

About Access TCA

Access TCA is a leader in the experiential marketing industry. The company provides exhibit design and fabrication, program management, meeting and event management, and creative and technical production. The company was incorporated May 1, 1985. Conceived at its outset as a regional exhibit builder, Access has exceeded its goal by becoming one of the premier companies in its space. Access is a privately owned company with no changes in ownership since its inception.

In the beginning, Michael Yag, founder and CEO, chose a location for his company that capitalized on a regional strategy: drawing business from Massachusetts cities Worcester, Boston, and Springfield; Providence R.I.; Hartford, Connecticut, and Nashua NH. The site he selected was the converted Whitin Machine Works textile mill in Whitinsville, Massachusetts. Built as a cotton mill and forge in 1826, the future home of Access was a collection of 29 deserted and decaying buildings when Yag first saw it.

At the time, the Worcester Telegram announced the opening of the company by writing, “The firm offers ways to push a product into a particular market by designing and producing exhibits for trade shows, as well as by designing and packaging products. It also designs and produces point-of-purchase displays.”

Yag was quoted in that same article: “I guess we’re taking a chance if you look at us strictly as a design firm because we’re out of the Boston area...[but] we’re more than just an exhibit house and we’re more than just an industrial design firm...we’re a full-service marketing-communications firm, and the emphasis on everything is marketing.” After signing a nine year lease at \$2/square foot and issuing four checks for the first payroll, Yag ordered “over \$10,000.00 in manufacturing equipment,” according to a company newsletter dated spring, 1987. Access quickly surpassed its original mission and was named one of America’s Fastest-Growing Private Companies by Inc. Magazine.

The mill, however, suffered its own identity crisis. On October 9, 1996—in the middle of Fire Safety Week—there was a major fire. Because a dormant plan had been developed in the event

that this would ever happen, the damage done by the largest fire in the area's history was minimal. With the help of 150 firefighters and the equipment of 25 communities, the Access headquarters sustained only light-to moderate water damage, in spite of the fact that it shared a wall with the paint room of the company where the fire started.

Access TCA Today

Today Access closely monitors the marketplace. The company thrives on premium client service, superior execution and organic growth. Once a pioneering regional exhibit builder, today the company is a sophisticated leader in trade show marketing. When clients expand beyond the U.S., Access' global experience is considerable. Clients rely on the company to reach wider markets with cost-effective solutions and brand integrity. With no formal ties to any other corporate entity, Access is an excellent choice for companies dedicated to competitive positioning in their industries.

Yag's daughter, Amy Sondrup, is now vice president, managing director of the company and oversees the day to day operations.

Community Involvement

Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives have long been a part of the Access culture. The day before U.S. Thanksgiving, a company wide pancake breakfast kicks off the holiday drive for warm outerwear and toys collected for underprivileged families. Support for programs such as [Cradle to Crayons](#) or [National Education for Assistance Dogs Services \(NEADS\)](#) have fostered camaraderie and a positive attitude toward volunteerism.

Earlier this year, in addition to a program at Cradle to Crayons, Access hosted freshman and senior students from Bay Path Regional Vocational Technical High School to show them what possibilities awaited them after graduation. Later another group, the sophomores and juniors, had a similar experience. This summer Access' employees are working on a community garden which provides area residents with fresh produce.

To celebrate the company's 30th anniversary this year, a program called 30 Causes in 30 Weeks invites employees to nominate organizations that will receive a \$100 check from the company.

Mike Yag also sits on the board of New Jobs for Massachusetts, a non-profit group that is dedicated to creating and keeping jobs—and businesses—in the state.

Innovation

Access has responded to the changes in the face-face-to-face industry over the past 30 years.

These changes have been brought about by:

- interactive graphics replacing printed graphics;
- the use of recycled and recyclable products reducing waste;
- the introduction of electronic communication and media into every facet of the business;
- the introduction of computer-generated design replacing hand sketching and more time-consuming methods of design development;
- client demands that account teams be available 24/7.

The ability to respond to the demands of these changes in the way business is done and the way production has been restructured is critical to Access' longevity as well as its bright future. Because Access' clients represent a broad mix of industries such as healthcare, technology, construction, and entertainment, an adaptive approach to the demands of each unique market is mandatory.

Access TCA's Success

From Mike Yag's start up in 1985 right up until 2015, Access has had a 30 year, steady trajectory of growth and revenue. Access is among the largest independently owned experiential marketing companies in North America, with

- four facilities worldwide,
- more than 500,000 square feet of design and fabrication space, and
- more than 150 employees.
- revenues ranking in the top five percent in the face-to-face marketing industry.
- consistent, organic growth since 1986.

With no formal ties to any other corporate entity, Access is an excellent choice for companies dedicated to competitive positioning in their industries. Access is debt-free, reliable and a low-risk partner.

- **Private ownership:** With no shareholders to report to, Access carefully selects clients and puts their interests first.
- **A broad client mix:** Diversity and design innovation have helped weather economic downturns. Best practices are benchmarked from one industry to another, greatly broadening the range and quality of creative solutions.
- **Union affiliations:** The Access TCA workforce is entirely non-union, keeping our overhead low and resulting in typical savings of 20-30% in fabrication costs, graphic production and inbound/outbound handling of exhibitry over similarly-sized competitors.
- **Vendor independence:** Unlike many of its competitors, Access has intentionally shunned expansive (and expensive) vertical growth, avoiding high overhead and increased costs.

In the face-to-face marketing industry, privately owned businesses are not necessarily rare but most of them are small and do not compete successfully with the publicly held companies or with the companies that feature exhibit building as part of a larger portfolio. Also many of these privately owned businesses scramble for succession plans or seek to be acquired.

Access is a major player in the industry with an amazing reputation for service and for thought leadership. The result has been a responsive, flexible company that is definitely poised for future growth.