

Cantu Buys Zaun West

Sale of the St. Petersburg and Ft. Myers branch offices and parts and equipment distribution facilities of Zaun Equipment Inc. has been announced by Ben G. Reemelin, president and principal owner of the Jacksonville based outdoor power equipment distributing firm.

The West coast facilities have been purchased by Jack Cantu, formerly president of the Toro Company of Minneapolis, Minn., manufacturers of Toro lawn mowers, institutional turf equipment, and irrigation equipment.

The newly purchased operations will be known as Wesco-Zaun Inc. The two facilities serve an area from Citrus County on Florida's West coast to Naples. The two branches combined did a total of \$11.5 million business in fiscal year ending December 31st.

Zaun has been one of the largest outdoor power equipment, and irrigation equipment distributors in the Southeast. And, one of the oldest, having been established as a Toro distributorship in 1932. Its corporate headquarters and a branch office are located at 1741 Hamilton St. in Jacksonville. The firm will continue to operate here and from branch offices in Orlando and Tallahassee. Reemelin, himself a former Toro executive, said this about the sale: "Jack Cantu has the integrity, the personality, and the background to build Zaun further. We will continue to progress together."

Cantu said that all Zaun employees in the two purchased branches will be retained. J. C. Higgins, a former associate of Cantu's, has joined Wesco-Zaun as operations manager.

In addition to Toro products, Zaun and Wesco-Zaun together distribute some 30 lines of consumer and institutional turf equipment as well as being one of the nation's largest irrigation equipment suppliers to wholesalers and contractors.

The original company was purchased by Reemelin in 1954. The firm consisted of a Jacksonville office and employed eight persons. 1954 sales were approximately \$150,000. Last years combined sales of the five branches were in excess of \$20 million, and the firm employed 110 persons throughout Florida.

Cantu is no newcomer to the distribution business. Prior to his tenure with Toro he spent 31 years with O.M. Scott & Sons Company, most recently as head of The Pro-Turf Division.

Cantu said his decision to purchase the West coast operation of Zaun was prompted by: "the quality of the people in this organization and the enormous growth potential of the market over here. I am looking forward eagerly to establishing my home in the area and working again with retailers, golf course superintendents, and professional turf managers." ■

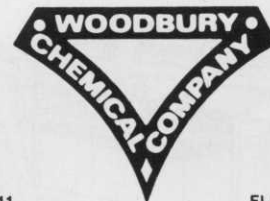


Jack Cantu, left and Ben C. Reemelin are shown following signing of purchase equipment for Zaun Equipment, Inc. St. Petersburg and Ft. Myers operations by Cantu, formerly president of the Toro Company of Minneapolis.

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