

# After a Decade, The Filter Shop's Niche Keeps Growing



**The Filter Shop was selected as the Greater Omaha Chamber's Small Business of the Month twice in less than two years.**

When it comes to providing air filters for commercial and industrial applications, Ryan Dahlgard doesn't allow any dust to settle on his warehouse inventory. The owner of The Filter Shop in Omaha strives for an average inventory turnover of 30 to 40 days, allowing for seasonal variables.

"In this business, you have to have the products available or the customer will go somewhere else," Dahlgard explained. "At the same time, you don't want to keep product sitting around in the warehouse for years—you need to move it."

Over the past decade, expanding product lines and a steady increase in sales has forced The Filter Shop

to seek more space at four different locations prior to occupying its current 20,000-square-foot office and warehouse at 8730 F. St.

Today, The Filter Shop is the largest distributor of Clarcor air filtration products and was recently recognized by the Gates Corporation for having the highest volume of belt sales in the Midwest.

In addition to its extensive selection of heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC) filters, the company sells and installs air, liquid and dust filtration products, cottonwood intake screens, negative air machines, and replacement belts for HVAC applications.

Serving a three-state area, The Filter Shop's list of commercial and industrial customers reads like a Who's Who of corporate headquarters, healthcare facilities, retail businesses, and manufacturing operations in the Midwest.

Customers can monitor and manage their product purchases and replacement schedules using FilterTrack, a free proprietary online service that Dahlgard and a third party rolled out four years ago.

The company operates four trucks that are used for deliveries by a team of National Air Filtration Association (NAFA) Certified Technicians responsible for replacing filters or other components.

"It varies by application as to how often our technicians change out filters in a building," Dahlgard observed. "Some filters are replaced every two to three months. Our technicians will replace up to 600 HVAC filters in some of the larger office buildings we service, or as few as five or six in smaller facilities such as retail stores or restaurants."

The market for filters offers "endless opportunities," according to Dahlgard. "Filters are a repeat business. It's not one of those businesses where you sell them once and you're done. Our challenge is to create a selling and service experience that turns our customers into 'raving fans' who want to come back again and again."

Dahlgard credits the company's success to his Christian values and a strong culture of customer service fueled by motivated employees. "I am very excited that this team has taken air filters, which are far from a top-of-mind product for most people, and made this company into a business of choice for our customers," Dahlgard acknowledged.

Recalling his company's early years, Dahlgard appreciates the support and encouragement he received from his manufacturers and business partners, including First National Bank.

"I've been with First National Bank since the day we started," Dahlgard noted. "It took us four years to turn a profit, but they were willing to work with me when others would not. First National, my accountant, and manufacturing partners are all team members who have supported what we're doing from day one."



**After a successful career in the wireless telephone sector, Ryan Dahlgard co-founded The Filter Shop, which received a Better Business Bureau Integrity Award in 2010.**



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First National Bank is passionate about helping Omaha businesses like The Filter Shop, because when businesses thrive, so does our community.