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Panel Specialists Inc. celebrates 25 years of Success, Friends and Service

In 1990, three men gathered around a metal desk to start one of the leading manufacturers of interior wall panel systems in the country. Panel Specialists is proud to celebrate 25 years of creating beautiful interior spaces. PSI's continued success is made possible by a family of dedicated employees.

April 20, 2015 – Temple, TX – Panel Specialists Inc. (PSI) (www.panelspec.com). Panel Specialists, Inc., located in Temple, TX, proudly celebrates its 25 year anniversary of composite panel and furniture manufacturing. In 1990 Raymond Schiller, Hal Martin and Paul Karnowski were seated in lawn chairs around a metal desk inside a 6,000 square foot building with one, French-style telephone between them. This was the less than auspicious beginning of PSI, now one of the nation's leading producers of interior wall panel systems.

Mr. Schiller and Mr. Martin, along with private financier, Mr. Jim Wallis, had just purchased the laminated panel business serviced by the Specialty Products Division of the Ralph Wilson Plastics Company (now [Wilsonart LLC](#)) in Temple. The laminated panels were the basis for two product lines that still are a part of PSI's offering today, a [Wall Panel System](#) for institutional and commercial interiors and a [Marine Wall System](#) for ocean going vessels and offshore oil rigs.

Paul, PSI's first employee, was soon joined by Jeff Dean and the two made up PSI's manufacturing team. "We made boards one day, cut them by hand the next, machined them and finally packed and shipped them out," said Paul. "That's where the PSI story begins. From day-one, there was something special about this company," said Elliot Germany, President of PSI. "We still have some of the first employees of PSI and we're thankful for their experience and commitment to the PSI family." Today, both Paul and Jeff are key managers in the company and the manufacturing team has grown to over 160 employees. The hand fabrication tools they originally used have been replaced with state-of-the-art, large scale production and handling equipment and the original 6,000 square foot building has expanded to five buildings covering more than 340,000 square feet.

During the succeeding years new products were developed and new markets explored. One of the great successes was a partnership begun in 1997 with another Temple-based company, [Southwest Contract](#), to produce residence hall furniture. Today PSI manufactures and ships high-quality furniture to college and university campuses across the nation, creating environments within student housing that offer students flexibility, versatility, space savings, and safety in a home-like atmosphere.

In 2007 PSI recognized the opportunity to meet the needs of the rapidly expanding healthcare facilities market in Texas. "We capitalized on our experience in manufacturing educational casework and furniture, and added seasoned manufacturing and engineering talent to address these needs," said Gary Kosel, PSI's Executive

Vice President. “To date we have supplied custom medical casework and patient headwalls to a number of prestigious hospitals and medical facilities in the Southwest. We have just recently finished supplying casework to the largest publicly funded hospital construction project in the US, the soon to open \$1.6 billion dollar [Parkland Hospital](#) expansion in Dallas.”

2009 saw a significant change at PSI when the founders sold the company to Markel Ventures, a subsidiary of the [Markel Corporation](#). Markel Ventures invests in market leading companies led by honest and talented managers. As part of its investment philosophy, Markel provides its companies with permanent capital and the resources necessary to support future growth opportunities. “This is the perfect scenario for a company like PSI,” commented Germany. Today PSI serves a variety of markets, including owners, architects, design firms, general contractors, university housing directors, hospitals, maritime and K-12 institutions.

PSI’s team members continue to be dedicated to its mission: “To enrich lives by enhancing the environment in which people live, learn, heal, work and play.” They have served PSI well for the past 25 years and will continue to be the foundation to build on for the next 25 years.

About Panel Specialists

[PSI](#) is a leading manufacturer of architectural, interior, modular wall panel systems. Their wall panel systems are designed to stand up to the rigors of demanding environments and still maintain their appearance. With a breadth of offerings spanning wall panel systems, medical casework, marine and residential life furniture, PSI is dedicated to enhancing the spaces in which people live, work, heal and play. PSI is based in Temple, TX, and is a proud part of the [Markel Corporation](#).