



# Longtime Exhibitor: Hans Rudolph Leaves Legacy of Expertise, Customer Service

The essence of Hans Rudolph Inc. is captured in its tagline—makers of respiratory valves since 1938. Seventy-five years after Hans Rudolph started the company that bears his name, it's clear that these five words exemplify the company's longtime dedication to designing and manufacturing a wide range of respiratory equipment.

The company's early beginnings trace back to when Hans, a German immigrant, first worked as a machinist in his early 20s. That led him to the physiology department at Indiana University, where he created many first-of-their-kind respiratory valves for human and animal pulmonary function studies. The two-way non-rebreathing valve Hans first developed is still sold today, but with newer materials. Over the years, he perfected his designs and ultimately moved to the Kansas City area where, with his son, John, they established Hans Rudolph Inc. (HRI). Today, the company operates its headquarters out of suburban Shawnee, Kansas, USA.

Hans died in 1994 at the age of 90. His legacy is strong. John is company chairman. Hans' grandsons, Kelly and Kevin, are president and chief executive officer, respectively. His great-grandchildren have worked there for many years.



Kelly Rudolph describes the difference between the Hans Rudolph reusable and disposable non-invasive ventilation masks during the ATS 2012 International Conference.

"My grandfather worked with us until he passed away," Kelly said. "He was still coming to our offices and manufacturing facility every day. He was very proud when we exhibited at the ATS International Conference. He wanted to know what our customers thought of our product lines and what further requirements they had."

That loyalty to conference attendees dates back to when HRI first began exhibiting about 30 years ago. Its presence has grown from a 100-square-foot booth featuring 20 families of products to a 300-square-foot booth with 28 product families.

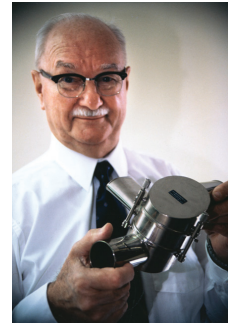
"My father, who is 80 and still works with us every day, my brother, and I all feel that this is our most important show and group of customers. This is the most interesting group to make products for because they have so many challenging applications," Kelly said.

For HRI, the ATS International Conference brings in a worldwide customer base—physicians, researchers, respiratory therapists, sleep technologists, biomedical engineers, and others who conduct pulmonary research and testing or who are involved in physiological human and animal studies. Company representatives also meet with original equipment manufacturers, for which HRI offers private label, custom design, and manufacture of its products, as well as dealers and distributors.

"When customers or potential customers visit our booth, they meet with me, my brother, and others who know our product lines and applications very well," Kelly said. "We can answer any question, help with custom requirements, quote prices, and demonstrate the products.

"Because we place our products on tabletops around and in our booth, visitors can get

hands-on experience with live demonstrations. They can use our three lung simulators, O<sub>2</sub> conservator tester, pneumotachs connected with flow measurement instrumentation, valves, mask fittings, and so forth. We want visitors to walk away with a complete understanding of what they need to order, including part numbers, prices, and lead times."



Hans Rudolph holds a mid-1960s version of his famous high-velocity two-way non-rebreathing valve.

Beyond the Exhibit Hall floor, HRI's 40 employees back in Shawnee take pride in their talents and customer service expertise.

"Everyone here seems to stay with us for a very long time, and they all seem to like doing what they do. Every job is important, and everyone understands that customers come first," Kelly said. "We get compliments every day about how fast, accurate, and pleasant we are to work with.

"We run a very efficient operation and meet the regulatory requirements of many organizations. We are flexible and have the expertise, background, and desire to design and make whatever our ATS friends and colleagues require to get their jobs done. This is what we do and have done since Hans began meeting the requirements of our customers in the 1930s."

Kelly is heartfelt about what Hans would think of the company's longtime relationship with ATS International Conference attendees.

"I think he is looking down on us and loving the fact that we have so many great relationships with ATS members all over the world," Kelly said.