

HOW TO FIND & KEEP THE BEST HVAC TECHS



HVAC SUCCESS



Matthew Rupp

My name is Matthew Rupp and I am the founder of HVAC Marketing Success.

My team and I specialize in helping HVAC owners make more money and have more time for the 'good stuff' - whatever that is for them - time with family, golf, fishing... that's what we do.

We put this guide together to help you think about HOW to attract the talent you need in a fresh way.

Before we jump into the details of how to find and hire the best technicians, I just wanted to say THANK YOU for downloading this PDF. I hope you find it valuable.



LABOR SHORTAGE CRISIS

Almost across the board, the work of finding, recruiting, hiring and keeping good technicians is almost always the biggest pain point for our HVAC clients.

As you already know this is a problem across all the trades all over the country.

Despite rising salaries, the skilled-labor shortage is getting worse

Forbes

Addressing the Skilled Labor Shortage in America

INSIDER

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The labor shortage may have an old-fashioned solution: Carpenters, electricians, and other trades are good jobs that make workers happy

Madison Hoff Sep 27, 2021, 1:31 PM



DAILY NEWS

SKILLED TRADES: JOB SATISFACTION HIGH BUT LABOR SHORTAGE WORSENING

September 21, 2021

Labor Shortages Loom as Most-In-Demand Group of Workers Retire



U.S. Skilled Trades Labor Shortage Heightens as In-Demand Jobs Remain Unfilled the Longest

#1 STOP ADVERTISING FOR HVAC TECHS

While this guide will explore a variety of different ways to solve your labor problem, we will start with an easy, but powerful, differentiator, when running help wanted ads for technicians.

Stop advertising for 'technicians.' Start advertising for MANAGERS.

Take a look at the job posting.


This is the boring, uninspiring ad all your potential applicants are seeing by the dozens.

There are hundreds of these all over the internet. And chances are, a lot of other companies are offering something better than you are.

HVAC Service Technician Full Time

Larry Cook Construction
Wichita, KS
\$18 - \$25 an hour - Full-time
Employer actively reviewed job 5 days ago

⚡ Responded to 51-74% of applications in the past 30 days, typically within 7 days.

[Apply now](#) 

Full Job Description

Must have experience servicing all makes and models of units

Residential and light commercial

Valid Drivers License

Strong Customer Service Skills

Reliable

Job Type: Full-time

Pay: \$18.00 - \$25.00 per hour

Schedule:

- 8 hour shift
- Monday to Friday

Education:

- High school or equivalent (Preferred)

Experience:

- HVAC: 1 year (Preferred)

HVAC SUCCESS

Sometimes our dads have the best advice, and I've got to thank mine for this winning tactic. My dad ran giant, successful car dealerships for almost 50 years. He never advertised for salespeople. *He advertised for sales managers.*

If you advertise for sales managers, you get solid salespeople who think they are good enough to be a sales manager but, for whatever reason, don't have that opportunity where they are currently.


The same concept applies to you.

If you advertise for a lead guy or, better yet, if the situation applies, a lead guy who could potentially work up to being an owner in the business, now you are appealing to a whole new audience.

The difference is subtle, but the impact can be huge.

HVAC Lead Installer

FOX SERVICE COMPANY ★★★★★ 26 reviews
Austin, TX
Full-time

[Apply now](#) 

Full Job Description

Fox Service Company is currently seeking qualified HVAC Lead Installers to join our growing team!

Sign-On Bonus Eligible for Qualified HVAC Installers

If you are looking for an opportunity where you will be able to showcase your talent in a challenging and rewarding environment then look no further. We offer a competitive salary, comprehensive benefits, and career growth!

Job Responsibilities:

- Performing skilled work installing, adding-on, or replacing HVAC systems on residential homes.
- Teaching and instructing install helpers during work hours, while on job sites, or working around shop areas.
- Providing a top-notch customer experience and effectively communicating to homeowners

Perks and Benefits!

- Opportunities for Commissions and other bonuses
- Weekly Pay
- Paid Personal Time Off & Holidays
- Comprehensive Benefits Package including Health, Dental, and Vision insurance options
- Matching 401k
- Supplemental Insurance – Accident, Critical illness, etc.
- Long Term and Short-Term Disability
- Flexible Spending Account options
- Life insurance options for you and your family

Requirements:

- 3 years of progressively responsible residential HVAC installation/technical experience
- EPA Certification
- Valid driver's license

#2 START AN APPRENTICE PROGRAM

Depending on the requirements of your state, this may be potentially huge for your business and the idea behind this guide initially!

