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Not Just Bells and Whistles: *A Discussion with Steve Kahlenberg on HydroComp Inc.'s PropExpert*

Winter in Wisconsin is brutally cold, particularly this year when the temperature rarely crept above freezing. As you scrape the ice and shovel endless mounds of snow, thoughts about the upcoming boating season may be distant. Yet the propeller industry never rests and this quiet period is an ideal time for boat-owners to consider making repairs to their vessels.

HydroComp, Inc. recently took advantage of this relaxed period to learn more about one of our customers. We spoke with Steve Kahlenberg of Kahlenberg Industries, Inc., located in Two Rivers, Wisconsin.



Kahlenberg Industries, Inc. has been in the business of designing and manufacturing maritime equipment since 1895. The company started as an engine manufacturer, creating gasoline engines for fishing boats, and continued making engines throughout World War II. In the 1920s and 1930s, Kahlenberg began manufacturing propellers and propeller shafts, and in the 1940s added sound signals: horns and ship bells. Today they offer the complete package of sound signal accessories, as well as marine propeller design and manufacturing.

Steve Kahlenberg is President of Kahlenberg Industries and has managed propeller sales since 1992. Steve focuses on assisting customers and growing the business and is assisted by a plant manager who helps him avoid the daily chaos. A typical day for Steve will include a continual stream of telephone calls from both current customers and potential clients, all seeking his assistance.

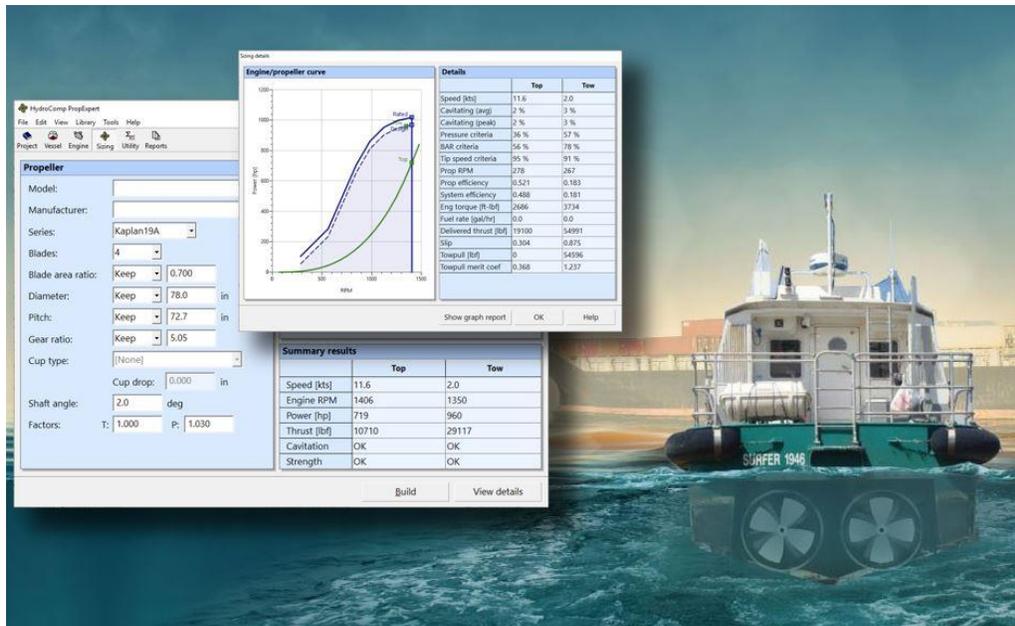
Inevitably, Steve will receive a flood of daily inquiries from diverse callers. Boat owners, using the lull of winter, will begin to seek advice from industry experts about repairing or resizing a propeller. Many will call Steve. Steve is prepared for the phone calls and emails and is ready to help, and one of the many assets at his disposal to help him excel at his work is HydroComp's PropExpert software.

PropExpert is a propeller selection tool for the sizing and analysis of propellers for workboats and pleasure craft. As Steve listens to the customer he enters their data into the computer and in a matter of a few clicks, the software program provides valuable information for the customer. As Steve asks for additional data, PropExpert helps Steve manage all this information quickly and enables him to provide the customer (or prospective customer) with answers, including job estimates, within minutes. This prompt efficiency has both Steve and the customer satisfied.

"PropExpert is most helpful on a day-to-day basis," remarks Steve. "It's become so integrated into our process that I hardly even think about it."

We asked Steve which feature of the PropExpert program was his favorite, and his reply was that he liked the PropExpert reports and PropCad drawings, which he includes with his quotes to customers. "It inspires confidence and strengthens our relationship with our clients," he says.

Kahlenberg Industries has used PropExpert since the early 2000s. For a company that was founded in the early twentieth century, well before World War I, Kahlenberg Industries has continually evolved by adding relevant and current technologies to maintain its strength in the marketplace. (For example, Kahlenberg uses a 3D printer to produce new propeller patterns directly from their PropCad designs.) As the workboat industry continues to see a consolidation of operators and an increase in foreign competition, using HydroComp's PropExpert program ensures Kahlenberg consistently stays ahead of the competition. We may not know what is going to happen in the next century, but as anyone at Kahlenberg Industries could tell you, all you need are the right tools to propel you into the future.



About HydroComp

Since 1984, HydroComp has been a leader in providing hydrodynamic analysis software and services for resistance and propulsion prediction, propeller sizing and design, and forensic performance analysis. Through its unique array of software packages and services, HydroComp services over 1200 naval architectural design firms, shipyards, yacht owners, ship operators, propeller designers, universities and militaries around the globe.

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