



*A worker loads a fresh resin into the hopper of an injection molding machine.*



*On these molding machines, DU-BRO produces injection-molded plastics with fresh resin to ensure maximum durability.*



*(Above) Skilled machinists prepare one of the sophisticated machines to run precision parts. (Left) Molded plastic aircraft wheels.*

# DU-BRO: CELEBRATING 65 YEARS OF EXCELLENCE

**M**ost workers start thinking of retirement as they approach 65. For DU-BRO Products, being around for 65 years means the company is nowhere near ready to retire. The folks at DU-BRO are still full of ideas and innovation for the model aviation community.

DU-BRO was started in 1959 by Dewey Broberg and was operated for decades by Dewey's children Jim Broberg, Kathy Weiland and Gayle Lundgren. In 2019, long-time employee Brian Bychowski took over the company and operates it with his family and many long time employees. The company began with the Kwik Klip and has expanded to thousands of products over the years.

DU-BRO has also successfully applied its expertise to other hobbies, with the Pine Ridge archery division and the DUBRO Pro Series fishing division housed at the 40,000-square-foot facility in Wauconda, Illinois.

There's some crossover between the hobbies — certain tools initially designed for model airplanes, like the Kwik Twist tool, have found utility in fishing for making wire leaders.

While DU-BRO is known for its model airplane products, Brian Schiller, head of Marketing and Sales, revealed that DU-BRO parts have made their way into projects such as medical devices, Hollywood movies, education programs and satellites.

## Continuous Innovation

Even after 65 years, DU-BRO is not resting on its laurels. Schiller emphasized the importance of constant innovation to stay ahead of the curve.

The company has embraced modern technologies such as 3D printing and CAD design, allowing faster prototyping and product development. These technologies have significantly accelerated DU-BRO'S ability to bring new products to market. Prototypes that used to take weeks can now be built and revised within hours.

"We're always trying out new things to stay ahead of the curve, or we'll fall behind," Schiller said.

The team at DU-BRO actively listens to its customer base, often receiving emails and phone calls with suggestions and ideas for new items or variations on existing ones.

"We love hearing from our fans with their ideas and seeing if we can make it work," Schiller said.

Feedback is welcome, even if it's not always positive.

"We want to hear from our customer whether a product is good, bad or just OK," Schiller said. "We always want to know if there are ways we can make a product better."

**In-House Excellence**

Like the old Ford River Rouge plant that took in steel and rubber at one end and rolled out Model A cars at the other end, DU-BRO is vertically integrated. Most of the CNC machining, plastic injection and blow molding, printing, distribution and everything in between are handled at the factory. Using fresh plastic in their injection molding process adds an extra layer of reliability to the products.

"Our motto has always been on American-made products whenever possible, which allows us to maintain quality control, fast turnaround times, and a strong commitment to customer service," Schiller said.

**Supporting the Hobby**

DU-BRO remains a staunch supporter of the Academy of Model Aeronautics (AMA) and encourages hobbyists to engage with them. Schiller underscores the importance of the AMA's advocacy efforts in Washington, emphasizing DU-BRO commitment to supporting initiatives that ensure the longevity of the hobby.

The company sees this as an opportunity to engage with a younger audience, providing step-by-step instructions for building model airplanes through live streams and videos.

Schiller acknowledged the vital role that dealers and distributors have played in DU-BRO's success. The company emphasizes fast turnaround times, attentive customer service and a commitment to quality as pillars of its support for dealers.



*The DU-BRO factory*



*Dewey Broberg (L) and David Gray show off early DU-BRO products at a flying event.*

DU-BRO views its relationship with distributors as a collaborative effort to achieve mutual success.

The company's central location allows orders to be quickly shipped to both coasts. Customer service is handled in-house, and Schiller or owner Bychowski are as likely to answer the phone as the customer service staff.

Looking ahead to the next 65 years, DU-BRO's unwavering commitment to innovation and excellence ensures the hobby community will continue to soar to new heights. HM

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