This idea really hit home for me. In all the years that I have worked with HVAC companies - even spending days with techs on job sites - I didn't initially know it was possible for a young man (or woman) to start simply as a helper. They can be an apprentice for two years, take a test to be certified as an HVAC technician, diagnose and fix residential units and make really good money in the process. With NO need for insane student loans, spending years in college, no need for a trade school or vocational training!

I also have a 17-year-old son that absolutely loves to fix things and is just one of those kids that is really good at figuring things out. At 16 he replaced our kitchen sink. He has every tool an aspiring tradesman could want. He can replace a dead bolt, replace the water filters on the OS unit in the basement, change the sump pump with no instruction, and even helped replace our water heater that went out.

This is him helping trim a tree in front of one of our HVAC clients offices so we could get a better shot of their sign from the street for a video project.



My point is, with all my experience working with HVAC companies and RAISING a young man who would love to be an HVAC tech, I had no idea this was possible.

APPEAL TO WILLING WORKERS WITH A GOOD WORK ETHIC

How many other young adults realize that they could be not a helper, but a PAID APPRENTICE, with no need for formal training or education?

Not just young people. There is a real opportunity for HVAC owners to appeal to the unemployed. People that would make fantastic technicians who might not have considered it before might be open to the idea now.

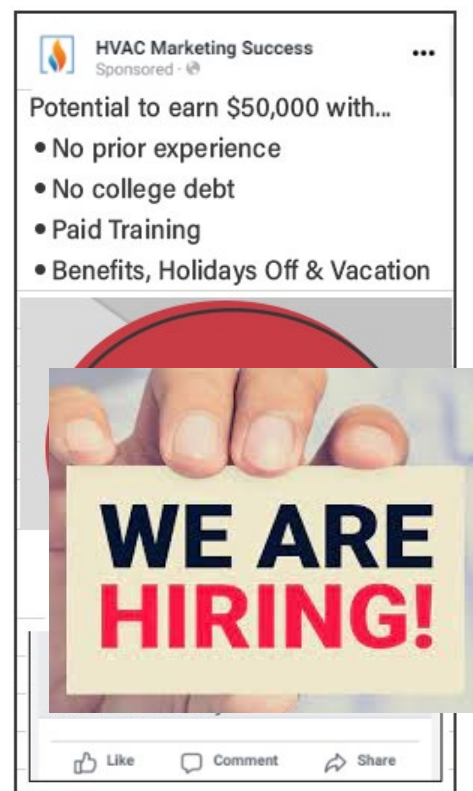
HOW TO IMPLEMENT YOUR OWN APPRENTICE PROGRAM

Perception is reality. We are appealing to the same group of people that your competitors are, but if we say essentially the same thing in a *different* way, it sinks it. It clicks, it resonates with them.

Highlight the benefits that a person without a degree, money for college or experience would be drawn to.

You could run a Facebook ad that would have a lot of appeal. The point of an initial ad is NOT to get a 'lead' or applicant. The point is just to get them to CLICK ON THE AD, That's it.

Then they'll be taken to a website page.



WEEDING OUT BAD APPLES

This webpage doesn't just lure in potential applicants, it provides you with the ability to easily weed out anyone not right for the position. On this site, interested people would fill in basic information that provides you with a pretty good first look at whether they have the background and work ethic to be worth your time.

These will come in as emails that you can filter through and contact the ones you are interested in.

Other good questions to ask:

- Are you good at working with your hands?
- Are you good at figuring things out?
- Do you love to know how things work?
- Ever taken apart a fridge or TV to see if you could fix it yourself?
- Did you actually succeed at it?

Do you have a valid Driver's License?

Yes No

Type of Work Desired *

Days / Hours Available *

Have you applied with us before

If Yes, When

Have you ever been convicted of a felony?

If yes, please provide details

Employment History

Company Name

Date From - Date To

mm / dd / yyyy - mm / dd / yyyy

#3 RECRUITING BONUSES

Most of us have built pay-for-performance environments in the residential service industry. It's natural then that giving them an incentive to recruit goes a long way.

