



Flying high

SELECTTECH SERVICES CORP. BUILDS
SPRINGFIELD MANUFACTURING SITE

The connection between SelectTech Services Corp. and U.S. Air Force logistics functions is impossible to miss.

Scott Sullivan, the firm's president, will tell you that opening the company's new Advanced Manufacturing Facility in Springfield was all about the company's service to its biggest customer, the Air Force.

"We hope to not only leverage the great local infrastructure and organizations supporting the (Department of Defense) and commercial industries in this rapid manufacturing space to date, but we're trying to incorporate and invest in specialized areas and capabilities that our partners cannot or will not do," Sullivan said when asked about the AMF.

By Thomas Gnau | B2B Staff Writer



Scott Sullivan, president of SelectTech, near the hangar at the Springfield-Beckley Airport where his company will build communications equipment for the Department of Defense. B2B Staff photo by Ty Greenlees

Privately held SelectTech was founded in 1982. Sullivan, 43, worked in what he calls the "support services business" for years, backing hard sciences and information technology.

While serving in the Air Force, Sullivan worked at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, his first assignment. Before leaving the service in 1999, he also served at McClellan and Eglin Air Force bases — all bases serving the Air Force Materiel Command, the organization managing how that military branch's acquisition and logistics needs are met.

Anyone who looks at SelectTech won't be able to miss the fact that the company today has locations near Wright-Patterson and Warner Robins Air Force Base in Georgia. The company also has offices in Salt Lake City, Utah, and Chicago.

"Wright-Patt has been really our core — AFRL (Air Force Research Laboratory) in particular," Sullivan said. "The hard sciences and engineering space where we've been for a long, long time. A vast number of our employees are still at Wright-Patt and AFRL."

After the Air Force, Sullivan worked for Cisco Systems, but found being on the road Sunday through Friday wearying. Small business — anchored more firmly to home — beckoned. Sullivan knew SelectTech's owners, and the match was made.

SelectTech provides an array of services to the Air Force, Sullivan said — structural engineering, lab work and analysis, operations, maintenance, sensors work and more.

But Sullivan gets to the heart of the matter quickly: Ask someone in the Department of Defense about SelectTech, and satellite communications will probably come up.

"I've got to witness folks from all different aspects of the government talking about this shop and how (SelectTech) is literally world-renowned in terms of satellite communications," Sullivan said with a smile.

That's one reason the company's new AMF (Advanced Manufacturing Facility) — a retrofitted 17,000-square-foot hangar — can be seen as a good move for the company.

Found at the Springfield-Beckley Municipal Airport, the AMF is the company's first manufacturing site.

SelectTech has built the "Steel Eagle" and "Silver Bullet." Those are more than communication systems with neat names, they are "DV (distinguished visitor) pallets" that allow senior government officials to have flying, secure environments as they travel — to Iraq, Afghanistan, wherever.

SelectTech Services Corp.

REVENUE: Declined to give specific figures. Reportedly growing at 10 percent to 12 percent annually.

RECENT ACQUISITION: C2 Projex, a software developer with a contract (supporting Northrop Grumman) to develop "sense-and-avoid" systems for unmanned aerial vehicles. The systems will be designed to help UAVs avoid

collisions. "They (C2 Projex) have a whole bunch of intellectual property that they've developed. It's an engineering company, a software company, which made it such a great fit. Now we can wrap our business around it. They can worry about the technology, and we can worry about taking it to market."

FUTURE ACQUISITIONS: "Our eyes are always open to that."

SOURCE: Scott Sullivan, SelectTech president

"It's an extremely efficient system from a taxpayer perspective, from an Air Force perspective."

Scott Sullivan, SelectTech president, explaining communications pallets that allow officials to work while they fly

Think of the pallets as flying offices — and more.

"They'll actually put pallets on the back of cargo aircraft, that have voice, cellular, video-conferencing capability, so that they're working for 21 or more hours while they're in the air," Sullivan explained.

"These planes are going there anyway," he added. "So it's an extremely efficient system from a taxpayer perspective, from an Air Force perspective."

It's a way to bring along government officials, letting them work while they fly, he said. "They're not doing all these dedicated flights (solely for government officials). At the same time, these DVs show up rested," Sullivan said.

The demand for "roll-on, roll-off communication systems" is only rising. The pallets — also called "airborne mobile communication systems" — will be made at the Springfield AMF.

"We said, 'There's reason to invest in that space and be able to do this stuff off (Wright-Patterson Air Force) base,'" Sullivan said.

Ed Moren — today the vice president, government business for SATCOM Direct — worked with SelectTech while he was in the U.S. Air Force. In 1997, the Air Force had developed its own "roll-on, roll-off"

communications package. SelectTech helped the Air Force complete the project when an earlier contractor's proved deficient, Moren said.

"Their engineering expertise contributed immensely to the re-engineering and improvements" of the package, Moren said. Their engineers were "on the ball," he added. "They worked some long hours to meet schedule and budget. Their ability, their enthusiasm were the biggest things."

SelectTech will make more than Steel Eagles at the AMF. There will be development of software and "sense-and-avoid" programs. Being on a flight line is perfect for quick testing of airborne systems. And the facility will support the testing of prototypes developed at TecEdge, the collaboration center where military officials, contractors and academics can put their heads together.

The AMF likely will employ 15 people in the first year and more than 50 in the second. Sullivan, ever wary of support-contractor competitors looking over his shoulder, tried to say as little as possible about employees and sales figures. But he acknowledged that the company has more than 100 employees working for or at Wright-Patterson, the company's biggest work site.