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PLUMBING & MECHANICAL



The team at Maloney & Curcio is the embodiment of professional sales and customer service.



2020 PLUMBING & MECHANICAL REP OF THE YEAR: MALONEY & CURCIO

Mountainside, New Jersey-based Maloney & Curcio takes this year's honor as *PM's* Manufacturers Rep of the Year.

Since its inception in 1934, Maloney & Curcio has held onto the tradition that the customer always comes first. Under the leadership of third-generation President **Joe Curcio**, the company is supported by loyal staff members whose dedication to their manufacturer clients, distributors/wholesalers and installers has earned the Mountainside, New Jersey firm the title of *Plumbing & Mechanical's* 2020 Manufacturers Rep of the Year.

A LONG HISTORY

M&C was founded by Joe Curcio's maternal grandfather, **Joseph Maloney**, who had worked for a supply house in Newark, New Jersey. Manufacturer's reps were coming into fruition back then, and Josam Manufacturing was looking for a representative in New Jersey. The owner of the supply house suggested they speak with Maloney, who was a counterman at the time, and the Joseph A. Maloney Co. was born.

Joe Curcio's father joined the company in 1957 after marrying his mother. Then, after the death of his grandfather in 1966, the name was changed to Maloney & Curcio.

"I had always worked for the company growing up in high school and during summers in college," Joe Curcio says. "After school, I joined the company in the capacity of outside sales in 1982. I took over as principle in 1987



The leadership team at Maloney & Curcio. From right to left: Bill Morris, general manager; Angie Matos, finance/HR; Joe Curcio, president; Rob Curcio, vice president; and Jordan Westra, sales manager.

after the unexpected death of my father from cancer when I was 26 years old."

Though 26 may seem a little young to take control of a family business, Joe Curcio says he was ready to go.

"I had excellent training — from my father and from the vendors — and here we are today," he says.

M&C has grown to represent 14 key lines in the plumbing industry with 16 full time employees. The company has represented Elkay Manufacturing for 61 years. Other lines represented include: PVI, Charlotte Pipe, Sloan, Navien, Jay R. Smith, Acorn Engineering, AcornVac, Chronomite Laboratories, Elmdor Stoneman, Milwaukee Valve, Western-Williams and Whitehall Manufacturing.

M&C's territory includes the Northern two-thirds of New Jersey and the Hudson Valley in lower New York state. The territory differentiates within itself with all types of work, ranging from commercial, industrial, multi-family housing in urban settings, single family in suburban setting as well as upscale estate homes in rural areas.

"Existing housing inventory along with mature commercial and institutional infrastructure provide tremendous renovation opportunities," Joe Curcio notes.

Photo credit: Valerie Teranova



A FAMILY BUSINESS

Ever since Joe Curcio was a child, he knew he always wanted to go into the family business.

"I would see my father go to work and I knew the family history," he says. "When I was 9, he'd take me down to the office and I would work in the literature room. Once I was old enough, I worked in the warehouse. It's just something I always wanted to do and I enjoy it very much. That's so important in life — enjoying what you do."

Joe Curcio says it's the people he enjoys most in the industry.

"There's some great and diverse people in this industry," he notes. "There's never a dull moment. My grandfather used to say — it held true 80 years ago and holds true today — 'Anybody can take an order, but we're in the problem solving business.' And when customers have problems, customers have issues, we have to find solutions to their problems and issues. We pride ourselves on that."

Joe Curcio, now 58 years old, says the most important long-term goal for the company was succession planning. And eventually, his son, **Rob Curcio**, 31, will take over as the fourth-generation president of M&C.

"Obviously, I grew up working at Maloney & Curcio when I was a kid, fil-



Rich Schaefer, warehouse manager for Maloney & Curcio, goes over paperwork in the company's new 21,000-square-foot location.

ing and putting newsletters together — all as an unpaid internship," Rob Curcio says laughing. "Then as I got into high school, I worked in the warehouse during my summers. In college, I also did some limited inside sales so I could really gain insight into how the business works, one day knowing

I would potentially work at the company."

However, Joe and Rob Curcio came to a mutual decision that, upon graduating college, Rob Curcio would look for a career outside of the family business to gain valuable experience and a fundamental understanding of how other industries operate.

"I studied finance and marketing, which I could apply to just about anything in the business world, and after graduating, I went to Lincoln Financial Group and worked three years in an inside sales capacity," Rob Curcio says. "It was a very good experience for me because the way the business operated was quite similar to the business model that Maloney & Curcio used."

In 2014, Rob Curcio came home to the plumbing and heating industry and the family business after long discussions with his father. "I was able to move back home to New Jersey after working in Maryland," he says. "And the plumbing and heating industry was just more appealing to me than selling insurance. It seemed like a better career opportunity long-term. I'm so happy I made that decision."

After starting back at the company in an outside sales role, Rob Curcio is currently vice president of M&C. He has taken more of an internal role with the company, but still handles outside sales. And, like his father, his favorite thing about the industry is the people.



The new facility also provides a modern warehouse that has increased M&C's efficiencies exponentially, Rob Curcio notes.



From left: Rob Curcio and his father, Joe Curcio, represent the third and fourth generations in the family business, which was founded in 1934.

"It's the people, the experiences and the constant innovation from the manufacturers striving to create a more efficient building and the fact that the industry prides itself on saving the Earth's most valuable resource — water," he says. "A lot of the manufacturers we represent strive to constantly innovate more efficient products and save water. That's what appeals to me most about the industry. It's the constant innovation, the rapid change and the people."