You can offer a bonus such as where the referring plumber or tech can get \$2,500 after 90 days and then \$1,000 for each year their referred plumber or tech stays.

Here is an ad that helped one of our clients use their staff to recruit more techs.

FENIX
HEATING & COOLING

We Are Hiring!

GET UP TO A
\$5,000
REFERRAL BONUS!

GET PAID FOR HELPING US FIND GOOD HELP!

WE ARE LOOKING FOR SEVERAL **LICENSED** JOURNEYMAN TECHNICIANS, BOTH NEW CONSTRUCTION AND SERVICE DEPARTMENTS. THE COMPANY IS OFFERING **UP TO A \$5,000 REFERRAL BONUS** - HALF IS PAID AFTER 30 DAYS AND THE OTHER HALF PAID AFTER THE LICENSED TECH YOU BROUGHT IN HAS WORKED 6 MONTHS.

**COMPETITIVE PAY!
GREAT BENEFITS!**

A successful recruiting program:

Birds of a feather flock together. The people who do good work and have a good attitude are likely to hang around with likeminded people. Make a point to individually talk with your best people in encouraging them to recruit some of their friends or family members.

#4 ADD THIS WEB PAGE

We have had great success with some clients by getting a really strong career and hiring page on their website.

A good page doesn't get more visitors to it to apply, it also will show up when people do a Google search for HVAC jobs in your area.

A good hiring page can increase your website traffic by hundreds (or more) every month! We see this happen regularly for our HVAC clients.

WE ARE HIRING

FULL TIME HVAC INSTALLER

BENEFITS INCLUDE:
50% Health Insurance, Retirement Profit Sharing & 10 PTO Days/Year

GENERAL REQUIREMENTS:

- 3+ years experience preferred
- Valid driver's license
- Customer service skills
- Time management skills
- Good work ethic

RESPONSIBILITIES / DUTIES

- Diagnose / Install equipment properly
- Keep company vehicle clean, maintained & stocked
- Keep a clean appearance
- Keep all required licensing up to date
- Ability to work occasional nights & weekends

ELIGIBLE FOR A \$2000.00 SIGNING BONUS

DALCO HEATING & AIR CONDITIONING

DENVER, CO 303-979-7541 DALCOHVAC.COM

WORK IN OUR 12 FT BOX TRUCK WITH A LIFT!

APPLY TODAY!

You should have one page on your website dedicated to hiring. This page isn't just convenient for applicants, but - if done right - can help you weed out people who just aren't right for the job.

Your employment page should include:

- Pay range
- Required experience
- Hours
- Location
- Holidays & Paid Time Off
- Benefits
- Opportunities for training or education
- Potential for internal promotion
- Sign-on bonus (if applicable)
- Profit sharing (if applicable)
- Overtime opportunities

We love doing this work for our clients. Let me know if you could use our help with an effective hiring page for your company's website.

#5 DOES YOUR WEBSITE IMPRESS?

Even with having dedicated pages for employment, a lot of interested people will get their first look of you with your website. Take a look at your homepage right now. Does it convey a team of happy technicians who are proud of their work? Does it show a community that respects the company and the work the technicians do?

It's easy to showcase these things on a website.

Photos of real people.

It's a shame that way too many HVAC companies fill their websites with generic stock photos. People know these aren't 'real' people in your community. Potential applicants know this as well. These stock photos do absolutely nothing to convey you as a quality, local HVAC company.



Testimonials

Seeing the glowing reviews from your customers doesn't just show visitors you are a company worth hiring, but that you are also a company worth working for. They can imagine receiving those glowing reviews themselves and feeling a sense of pride in their work. You only need to look to Facebook or your Google business profile to find 5-star reviews you can add to your website right now.

“ We actually dealt with three guys. **Thomas, Chris and Matt.** This is an awesome company well represented by all three. Each man treated us with respect and explained everything that needed to be done. From the time of first contact they came, diagnosed our problem and had our new unit installed in 24 hrs.”

Other items you want to make sure your website has:

- Involvement in the community
- Photos of the team: technicians in the field, office staff, etc.
- A team page with some bio information

Luke Parthemer

Luke Parthemer was born in Frankfort, Kansas and played football at Butler County Community College before going on to earn a Master's Mechanical License. He worked in the HVAC industry for five years before going to work for Fenix in 2005 & becoming part owner in 2009. He and his wife, Jamie, have six kids. Spending quality time with his wife and kids is of the utmost importance. When he's not keeping up with all the various kids' sporting events (football, basketball, baseball), Luke likes to hunt, fish, and pass the time with water sports.

