



PTD CHAT

JULY 2021

PENTELEDATA'S
CUSTOMER NEWS

Partner in Business

Strong Spas

Strong Industries Inc.'s president, Wade Spicer, started his company from a college dorm room in 1992, with himself as the only employee. He was finishing his last semester at Alfred University and read a newspaper article about an incubator program to help launch businesses in the glass industry. He had already been accepted to law school but decided to start his own company instead and enrolled in a few courses on fiberglass. The name Strong was inspired by the strength of fiberglass.

The business's original products were pet-related. He had the help of a few high school friends to get started. Over time, his operations moved from Sayre to Williamsport. The move to Williamsport allowed the purchase of large-scale plastics manufacturing equipment and shifted operations to include becoming a contract manufacturer to OEMs in various industries. Strong built bumpers, wheel wells and water tanks for the motor home industry, displays for the shower, bath and golf industries, plastic parts for the automotive industry, and high-pressure hydraulic tanks for the national defense industry, just to name a few. By the late 1990s, the growing company needed additional space, and purchased the current company headquarters in Northumberland.

Today, Strong Spas is one of the largest hot tub manufacturers in the world, and one of the few hot tub manufac-

turers with plant operations in the USA. Strong Spas are proudly custom built at Pennsylvania manufacturing facilities and are shipped throughout North America and Europe. Taking great pride in its all-American heritage, the brand has been a global leader in spa

manufacturing since 1994, shipping to over 40 countries. Through its innovations, Strong Spas has imprinted its status as one of the leading hot tub manufacturers in terms of both quality and features. Their unique, patented DURA-SHIELD® Hard-Cover was engineered to provide the industry's toughest protection and ultimate thermal efficiency. This cover can hold well over 1,000 pounds, minimizing the risk of kids or pets entering while blocking out debris and snow.

They market their hot tubs through an authorized dealer network of brick-and-mortar stores across North America and Europe, as well as through specialty retailers like Mattress Firm. A significant portion of sales are through ecommerce sites such as Costco (US and Canada), Sam's Club, Home Depot, BJ's Wholesale, Wayfair, Amazon and MyHotTub.com.

Why does Strong Spas choose PenTeleData? Adam Tressler, Strong Spas' Director of IT, explained, "PenTeleData is a local and trusted company that has been around for several years. Strong has a long history with PenTeleData partners such as Ironton Telephone and Service Electric. We've had a dedicated fiber line in place for about ten years at our main production facility in Northumberland that is supported by PenTeleData. Our factory outlet store in..." *(continued on page 4)*



Strong Spas factory aerial view

 PenTeleData

In this issue

Page 1:

Partner in Business:
Strong Spas

Page 2-3:

Manager's Desk...
IronPigs Update
What's in a Gig?
PenTeleData Webmail

We are Proud of Our
Strengths in Partnership
PenTeleData & Musikfest
Monthly Contest

Page 4:

Business Feature (cont.)
Fun Facts
Contest Winner



Manager's Desk...

Dear Valued Customer,

Welcome to the summer edition of the "PTD Chat", our quarterly newsletter. At PenTeleData, we value our relationships in the communities we serve. That's why being local is important to us and we know that it's important to you too. With this in mind, it's great to see that local events are happening again. We can't wait to see you, so don't hesitate to stop and say hello when you see our booth or our people out and about.

Thank you for your business and continued support.

Best regards,

Jaime Mendes
Vice President of Operations
PenTeleData

What's in a Gig?

Gig is slang for a live musical performance. But what about Gig Internet speeds? We've got 'em, and you're gonna want them! Gig Internet is now available throughout our footprint.

Gigabit Internet speeds are a "gold standard" for Internet users, as they can support several devices at once and are designed for today's connected homes and offices. Gig Internet offers speeds for optimal streaming and gaming experiences, all while supporting other smart home devices.

Would you like to know more? If you are a business customer, contact us at 1-855-22FIBER. If you are a residential customer, please call our partner cable company that serves your area.

Lehigh Valley IronPigs Update

It's no secret:

PenTeleData loves the Lehigh Valley IronPigs and Coca-Cola Park! We're proud to have supported the team and their functions since their beginnings in the Lehigh Valley and this year was no different. Except, it was different. When the IronPigs hosted their home opener on Tuesday, May 4, 2021, it had been 616 days since the last home game, which had taken place on Sunday, August 25, 2019. During that time, there were many special events, including Bingo, a Summer Fun Fest, a visit from the Philadelphia Phillies Taxi Squad and much more, but there's something we can all agree upon: It's good to have baseball back!

My PenTeleData Webmail Update

We have good news! By the time you're reading this, our migration to our new WebMail platform will be almost complete. Thank you for your patience as we experienced a few setbacks with our vendors along the way. We're sure that the result is worth it. Customers who use My PenTeleData Webmail to manage their PenTeleData email accounts will see a new user interface (UI) that allows users to move seamlessly between desktop, mobile and tablet browsers. Settings, including all emails, calendar events, and preferences automatically transferred to the new platform, plus the ability to block unwanted emails.

