



## A Brief History of Brown-Strauss

Since its founding more than 100 years ago in Kansas City, Brown-Strauss Steel's history has been one of innovation, adaptation, and expansion. Founded in 1905 by Harry Strauss and two brothers, Morton and Isador Brown, the company's initial focus was collecting and selling various types of scrap metal. Success in the used steel business led to opportunities in the new steel business, and by the mid-1950s, Brown-Strauss changed its focus to the distribution of new steel.

Brown-Strauss' niche in the new steel business became purchasing large lots of prime and secondary steel from mills with excess inventories on hand. With the addition of a new warehouse in 1960, Brown-Strauss expanded to offer a full line of steel and pipe to service local manufacturers of farm implements and conveyors and other steel distributors throughout the Midwest.

Brown-Strauss embarked on a westward expansion in the mid-1970s, opening a branch office in Denver, followed shortly thereafter by operations in Phoenix and Salt Lake City. This ultimately proved to be the company's salvation, as the depressed economy in the Midwest in the early 1980s forced the closure of the Kansas City operation. The Denver branch became the company's headquarters, and to take advantage of the explosive growth in construction in the Mountain states, Brown-Strauss narrowed the product line and emphasized wide flange beams. The Brown-Strauss name became synonymous with wide flange beam distribution.

After Brown-Strauss became a part of Blue Tee Corp. in 1986, the company adopted a strategy of significant internal development and growth. Led by an expansion to the West Coast with new facilities in Los Angeles, Portland and San Francisco, sales nearly doubled in only three years. At the same time, Brown-Strauss expanded its product offering to include structural tubing.

In 2009 Brown-Strauss expanded again with the addition of a major steel distributor in Kansas City; once again bringing Brown-Strauss back to the city in which it began more than 100 years ago. Brown-Strauss remains one of the largest distributors of wide flange beam and structural steel tubing in the United States.