

LED specialist lets there be light

By Cindy Kent
STAFF WRITER

In an economy where the outlook is dim for some businesses, the future looks bright for Chauvet.

Revenues for 2008 are projected to rise 25 percent from 2007, said Albert J. Chauvet Jr. He and his wife, Berenice, own the Hollywood-based specialty LED lighting products company that recently broke ground on a 65,000-square-foot headquarters in Sunrise. Albert Chauvet said his company's growth is based on careful study of the industry, conservative spending and affordable products.

The current 10,000-square-foot headquarters is crammed with marketing and administrative offices. The firm leases two other warehouses for a total of 35,000 square feet. The move will allow them to consolidate and streamline shipping and warehousing.

Careful spending and meticulous planning are practices Chauvet implemented when he originally acquired his lighting business in 1990. Back then, the company sold only rope lighting. "That's as basic as it gets," he said.

But extravagant spending by previous management had sent the company spiraling. Chauvet cut travel expenses, participation in trade shows and entertainment. Chauvet has about 70 employees, which creates an

Taking notes

Don't stop paying attention to the details.

No matter your success, don't walk away from the core.

The customer is always right.

Be passionate about what you do for a living.

Understand where the market is going.

Details

Chauvet

chauvetlighting.com

So when it comes to creating and marketing new lighting products, Chauvet weighs expenses for research and development and manufacturing. "We have a great staff that is committed to the goal. We say that for every dollar we spend, we measure what we will get in return," Chauvet said. "A one-dollar expense is a direct hit to your bottom line."

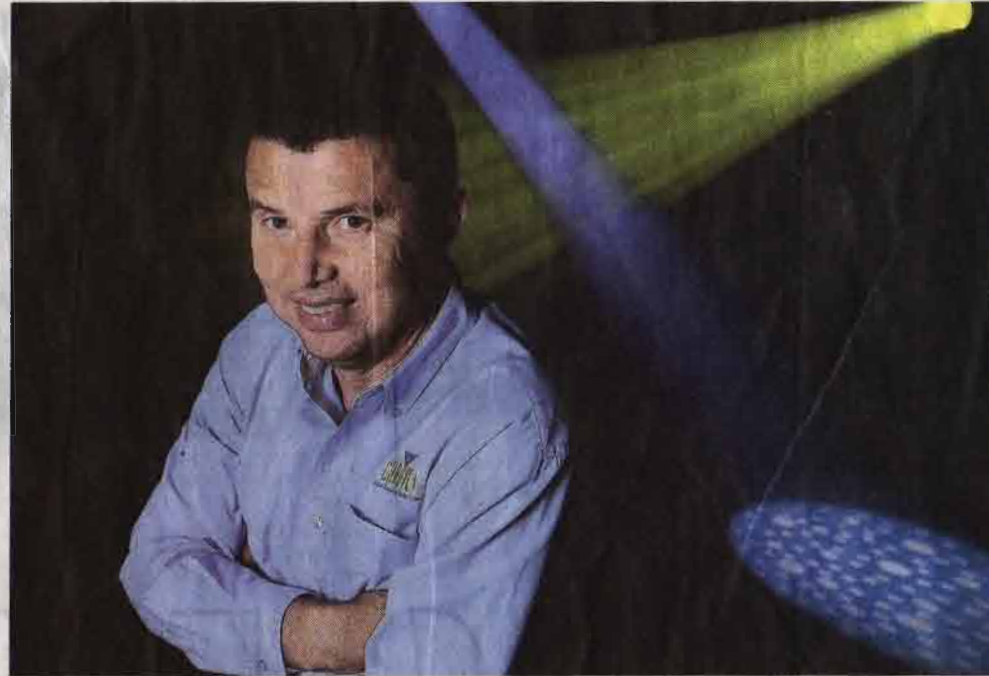
That philosophy pays off for consumers, too, said Chauvet. "The key is we offer value. In tough times, things get tight. That's when consumers begin to pay attention."

For example, Chauvet said schools, churches and other nonprofits look to reduce operational costs with improved, cooler and more-energy-efficient LED lighting.

LEDs, or light emitting diodes, appear to be bulbs but actually are tiny semiconductors encapsulated in plastic which protects the components and helps focus the light.

Commercial customers such as production companies, might spend as much as \$7,000 for tilt and pan spotlights on motorized bases. Party DJs can jazz up a show for around \$200 for portable panel, strobe or track lighting systems. A variety of Chauvet brand lighting was used for a presentation recently at Dolphin Stadium.

"Ninety-five percent of what's going on in life, you need lights," said Jhansen Reinoso of Word Up Sound & Light in Miami Gardens, which is supplied by Chauvet Lighting. Word Up first started its business in the church market, but quickly expanded into a retail store and production company. "LED is becoming the industry standard," said Reinoso. "And Chauvet has it for every application." Owing his own business has allowed



Susan Stocker, Sun Sentinel

Albert Chauvet Jr. of Chauvet in Hollywood specializes in LED lights, such as these moving-head spotlights used in theatrical productions.

Chauvet to move quickly. "In the corporate world, no one can readily make a decision. You have to wait. I dive into things. I have a hard time waiting when I already have the answer."

Chauvet said his pas-

sion for the job has turned him into an astute student of the lighting industry and its emerging technologies and markets. From uses such as theatrical platforms or architectural illumination, Chauvet

said, "We're always identifying opportunities."

Cindy Kent can be reached at ckent@SunSentinel.com or 954-356-4662.