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## SMALL BUSINESS: A NEW TWIST ON COMPUTER HELPS HIM BEND TUBING

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Being a computer nerd has had its advantages for Craig Webster.

While working as a sales representative for a British tube-bending company in the late 1980s, Webster spent his spare time creating a computer system to control the tube-bending process.

His employer allowed him to hook his system up to the company's machines, and it worked.

"I basically got the computer more involved with the machining and it was big surprise to everyone that it turned out to be a faster process and more accurate," said Webster. "I was a nerd, so that was the kind of stuff I did as a hobby."

Webster's hobby has become a rapidly growing business. After spending a few years in Italy to perfect his product and train some people to use it, Webster moved to Michigan in 1992 and opened Adaptive Motion Control Systems, or AMCS.

The Wixom-based manufacturer of tube-bending machines supplies Webster's system to about 40 companies, most of which use his machines to make exhaust systems for the auto industry.

"I had a friend here in Michigan, so that was one reason I moved here," said Webster, who is a native of England. "I also knew that, because of the auto industry, there would be a market for my product."

One of Webster's largest clients is Texas-based Tenneco Automotive-Walker Manufacturing, which has been relying on AMCS for several years.

"They are very innovative, way ahead of their competition. They have great craftsmanship and listen to us when we tell them what we need," said Dave Yarber, operations manager for Tenneco.

The increasing demand for machines from AMCS has pushed its payroll from five employees in 1993 to 40 today.

Revenue has followed suit. Webster predicts sales of \$7 million this year and expects to have 80 employees and sales of \$15 million in 1998. The growth forced AMCS last year to move to a 19,000-square-foot building in Wixom.

AMCS also has operations in Franklin, Ind., and a one-person sales office in England.

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