optical bonding and integration services. You can talk with our engineering, sales and marketing teams and depending on what time of year you come, you can take a tour of one of our other three world class championship manufacturing sites, the home of the Pittsburgh Penguins, Pirates or Steelers!

Author: David Ashi