PenTeleData is a Proud Sponsor of Musikfest!

It's hard to believe, but PenTeleData has been supporting ArtsQuest and Musikfest since the mid-1990s. Time sure flies when you're having fun!

This year, Musikfest is back! For more than three decades, Musikfest has brought millions of people to Bethlehem. Last year was a little different, but Musikfest is ready for 2021 with a full line up, including Darius Rucker, Preservation Hall Jazz Band, Sam Hunt, Shinedown, Jimmie Allen, Colin Hay Band, KT Tunstall, Zedd, and The Wood Brothers. Once again, music and food will take over the streets of Bethlehem!

The festival will take place both in the Historic Moravian District and South-Side Arts District of the city of Bethlehem. Although this year will be slightly modified, they are thrilled to offer more than a dozen venues. **This year's festival is set for August 6th – 15th.**

We are Proud of the Strengths in Our Partnership

Batman and Robin. Captain America, Thor, and Iron Man. Ant-Man and The Wasp. Green Arrow and Green Lantern. X-Men. Avengers. The Justice League. The Fantastic Four. Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. PenTeleData. Wait, What?!? That's right, there's strength in any good partnership.

Heroes are made by the paths they choose. Have you ever wondered about how PenTeleData Internet services got started? It all began in a world of ordinary mortals using their everyday powers: a few heroes with almost superhuman ESP of what cable could provide to the community. Cable television, also known as Community Antenna Television or CATV, was born in rural Pennsylvania back in the 1940s. Some of you may already know the story—Service Electric's John Walson placed an antenna on top of the mountain to improve television reception in Mahanoy City. (Did he miraculously fly up the mountain with that first cable line? Was he wearing a cape? We'll probably never know for sure.)

Service Electric Cable TV, Inc. is a successor corporation to a community antenna television business started by John Walson in June 1948. Prior to beginning the nation's first community antenna television system, later known as cable television, in Mahanoy City, Pennsylvania, Mr. Walson was employed by the Pennsylvania Power & Light Company. In addition to that occupation, he and his wife also operated an electric appliance store under a General Electric franchise. In 1947, the Walsons began selling television sets at their appliance store. It was impossible to receive

the three Philadelphia network stations in Mahanoy City because the town is surrounded by mountains. Because of this situation, an antenna tower was built on top of a nearby mountain. Mr. Walson was able to demonstrate his new television receivers at this mountain top location. In searching for ways to increase television sales, a line was constructed from that antenna site to his appliance warehouse. As a result, a new industry was started in America. By adding new antennas and boosters, and by starting to wire individual homes, Mr. Walson was able to create the Nation's first cable television system. As systems were offered for sale, he purchased them. When franchises were available, he applied. Mr. Walson was guided by the one fundamental principle, people wanted television service and he had the power to make it possible. It was quite the adventure, but a true hero finds strength to follow through and persevere despite overwhelming obstacles.

Nearby, like all superheroes who serve in specific communities, other champions of the cable cause were also working in areas where reception of television signals was difficult or impossible. One of those striving for the future of cable television was Claude E. Reinhard, Engineer at the New Jersey Zinc Company by day and cable founder by night (and weekends). After all, he had to go door to door to persuade others that his dream was possible, because starting a cable company required money and no matter how heroic he was, that wasn't going to happen without hard work. Soon, he and other investors

used their diverse powers to found the Palmerton TV Signal Corporation. Over time, this company transformed to become Blue Ridge Communications. During those years, telecommunications changed at a rapid speed (a reasonable comparison of the warp speed evolution of the cable and communication industry might be a superhero who was referred to as "faster than a speeding bullet"). Palmerton TV Signal Corporation bought Palmerton Telephone Company from PP&L and later purchased Blue Ridge Telephone Company to improve local telephone service by making investments in new technology. These companies became part of the larger parent company, Pencor Services, Inc. Pencor's headquarters are based in Palmerton, Pennsylvania, and grew with the founding vision of Claude Reinhard, and his sons, Donald and Fred, who followed his innovative example.

Superheroes represent hope, opportunity, and strength, so at the dawn of the information age in 1994, Pencor Services, Inc. founded PenTeleData with the purpose of providing affordable Internet access, and with the vision of providing Broadband High-Speed Internet. Part of that plan was the partnership with local cable television and telephone companies to provide high-speed Internet access. That strong and powerful partnership continues today, and includes Blue Ridge Communications, Service Electric Cable TV and Communications, Service Electric Cablevision, Palmerton Telephone, and Irontron Telephone.

Contest

July 2021:

PenTeleData is giving one lucky winner a family 4-pack of tickets to an IronPigs game on Sunday, August 8th at 1:35 pm. Lehigh Valley IronPigs vs. Buffalo Bisons.

