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Flexibility, atmosphere make CTI ideal place to work

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AKRON—Commercial Timesharing Inc. is small, making it nimble and resourceful.

And that's exactly what it prefers to be.

Those are just two reasons the company is an ideal operation, the firm's employees said in a recent survey conducted by Best Companies Group, placing it among *Rubber & Plastics News'* Best Places to Work for 2020.

"Our smaller size allows every employee to be a contributor, not just another small cog in a big wheel," CTI President Troy Anenson.

Akron-headquartered CTI provides innovative controls and software along with electrical engineering services to tire manufacturers and the rubber industry globally.

"We collaborate with them to define needs and then we design, develop and deploy projects all over the world to meet those needs," he said.

It also provides and supports a specific line of tire testing and factory management products for the tire and rubber industry.

With a work force that exceeds 100, the Akron-based company employs more than 25 engineers along with a strong support staff, Anenson said.

It has a strong team methodology "that makes for a great experience in a demanding technical environment," he added. "We have a family-like atmosphere with monthly birthday treats, special work anniversaries, holiday parties and game nights."

CTI, which was founded in 1978 and became part of the Poling Group in 2001 when David Poling bought the firm, has modernized its services as technology has advanced, Anenson said. The same engineers who developed the software and controls also travel to customer sites for startup and commissioning, which allows for last-minute changes and improvements in the field.

He said that while most of the company's competitors have field service technicians who handle travel assignments for start-



Employees at CTI, part of the Poling Group, had the flexibility to work at home or the office even before the pandemic.

ups, they have no access to the software or authority to make changes in the field. As a result, changes could take days or weeks before they can be approved, deployed and tested.

"The CTI model makes for happier customers, especially when startup delays can affect production," Anenson said. "We build good relationships with companies. Our people care about their problems."

Anenson has a thorough understanding of what it's like to be employed at CTI. He was hired at the company as an engineer in 1989 after earning his college degree. He's been there ever since.

"Employees are highly valued here," he said. "CTI has always believed in paying its employees well. We work a 40-hour week (with flexible starting times) and everything is very fair here. And as a smaller company, we get to work on a lot of different jobs. That makes things interesting."

In the survey, employees echoed Anenson's comments. They cited three key examples that make CTI special: The ability to earn unlimited comp time that can be used for either PTO days or cashed in;

flexible starting times; and the choice to work from home or at the office, an option that was available even before the pandemic, allowing for even greater flexibility.

Employees pointed out in the survey that flexible hours are especially important to accommodate school events, taking a family member to the doctor and other important matters.

Working at CTI is not a job, it's a career—with a family atmosphere where each member is respected for the skills and experiences he or she brings to the table, they said.

Each employee has the ability to make an immediate impact after the person is hired and shares in the firm's success with profit sharing, annual bonuses and a unique compensation time policy. As profits increase, year-end bonuses rise.

Employees cited a number of other advantages at CTI, including managers and senior employees working alongside new hires, passing down invaluable experience and knowledge; an open door policy that trickles down from top management to interns; and no micromanaging.

Anenson often says "happy and informed employees make a successful company," and those words form the CTI culture—and make it a worthwhile working experience.

