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**ROUTING**



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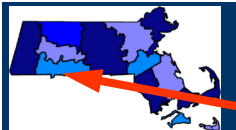
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**ATLANTIC FASTENERS® CO., INC.**  
Agawam, Massachusetts



# ATLANTIC FASTENERS

By The Gateway

AGAWAM, MA

**A**tlantic Fasteners was founded by Western Massachusetts businessmen Patrick and Larry O'Toole in 1981. The firm had been headed for its second bankruptcy under a previous owner when the brothers, experienced businessmen who had owned lumber and pipe, valve, and fitting distributorships, purchased it. The company had five employees and \$250,000 in sales. "It had a terrible reputation with customers and suppliers alike," says Pat O'Toole. Pivotal to the firm's initial success, he says, was his partner, Carol Peters, who had worked for years at another fastener distributor. She headed the early sales effort and secured important authorization to carry quality brands.

Pat O'Toole bought out his brother in 1985 when he took on another partner, Tony Peterson, the current president. He says that over the years, sales and headcount soared, while the company invested heavily in computerization and bar coding. In 1993 the company earned ISO certification and years later, AS certification.

In 2005, as O'Toole neared retirement, he sold the company to his employees in an ESOP (Employee Stock Ownership Plan) transaction. The company was located in West Springfield, Massachusetts for 33 years. In November 2014, it moved to its current 44,500 sq. ft. facility in neighboring Agawam.

Open 7am to 5 pm weekdays, Atlantic Fasteners is an ISO 9001:2008 and AS9120A certified wholesale distributor of industrial and aerospace fasteners and industrial supplies. It stocks over 17,500 varieties tended by 48 employees. Its industrial website is [atlanticfasteners.com](http://atlanticfasteners.com).

## High quality brands in stock

Peterson says it sells high quality brands including Holo-Krome, Loctite, HeliCoil, Dzus, Camloc, Monadnock, Greer, 3M, Uvex, Infasco, Camcar, Flexloc, Sait, Champion, Pop, Simpson Strong Tie, and ITW Fastex.

A made-to-print department handles special lengths, coatings and platings, cross-drilling, cold heading, waterjet cutting, powdered metal, stamped, molded and deep drawn parts.

Kitting with custom labeling is another offering.

Atlantic ships nationally and internationally to customers as varied as small machine shops to huge aerospace primes. Peterson says major accounts include, "medical device manufacturers, machine builders, chemical plants, electric utilities, firearms makers, and paper mills."



*Atlantic Fasteners' 22 foot long pickup counter is open from 7 am to 5 pm weekdays.*







*Atlantic Fasteners' shelving is designed to accommodate a second story with catwalks for planned expansion. The firm also has an additional 18,000 sq. ft. of clean, connected warehouse space available.*

### **Custom VMI specialists**

The wholesaler specializes in customized bar code vendor managed inventory systems (VMI), some at point-of-use assembly areas. It employs six inventory managers throughout the Northeast and Midwest who visit more than 65 industrial and aerospace customers periodically, managing inventories, taking orders and often returning to put away product.

According to VP of Sales, John Kraus, 27 years with Atlantic, the salaried VMI managers' sole role is to manage inventories and help customers determine the right balance of adequate stock to dollars spent. "Through specialized reporting, they pinpoint what moves and what doesn't," says Kraus. "Most have been employed by Atlantic for over 20 years," he says.

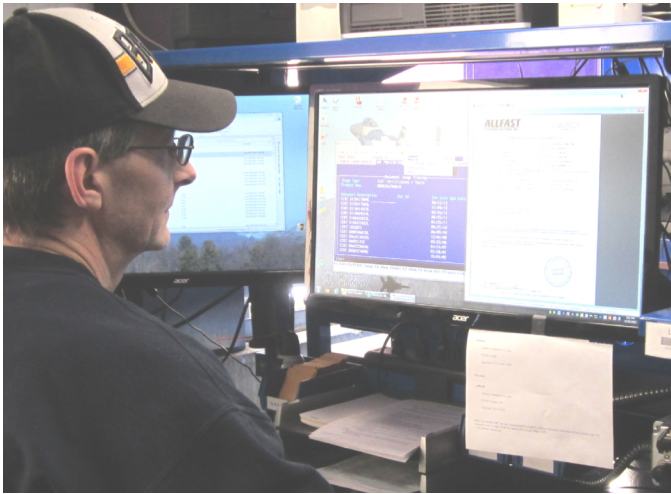
Kraus goes on to say, "Customers who prefer to manage their own supplies can download Atlantic's inventory management app from iTunes. The app runs on Apple iPhones, iPod touches and iPads and sends orders directly to Atlantic for processing."

