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## **Lincoln Electric Wins Award for World-Class Customer Service**

CLEVELAND, OH, U.S.A., June 30, 2008 -- Lincoln Electric's customer service has been recognized as best-in-class by *Smart Business* magazine. The Company was honored in the service standards category at the magazine's 2008 World Class Customer Service Award ceremonies held in Cleveland.

"Our team is proud of this award. It distinguishes Lincoln Electric as a leader in customer service and recognizes the hard work and accomplishments of our team," said Rick Trivisonno, Lincoln's Director of Customer Service and Community Affairs.

The magazine's World Class Customer Service Award was established to share best practices and raise awareness of the importance of customer service by recognizing organizations that demonstrate exceptional customer service.

The high level of customer service is the result of a structured and disciplined program implemented by Lincoln. "We have enhanced our customer service by strengthening our processes, people, and infrastructure to meet the changing needs of our customers," Mr. Trivisonno said.



"This was a 12-month process in which we benchmarked some of the leading companies in the world, both manufacturing and non-manufacturing, to initiate and sustain continuous improvement," Mr. Trivisonno said. "We incorporated Six Sigma practices and several other quality and service measurement programs into our organization. In addition, we focused on the people side and had our entire organization attend Dale Carnegie training courses on site. We upgraded tools needed to improve performance and adapted the latest customer support technology to help speed inquiries and warranty processing. Our phone service was re-tooled to improve our answer rates, which are now consistently above 98.5%."

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Lincoln Electric continues to implement programs to increase service and support for customers. Some of these programs include free Next Day UPS service on domestic parts orders, shipment tracking e-mails, two-year extended warranties, guaranteed same-day shipment of parts orders received by 3 p.m. EST, and on-line warranty processing.

“Our focus is to listen to the voice of the customer so that we can continue to improve and sustain our world-class customer service,” Mr. Trivisonno said.

Lincoln Electric is the world leader in the design, development and manufacture of arc welding products, robotic arc-welding systems, plasma and oxyfuel cutting equipment and has a leading global position in the brazing and soldering alloys market. Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, Lincoln has 38 manufacturing locations, including operations, manufacturing alliances and joint ventures in 20 countries and a worldwide network of distributors and sales offices covering more than 160 countries. For more information about Lincoln Electric, its products and services, visit the Company's Web site at <http://www.lincolnelectric.com>.

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