How to play:

Rack your brain and figure out the answer to the brain teaser below.

Then send us an e-mail with your full name, address, daytime telephone number (where we can contact you), and the answer to the brain teaser below, to chat@corp.ptd.net All entries must be received by 7/31/21.

Good Luck! PenTeleData

Brain Teaser:

A blue house is made of blue bricks. A yellow house is made of yellow bricks. A red house is made of red bricks. A orange house is made of orange bricks. What would a greenhouse be made of?

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Partner in Business: (continued)

Strong Spas

Lewisburg and the up-and-coming production facility in Danville both utilize their broadband Internet."

When asked about the reliability of PenTeleData's services and support, he shared, "Outside of natural disasters we have had excellent service. The few times we have run into issues, support is very prompt, insightful and helpful."



Strong Spas factory floor
overhead view

Like many businesses, Strong has seen their share of challenges. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 resulted in sky-rocketed energy costs. Later, after the events of 9/11, skyrocketing energy costs caused many of their buyers to scale back or go out of business entirely. That's when Strong Spas began creating more proprietary products. This led to the creation of the Colosseum Pool, one of the best above-ground swimming pools. The seasonality of the pool led to the less seasonal hot tub product line in 2004. Then, in 2006, just as they were ramping up pool and spa production, the recession began. When the housing bubble burst, the hot tub industry took a huge hit too. The swimming pool industry, their other main product, followed the same path. While many similar companies closed completely, Strong weathered the storm. Unfortunately, in 2008, just as business was building up again, their building suffered a major plant fire. Despite all of this, they continued to grow and develop new products. Most recently, unlike the pandemic challenge to most businesses, the struggle for Strong Spas has been a bit different. When vacations turned into staycations, their business thrived as the demand for pools and spas has increased dramatically. Strong Spas recently bought and renovated a 200,000-square foot facility in Danville that has four new assembly lines, with a pending addition of 400 new jobs. In addition, a second shift with 200 additional workers are being added to its current site in Northumberland and they will add another full staff for a third shift by Spring 2022, nearly doubling their number of staff since pre-pandemic operations. While that doesn't sound like a challenge, Mr. Spicer said it's been difficult to find enough employees. Once they are fully staffed, the increased production will also bring a greater demand for their networking infrastructure and capacity demands.

At PenTeleData, we're proud to serve Strong Industries Inc. We know that every company faces unique obstacles and varied periods of growth, so our fully redundant fiber optic network is ready for whatever those changes may entail, as proven by the increased need of Internet services during and since the pandemic. Our partnership has invested more than \$300 million in fiber optic infrastructure, with nearly 10,000 miles of fiber optic cabling and 60 nodes for diversity and redundancy. We have private peering agreements with major national content providers and cache servers to reduce network congestion and interconnect agreements that allow us to expand our footprint to serve multiple locations. One of our greatest assets is being locally owned - it allows us to make decisions faster and support our customers better, for everything from reliable, scalable fiber-based solutions, including dark fiber, to broadband services, Cloud-Based Business Voice services, and an I.T. Services team.

Fun Facts

Epcot is the second of four theme parks built at Walt Disney World in Bay Lake, Florida, near Orlando, Florida. It opened as EPCOT Center on October 1, 1982, and spans 300 acres, more than twice the size of the Magic Kingdom park.

Astronauts can indeed cry in space. Tears run down your face because of gravity, but they don't need gravity to form. When the tears get big enough they simply break free of the eye and float around.

The little finger, often called the pinky in American English, pinkie in Scottish English (from the Dutch word pink, "little finger"), or fifth digit in medicine, is the most ulnar and usually smallest finger of the human hand, opposite the thumb, next to the ring finger.

Guinness World Records lists the largest snowflakes as having fallen during a storm in January 1887 at Fort Keogh, in Montana. A rancher nearby, the book says, called them "larger than milk pans" and measured one at 15 inches wide.

According to the Theodore Roosevelt Association, Mr. Roosevelt was the first president to be submerged in a submarine; the first president to own a car; the first to have a telephone in his home; and the first to entertain an African-American, Booker T. Washington, in the White House.

Crocodiles and alligators belong to a group of reptiles called crocodylians, which are the largest of the living reptiles. Of the 23 different species of crocodylians in the world, 2 species are native to the United States, and south Florida is the only place where both of these species coexist.

The "BB" in bb gun does not stand for 'ball-bearing'. 'BB' began as the size of a shot (intended for use within a shotgun shell) which fell midway between 'b' and 'bbb' types. An inventor eventually began using 'bb' as a single projectile, hence the name.

WINNER

April 2021 Contest Winner

**Congratulations to Kenneth Kmetz of Lehigh, Pa.
Kenneth was the winner of a \$50 Amazon Gift Card.**

QUESTION: It's so fragile even just saying its name can break it.
What is it?

ANSWER: Silence