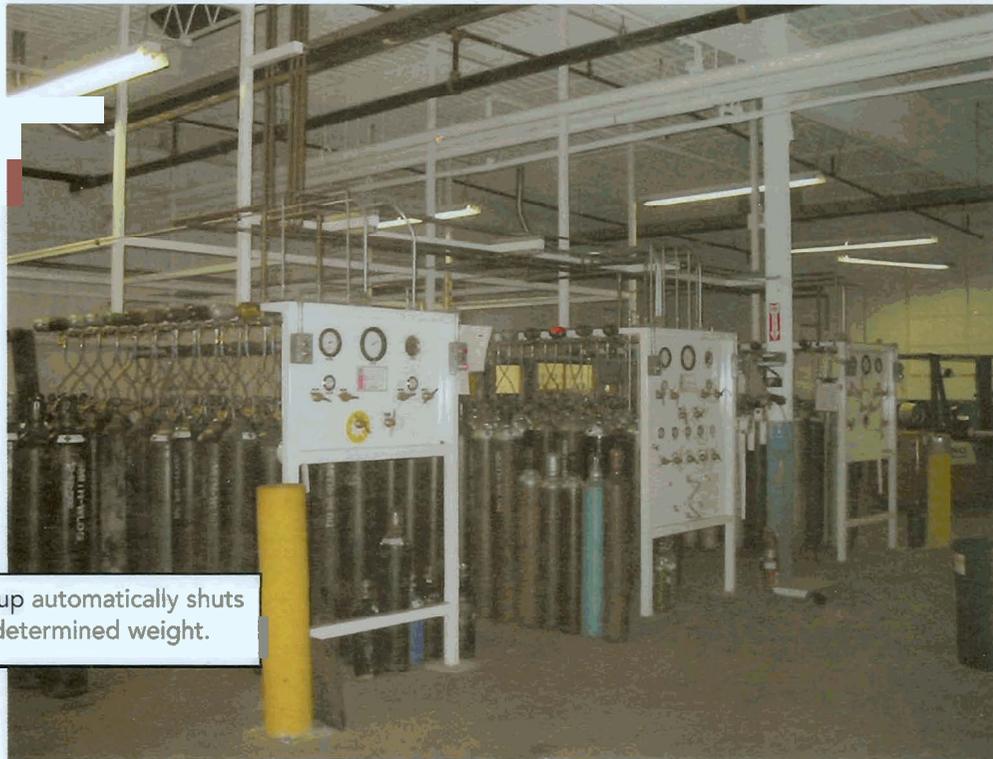


### Smith Welding Goes that Extra Mile

**S**mith Welding Supply & Equipment, based in Ferndale, Michigan, had built a solid customer base among metal fabrication companies involved in the automotive industry. The problem, if you can call it that, was that the demand

A gravimetric set up automatically shuts off filling at a predetermined weight.



for Smith services—most notably filling and delivery of a wide range of weld and specialty gases—was beginning to challenge capacity at the company's one-acre, 15,000 sq. ft. downtown Detroit plant.

Smith Welding President Irv Sparage found a 40,000 sq. ft.

- ▶ **SUMMARY:** High pressure cryogenic pump ups production for automotive suppliers
- ▶ **DISTRIBUTOR:** Smith Welding Supply & Equipment
- ▶ **MANUFACTURER:** Veite Cryogenic Equipment & Service Inc.

facility vacated by a competitor, with infrastructure already built in, but no equipment. It had a fill plant with no manifolding or piping. Sparage called upon longtime vendor Veite Cryogenics, which 30 years earlier had equipped Smith Welding's first

Detroit plant.

Veite's co-owners, **James Veite** and **James Harris**, helped Sparage design an operation that would improve his company's efficiency. That process would begin with a gravimetric setup on its liquid Argon operation. This digital scale-controlled process automatically shuts off filling at a predetermined weight. Monitors who previously had to oversee the filling could now spend more time on the company's high pressure filling operations.

A customer base made up of automotive fabricators eagerly awaited the transformation. In the fast-paced world of automotive manufacturing, any slow down, no matter how small, would pose a problem not only for the customer, but for Smith Welding as well. Veite helped the distributor transition to the new plant without stopping production, and the added capacity and improved efficiency gave the distributor the capabilities to fill 6,000 psi Nitrogen, Helium, Argon, Oxygen and CO<sub>2</sub> cylinder, using automated fill controls.

After moving from its old plant located just south of Detroit's famous 8-Mile Drive, to the new facility just south of 9-Mile Drive, Smith Welding Supply & Equipment demonstrated that a little extra mile can go a long way.