Joe Curcio adds that having his son follow in his footsteps in the family business is certainly enjoyable.

"I mean, there were contentious times when I worked for my father, there has to be, and Rob and I have had contentious times, but the last thing you ever want to do as a leader is surround yourself with 'Yes' people," he says. "You want to hear other opinions. But Rob and I have a very strong working relationship together, and we're able to separate personal from business. It's very gratifying to see your son following in your footsteps, there's no doubt about it."

M&C has several loyal, long-term employees like its General Manager **Bill Morris** who has been with the firm for 27 years. Morris previously worked in a distributor warehouse and knew Joe Curcio as the company's Elkay rep.

"I asked him for a job," Morris says. "I started in the warehouse, and after a few months, Joe asked me to come inside. I worked my way up from inside sales. Joe is a great boss. I like the people I work with — most of us have been here a long time. We've got about five people who have been here for 20 plus years. It's a good organization. Joe is the best boss I've ever had — he takes care of his employees."

Morris notes that M&C has a family atmosphere, and that the company is always moving forward by being proactive, not reactive to the market.

"It's not just a job — my coworkers are like family — we have each other's backs," he adds. "Our customer service is No. 1. Our people, with the product knowledge they have and response time to issues, I say, is the best in the country. Everybody knows what they're doing and how to handle different situations."



Maloney & Curcio General Manager Bill Morris says the company's success is due to the fact it is always moving forward by being proactive, not reactive to the market.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS

If you ask Joe Curcio if M&C has a motto, he responds with, "Professional sales and service."

"It's so important to us that we approach the market with the utmost professionalism," he adds. "Whether it be myself, the accountant, inside sales, outside sales or the warehouse, each and every one of us represents the company in a professional manner at all times. Maloney & Curcio takes great pride in providing real service, not lip service. We have strong relationships with the contractors, keeping them in tune to new products and industry news."

Christopher Guzman, president, Brooks Mechanical in Paterson, New Jersey, says M&C does a great job balancing and taking care of contractors with the manufactures they represent while working through distribution channels.

"I've worked with them for 15 years — they all do a great job," Guzman says. "They are always available and responsive. They also are always bringing in new products and keeping up with the changes, and they take the time to show them to us as well as discuss them in detail."

Scott Peggs, director of Commercial Business Northeast District for Ferguson, also appreciates working with M&C the past five years because they represent premium lines and are well versed in all the products they sell.

"They respond quickly, invest in training their people and distributors, and are always willing to work through difficult situations," Peggs says. "They are responsive and willing to work with us because they understand the value of relationships and work hard every day to take care of their customers."

Manufacturers also appreciate M&C's professionalism and how easy it is to work with them. **Abid Khaleel**, Northeast regional sales manager for Elkay has worked with Joe Curcio since 2004, but has known him since 1988.

"They are so easy to work with and always ready for a new challenge," Khaleel says. "They have talented individuals who are

well respected in the industry. Joe knows more about Elkay than some of us know about Elkay. He knows our model numbers backwards and forwards and understands how to take our products to market so that they become not only a product sale, but a business solution.

As a group, M&C's overall tenacity and willingness to go the extra mile to make things happen is what sets them apart, Khaleel notes.

"As a result of Joe's leadership, Maloney & Curcio has become masterful at deploying a cohesive 'go to market' strategy with highly effective tactics that have made Elkay a powerhouse brand in the bid-specification marketplace and the two-step wholesale marketplace in Northern New Jersey," he says. "Joe is like a family member to Elkay. His company has been working with Elkay for many generations, and the trend will continue with Joe's son, Rob. Maloney & Curcio is well poised for taking Elkay into the next century of work. We look forward to a great future with them."

Sloan National Sales Manager **Bill Madison** has worked with Joe Curcio since 2000.

"Maloney & Curcio is a passionate group, and they work as a team to achieve their goals," he says. "The entire team is personable and well-versed in the industry. Joe Curcio is an incredible leader, and one of his greatest skills is that he has put together an enthusiastic, experienced group.

"Sloan is one of their premier product lines, so they're very familiar with it — but more than that, they're excellent listeners and are adept at matching the right Sloan products for each project's requirements after hearing the customer's goals," Madison continues. "It's not just a push for the latest and greatest product that Sloan has to offer; it's always the right fit for each individual project. At Sloan, we have great customer and technical support teams, but the work being done by sales reps like Maloney & Curcio out in the field is irreplaceable. They really know our products and are dedicated to supporting their customers for installation, maintenance and other product inquiries."

Madison notes M&C's biggest differentiator is its relationships with contractors.

"They always seem to know who the right decision-maker is on big jobs," he says. "Another important element is their willingness to embrace new strategies and technologies. It can be easy for a company that's been around since 1934 to maintain a certain status quo, but they've really responded well to new ideas like customer relationship management (CRM) technologies. Sloan is fortunate to work with a great group of sales reps across the world, and Maloney & Curcio certainly deserves this award."

OVERCOMING CHALLENGES

Like many other manufacturer's reps today, M&C is facing one of the greatest challenges to the industry: E-commerce.

"We need to continue to find new and innovative ways and value for both the customers in the market as well as the vendor," Joe Curcio says. "Education and training is paramount. We're out in the marketplace supporting the secondary markets to our fullest efforts. What we look for from the vendors is compensation for those efforts. Buying patterns are changing, and it's a concern to all representatives. The industry is evolving, and we have to make sure that we prove our value to the customer and to the vendor every day."

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