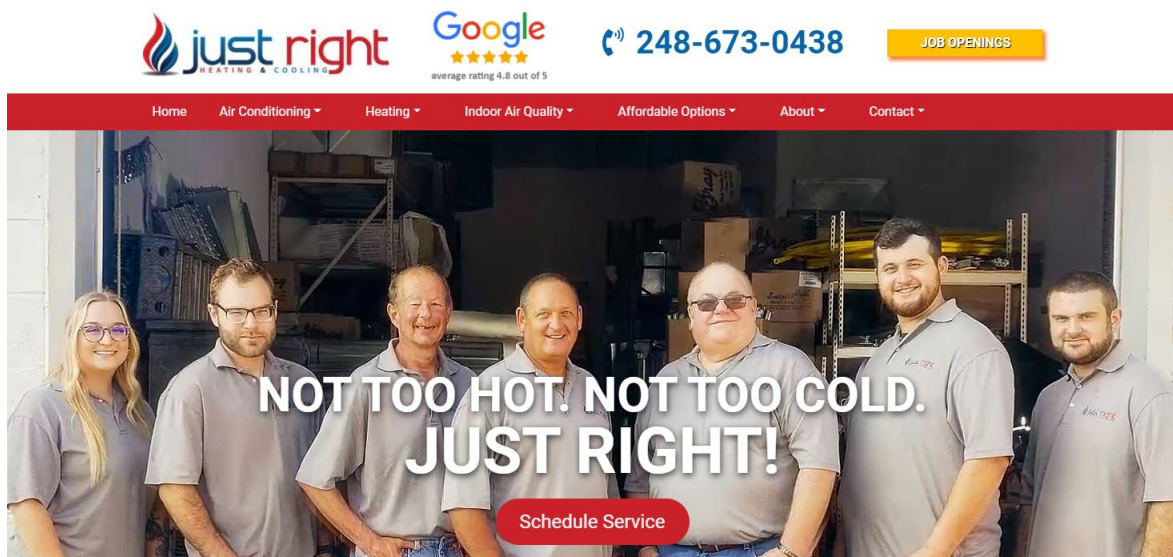
Luke is also a board member (and past president) of the Kansas Cooling Contractors Association, as well as a member of the Wichita Area Builders Association.



A good website doesn't mean an EXPENSIVE one

Don't be fooled into thinking you need to pay tens of thousands of dollars to get a new website. That's a waste of money that you will not necessarily get a return on with increased website traffic or sales. While you want a site to be appealing, it doesn't need to win design awards. In fact, the websites that actually help a company increase their bottom line are sites that focus on Google ranking factors.

We have designed dozens of (gorgeous) websites and analyzed the Google rankings and know what elements are important to getting your site to rank well on Google.



#6 SO CHEAP, BUT SO IMPACTFUL

You have how many branded vehicles out on the roads and all over town every day? Let the vehicles help you find new techs.



Adding a simple “now hiring” graphic could cost merely \$20-40 each and potentially be seen by *thousands* of people a week!

It doesn't have to be seen by the job-seekers themselves to be impactful. A lot of those people have spouses, children, friends, relatives, or neighbors that might be looking for work.

You can get this done easily right now. If you don't have time to find a vinyl graphics company who will do this work for you, contact my guys at [Shire Graphics](#).

They will design and produce a vinyl graphic that you can put on your vehicle yourself. Within days you could have your vehicle that helps to solve your workforce problem.



(316) 838-1362

sales@ShireGraphics.com

#7 HIRE (OR ASSIGN) OUT THIS WORK

While it can be difficult to find good techs, it's relatively easy to find someone who can help do that job for you. You can hire someone for around \$13/hr to be responsible for your company's hiring process. They wouldn't make any actual hiring decisions. You can even fill the position on a part-time basis. Alternatively, you may have someone already in the office who could take on this responsibility.

