

Empowering Tomorrow—The Southern States Story

Just a short 45 minutes south of the world’s busiest airport, Atlanta’s Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport, down US Highways 19/41 you will find Hampton, Georgia. Here in this small, peaceful Southern community you will find our most famous neighbor, the Atlanta Motor Speedway. Here; too, you will find Southern States, the largest switch manufacturer in North America and a rapidly growing player in the SF₆ products field.

Don’t let the peaceful façade fool you, as inside our doors beats the heart of a vibrant, thriving business that continues our long standing history as The Quality Name In High Voltage Switching. Disconnect switches remain the core product business, but Southern States in recent years has diversified as a company to provide cost-effective, targeted solutions for all of a customer’s switching needs through the addition of our SF₆ products business, the Power Switching Division; the addition of our parts/retrofits/upgrades/refurbishments/field service/training group, the After Sales & Service Department; and the addition of our power electronics business, SSIpower, LLC. And our customer base does not just cover North America, as in 2004 Southern States acquired two European based disconnect switch companies; Egic of Lyon, France, and Coelme of Venice, Italy; to enhance our global position as a market leader in products and solutions for the worldwide electric utility industry.

Our sales and marketing organization, backed by professionals with unparalleled engineering and manufacturing expertise, works closely with each customer to provide a high voltage power switching solution tailored to that customer’s specific application requirements. President and CEO Raj Anand constantly challenges his people to be solutions oriented rather than technology focused. Quoting a personal hero, Thomas A. Edison: “First, be sure a thing is wanted or needed, then go ahead”.

Meeting “needs” is readily seen in recent product developments, including the LLS-II Load and Line Switcher, the *CapSwitcher*[®] High Voltage Capacitor Switching Device, and the *CMD*[™] Current Measuring Device. And Southern States solutions concept goes beyond custom engineering and product development. Southern States After Sales & Service Department, which focuses on optimizing product or system value and extending useful life performance of both new and existing equipment, evolved from customer field service interaction.

But Southern States history of empowering its people to solve problems is not new—it goes back to the company’s founding. In 1916, W.E. Mitchell opened a repair shop to service electric motors and transformers in Birmingham, Alabama. Southern States Equipment Corporation soon began manufacturing its own line of motor operators. The young company grew and was credited with a host of high voltage expulsion power fuses, disconnect switches, distribution cutouts, substation connectors, and substation engineering developments. As the little business grew into a thriving corporation the available facility space at the Birmingham location was quickly consumed, necessitating a move to a larger plant.

In 1940, Southern States relocated to Hampton, Georgia, purchasing Henderson Foundry & Machine Works. This new home, a much larger facility, also had the advantages of a large machine shop and a foundry capable of producing many different metal castings. As the United States entered World War II in December, 1941, Southern States converted from a supplier to the electrical utility industry to a wartime industry producing bomb casings and firing pins for the U.S. military. The instrumental contribution of Southern States to the war effort was recognized through the presentation by the U.S. military of an Army-Navy “E” award for munitions excellence.

After the war Southern States production returned to serving the industry it knew so well, the electric utilities of the world. Business continued to grow through the years, necessitating facility expansions in 1952, 1959, 1964, and 1976.

Southern States vision of a company of innovators is evidenced by the more than 120 patents issued for various Southern States inventions in the 90 years since our founding. Examples of these many technological advances include the first substation class expulsion power fuses; the reverse loop contact finger for rotating blade disconnect switches (*Amplitact*[™]); the world’s first and still only 1 million plus volt switch, an RDA 1100 kV double end break switch; the only single gap per phase SF₆ full load break/loop break/line drop interrupter attachment for transmission class (69 kV through 230 kV) vertical break switches available in the world today, the LLS-II; the world’s first single gap per phase SF₆ special purpose capacitor switch with pre-insertion resistors for transient mitigation, the *CapSwitcher*[®]; the ingenious *CMD*[™] Current Measuring Device, a power electronics current transformer; and the list goes on and on with new inventions moving from the minds of our highly talented design engineers into production at an unprecedented pace, keeping in step with utility demands for better technology to provide reliable, high quality electric power to customers.

From our modest beginnings to our current position as the industry leader in the supply of disconnect switches and a growing force in the field of SF₆ power switching and protection equipment, Southern States has remained true to its vision of providing cost-effective, high quality, innovative products and solutions to our broad base of customers.

Today Southern States operates its business in a highly electrically dependent world in which the need for electric power never decreases. A world dealing with deregulation, rapid technological development, and increased global competition. A world of change.

In this environment, Mr. Anand reminds his company, “We must deal with the discomfort produced by change and move beyond it. Only by embracing challenges can Southern States become more innovative in meeting industry’s true needs. And, it is through innovation that we will reach the future.”

Timeline of Empowerment		1950s	1990s
1916 – W.E. Mitchell opens an electric motor & transformer repair shop in Birmingham, Alabama.	■	■ Double side break switch line introduced	■ Siemens/Siemens-Allis/Allis Chalmers/Schwager-Wood Corporation switch lines acquired
		■ <i>Amplitact</i> [™] (reverse loop) contact introduced	
1920s	■	1960s	■ After Sales & Service Department formed
		■ EHV 500 kV switch line introduced	
■ Air disconnect switch line introduced	■	■ Ice tested switch line introduced	■ SF ₆ products introduced (load & line switchers and horizontal interrupter circuit switchers)
		1930s	
■ Distribution cutout line introduced	■	■ 1100 kV switch produced	■ SF ₆ product line expanded (vertical interrupter circuit switchers and <i>CapSwitcher</i> [®])
1940s		■	
■ Henderson Foundry & Machine Works purchased in Hampton, Georgia	■		■ Cole Electric Company switch line acquired
■ Army-Navy “E” Award recognizes excellence in munitions production		■	1980s
■ Birmingham plant closed & operations moved to Hampton	■		■ 230 kV and 500 kV switches seismically qualified via shaker table tests
			■ HVDC switch line introduced