### **Industrial supplies**

Two years ago, Atlantic became a supplier of over 83,000 industrial supplies through a partnership with a nationwide supplier of branded product. Products include safety, welding, electrical, tools, plumbing, HVAC, janitorial, and other supplies. The firm's online industrial supply store is at [www.atlanticindustrialsupplies.com](http://www.atlanticindustrialsupplies.com).

Twice monthly, Atlantic emails industrial supply specials to its customers.





*For its aerospace department, Atlantic Fasteners scans and stores all important documents like test reports and certifications. Then it electronically links them to appropriate product lots. So when customers misplace the documents, the firm faxes or emails them within seconds.*

### **Aerospace certifications, awards and low minimums**

Quality director, Dana Lees, a 26 year employee, says, "The aerospace department is certified to AS9120A quality standard and includes its own well-equipped inspection department. It's QSLD approved by the federal government to sell rivets, Class 2 and Class 3 threaded products. And it holds FAA AC 00-56 voluntary accreditation for the sale of civil aircraft parts and DD 2345, which is a joint certification by the U.S. and Canadian defense departments allowing Atlantic access to their unclassified technical information about critical technology."

Lees says, "Atlantic is a Lockheed STAR award recipient and two-time DOD Gold Medalist Supplier Award winner."

He went on to say, "One of its appeals is its low minimum order requirements – only \$10 per line, \$20 per order, including FREE manufacturer's certifications." More at [www.afaero.com](http://www.afaero.com).

### **Prepared for disasters**

"Atlantic's disaster preparedness program is quite advanced for a \$12.5 million firm, according to IT Director, Dean Johnson. He says, "Atlantic conducts nightly cloud backup, which allows for remote server operation during a disaster. It operates under server virtualization which allows for quick recovery. It has a 50kw Cummins natural gas generator that powers the entire company." And Johnson says, "As an added insurance policy, Atlantic has an annual contract with a nationally renowned disaster preparedness firm that will deploy mobile generators, office trailers, internet connectivity, and its own telecommunications to Atlantic, if necessary."

### **Quality program started with \$100 Service**



*Customer service manager Tony Orvis talks with customer service rep Jacquie Kostanski, an 18-year veteran.*

### **Guarantees**

Since 1986, the firm has offered six, \$100 Service Guarantees that ensure call-backs when promised, on-time delivery, without errors or quality defects, and 100% customer satisfaction. When Atlantic makes an error, it issues a \$100 credit.

Peterson says that in the 80s, before the company had begun conducting kiazens or was ISO certified, the guarantees served as a barometer of its performance. "If we started sending out







*Atlantic Fasteners' entire warehouse is bar coded, which dramatically reduces errors. Last year, the firm made only 22 picking, packing and shipping errors after shipping over 131,100 individual order lines. That amounts to 99.98% warehouse accuracy. Here, Brian Pranka confirms an order before shipping.*

credits, for let's say late deliveries," notes Peterson, "it was an indication there was a problem that needed fixing. That was years before we created our online corrective action system and the sophisticated computer performance tracking we now use."



*Atlantic Fasteners 44,500 sq. ft. building is located in the Agawam Industrial Park, minutes from Rt. 91.*

But Peterson says the firm still offers the guarantees, which create a sense of loyalty among recipients. "They know we're willing to put our money on the line."

"We appreciate that loyalty," acknowledges Peterson who notes that for 2014, Atlantic's companywide service level (the percentage of lines shipped on time, 100% complete) averaged 94.8% and its accuracy rating, 99.99%.



*Atlantic Fasteners' inspection lab includes a Greenslade Fastation Gaging System connected to a L.S. Starrett multiplexer and software. Shown here is Quality Director Dana Lees.*



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