Benefits of having someone in this position:

- A person who can really follow up with all the applications
- They coordinate having the better applicants take an assesement, making sure they are worth a damn before you meet them
- They can meet and keep in touch with local trade schools, college, vendors, supplies houses and letting (the whole world) know you are hiring!
- They can help drive and coordinate the apprentice program

Give them a base pay with a generous incentive plan for each technician hired and an additional amount for every quarter that guy stays on. That makes them motivated to find you guys that are good enough to STAY.

If you spent \$2K a month and they helped you bring on 3 techs, that helped generate \$750k a year in revenue! That was a damn fine investment.

#8 PLANT SEEDS

Build community relationships to find the best HVAC hires.

Ron Smith, an HVAC consultant and coaching pioneer who's owned 24 HVAC companies at various times during his career, suggests beginning the HVAC recruiting process at local schools.

"Form a relationship with the leaders of your community's high schools and vocational schools, and ask if you can speak to the students in group sessions," says Smith, author of the bestselling book HVAC Spells.

"After building relationships, these groups are more likely to keep you in mind when they graduate from school and are looking for jobs. Your education will help them understand the employment opportunities available in the HVAC industry and can assist in your recruiting efforts."

Don't do this work yourself.

This is another great task for your hiring assistant.

If you took advantage of the previous step and hired a person dedicated to your company's hiring process, this would be an ideal task for them to accomplish. They would do the research in finding who in the community to connect with and coordinate getting out the message of your company's open positions.



#9 RETENTION PLAN

A trillion dollars.

That's what U.S. businesses are losing every year due to voluntary turnover.



Not having a PLAN to retain your team in this day and age is just plain irresponsible and dangerous.

The biggest factors according to a McKinsey Quarterly Survey found that praise from managers, attention from leaders, frequent promotions, opportunities to lead projects, chances to join fast track management programs are often more effective than cash.

Money isn't everything.

As the owner of an HVAC marketing firm, I am invested in completely understanding the industry of my clients. In some ways, I'm in a unique position to gain insight on hiring since I don't run a HVAC company myself.

I've joined many online HVAC groups full of HVAC techs. When I ask how many would leave their current job for \$5 an hour more in pay the answer was a resounding, almost unanimous NO.



26.3%

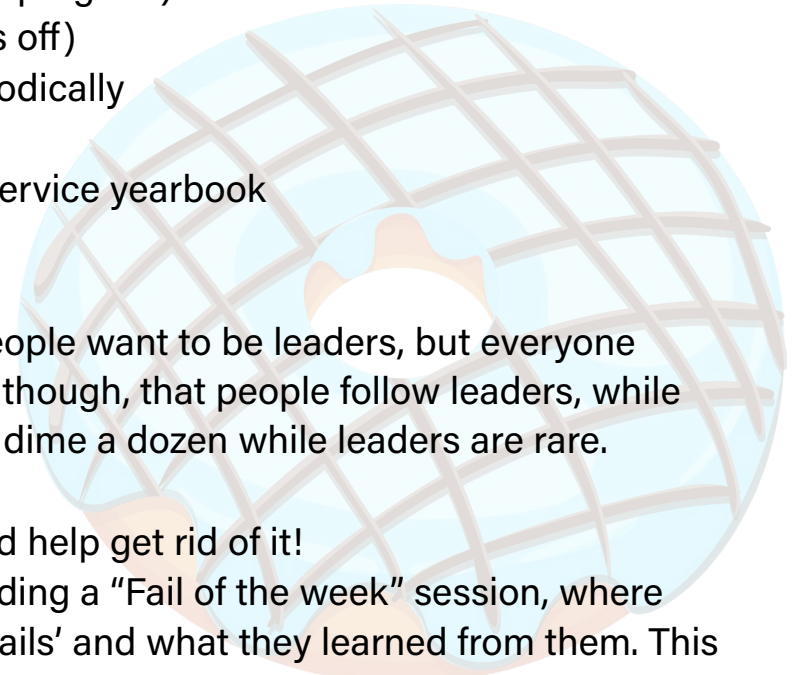
The annual turnover rate in the U.S. in 2017 was 26.3% based on the Bureau of Labor Statistics

GOOD WORK CULTURE IS MORE THAN DONUTS

If you think treating the team to donuts some mornings or ordering in pizza is all it takes to obtain a healthy work culture, you're going to have problems.

