

News Release

PRESS OFFICE

Release Date: April 15, 2008
Immediate Release

Contact: Deborah Wilson (402)221-7222
Internet Address: <http://www.sba.gov>



ROGER BEITEL CHOSEN NEBRASKA SMALL BUSINESS PERSON OF THE YEAR; WILL COMPETE FOR NATIONAL TITLE IN WASHINGTON, D.C.

(OMAHA) - - Roger Beitel, President Advanced Technology Repair, Inc., located in rural Minatare and Gering, Nebraska has been named Nebraska Small Business Person of the Year for 2008 by the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA).

Roger is among over 100 small business persons who will be honored by the SBA at the national celebration in Washington, D.C., and New York City next week, April 21-25, 2008. As the winner of the Nebraska Small Business Person of the Year award, Roger could be named National Small Business Person of the year during the national event.

Leon Milobar, Nebraska's SBA District Director, congratulated Roger and said, "Roger Beitel demonstrates the ability of an individual to utilize their skills and knowledge to create a successful business in a rural area."

Roger Beitel is the conductor of a small business which, in another era, may have been the fantasy of every little boy. He builds trains...and keeps them running.

Roger has always been a train buff. He first worked in the locomotive engine repair business in 1985 for the Glover group in Sidney, Nebraska. At that time, only a limited number of components were being repaired. He experimented with some repairs and found that he had the capacity to figure out how repairs should be done. By repairing a refrigeration unit, Roger saved the clients costly replacement dollars and created his first niche with the railroad industry. He expanded his knowledge on the components through his experience and self-teaching...all to become a conductor of business in the train industry.

Roger established Advanced Technology Repair (ATR) in Minatare, Nebraska in 1996 as a sole proprietorship. Roger began conducting his small business with one full-time and three part-time employees. ATR incorporated as an "S Corp" in 2005, but Roger is the only stockholder. As of October 2007, ATR employs 49 people fulltime and has logged net sales of over \$3 million. He has increased his sales territory from Alliance, NE to include the United States, Canada and Australia and has made a sizeable investment in the small Nebraska communities of Minatare and Gering.

ATR offers a wide variety of train manufacturing and re-manufacturing services, from refrigeration to fabrication to welding, delivering and picking up products with their own trucks. ATR also offers a mobile service to travel from site to site to service and install new modifications or components on the units.

ATR offers its services to all railroad customers, but Electro Motive Diesel (EMD) is its largest customer and is the second largest U.S. manufacturer of locomotives sold to railroads. With each sale of a new locomotive, EMD offers a full service maintenance agreement to their customer and contracts on an exclusive agreement with ATR to honor the maintenance contracts. ATR is the only company in the locomotive industry that specializes in refurbishing almost all locomotive components and accessories.

As business increased from 1996 to 2002, Roger started purchasing lots and buildings in Minatare for shop space. As he expanded, he also made improvements to the real estate to improve Minatare's downtown appearance and worked with the city and the local chamber to build a city park. He assisted with other beautification projects, including painting the light poles and community clean up and was instrumental in starting a school booster club to solicit donations for a new, electric school sign.

As they outgrew their space in Minatare, ATR leased a 12,000 warehouse in Gering, NE in 2005. Soon, the company soon outgrew this space as well. In 2006, Roger started negotiations to purchase a 47,000 square foot warehouse in Gering and purchased several new pieces of equipment to further expand the services of ATR to the railroad industry. This expansion, completed in 2007, was financed in part with a U. S. Small Business Administration loan.

Advanced Technology Repair, Inc. is again planning to expand – this time with three new product lines. The addition of these lines of work will increase the company's potential to tap a market vital to the continued growth and expansion of railroads. Roger relays that it is by staying abreast of the industry and keeping communication lines open with EMD, that he maintains the company's credibility. He knows that at any time, EMD could choose another service provider or decide to provide their service "in-house". Roger feels that ATR's consistent provision of quality service at a more reasonable cost than the competition is essential to the company's survival.

Nebraska District Director Leon Milobar noted that Roger Beitel was judged on seven basic criteria: staying power, growth in number of employees, increase in sales and/or unit volume, current and past financial reports; innovativeness of product or services, response to adversity and evidence of contributions to community-oriented projects.

###