Here is just a handful of ideas you can offer that can make a world of difference when it comes to keeping the guys you have (for years to come):

- Offer professional development
- Make a great culture a real priority
- Encourage feedback!
- Support them in ways outside of work
- Provide feedback and recognition
- Mentorship programs
- Wellness program
- Flexible work arrangements
- Setting them up for success with a great onboarding process
- Acknowledgement of milestones, big and small
- Involve them in important decisions (sometimes)
- Training and education
- ESOP (Employee stock ownership program) can have fantastic tax benefits!
- Sabbatical program (take 6 weeks off)
- Altering work responsibilities periodically
- Encourage open communication
- Celebrate employee tenure with service yearbook
- Profit sharing
- Team building exercises
- Have leaders (not bosses) Few people want to be leaders, but everyone wants to be the boss. Remember, though, that people follow leaders, while they abandon bosses. A boss is a dime a dozen while leaders are rare.
- Be a brand they can be proud of
- Find a pain point of your techs and help get rid of it!
- Scopely celebrates failures by holding a "Fail of the week" session, where team members share some 'epic fails' and what they learned from them. This weekly meeting shows employees that Scopely encourages them to take risks and doesn't punish constructive failures. As a result, employees are more likely to experiment fearlessly.
- Conduct regular 'stay' interviews.



#10 YOU HAVE TO LET THE BAD ONES GO (I know it sucks. I know it's hard)

Back in 2012 I was running a business that sold and installed security systems in homes and businesses. Most of my installers were your average 19-22 year old idiots that I would have to train and babysit and hold their hands to get them to show up to work, on time was a miracle, and pray nobody steps through a ceiling or drilled into an electrical panel that week.

Then a guy named Rob came along. Rob had installed security systems for years and was VERY good. He knew everything and had been in the industry since I was in junior high. He could do 3 installs a DAY, every day, by HIMSELF. It was a miracle when my two mans crews could get 3 done in a day.

The problem was Rob was an asshole, pure and simple. I don't think a week went by that I didn't think he and I would up in the parking lot actually fighting. He was rude to Elizabeth who handled payroll, he wasn't terrible with customers but he sure as hell wasn't great. He pissed off the other techs on a regular basis.

This is an extreme example but one I am sure you can relate to. I worked with a number of 'Rob's' over the years. Sometimes you have to make the best of a crappy situation.

I get it, I've been there.

But then I got the advice that changed the way I handle potential and current employees that kept me from ever having a Rob problem ever again. (keep reading)



LESSONS FROM BILLION-DOLLAR COMPANIES

Back in 2019 I attended a business conference in Palm Springs, Florida. There was a really incredible lineup of speakers that we heard from over those 5 days.

One of them was a CEO who ran *several* billion dollar companies. He was clearly brilliant and knew how to move the bottom line. He gave us one piece of advice that really resonated with me.

He asked us **“How many of you have somebody working for you right now you should go home and let go?”**

I expected a decent percentage might raise their hand. Maybe 15% of the room. It made a SOUND having roughly 80-85% of the room raise their hand at the same time. I couldn't believe it.

He went on to explain how absolutely vital your BEST people on your team are to the success of your company. But if you tolerate people on your team that you know are bad apples to stay on because they are really GOOD at what they do (efficient, talented, fast, capable) even though you KNOW their attitude is toxic, or they cause drama for others, the good people on your team will either think:

- A) You don't know, which means you are stupid.
- B) You do know, you just don't care enough to do anything about it

Regardless of which it is, the cost is the same. Your good people will leave.

“Nothing will kill a great employee faster than watching you tolerate a bad one.”

- Perry Belcher

Let that sink in. Those 1-2 guys that may do good work but their attitude is shit could be what prevents your company's growth (or might have already held it back)

Something to think about.

CAN WE HELP YOU?

Why is a marketing agency providing recruiting guides?

Our job is to help our HVAC clients grow. No matter what way we can. Mostly that's marketing, but we found when we increased the calls and jobs for some of our clients, they weren't able to handle the additional work. They simply didn't have enough techs and couldn't seem to find good ones.

We knew that growth from successful marketing efforts can't be capitalized on if the company can't handle the extra work. That's when we created actionable strategies for helping our clients grow their team to meet their growing demand.

If you would like more details or are ready to grow your company to \$5 or \$10 Million in sales a year, shoot me an email at hvac@matthewrupp.com or you can reach me on my mobile at 316-312-8181.

