

David Weiss of Sierra Equipment Company Inc. in San Francisco, California has been a Ritchie Bros. customer for more than 30 years.

In 2008, David sent the following account of his relationship with Ritchie Bros. to stories@rbauction.com.

My family's relationship with Ritchie Bros. goes back a little over 30 years. We began purchasing equipment from them for our Pennsylvania-based coal and construction company in 1975.

Years later, when we decided to liquidate the construction part of the company, we explored various methods. Looking for a timely and efficient method and after unsuccessfully attempting to sell the business in whole we decided to use the unreserved auction method.

In 1984 we called Dave Ritchie. He sent two newly hired fellows by the names of Mark Clarke and Roger Rummel to visit with us. My brother Alan – my partner at that time – and I decided to let Ritchie Bros. handle the liquidation of our construction company in a series of auctions in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Atlanta, Georgia from 1984 to 1988.

The Pennsylvania auction in 1984 was the first large auction Ritchie Bros. had in the eastern United States. Mark Clarke and Roger Rummel headed up our first sale and on auction day the remainder of the Ritchie team – Dave Ritchie, Dick Bartel and Marv Chantler – came to town along with Wayne "Leroy" Clark who did the auctioneering and Russ Cmolik who was the office clerk.

It was a very successful sale in many ways. It began accomplishing the goal of liquidation while recovering our investment in that equipment in a timely manner. We also established a business relationship and friendship that continues to this day. Ritchie Bros. was truly a full service company and handled all aspects of the sale, which enabled our people to continue on with their normal duties.

I do not use the words full service lightly. They were a full service company; in fact, Mark twice babysat mine and Judy's three children during those days, an event our now adult children still remember to this day. Ritchie Bros.' service and transparency in their business dealings is what make them have one of the most loyal customer bases of any industry.

When I attended one of the early Ritchie Bros. auctions in Dubai in the late 90s, there was not enough seating for the large crowd. Dave Ritchie saw the problem and asked me to give him a hand to put out more chairs. The two of us added about a hundred more chairs to accommodate the bidders.

Ritchie Bros. works like our company and most other successful companies: no one is afraid to get their hands dirty and no one is above approach. This is an internal culture Dave and Russ built in Ritchie Bros. Their full service, integrity and dependability are why our son Judd, who now heads our company, continues our long-term



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Since 1975 we've bought and sold at dozens of Ritchie Bros. auctions. The last major auction they did for us (in 1998) consisted of the rolling stock we had excess from a power plant project in Southeast Asia. We brought all of the equipment to San Francisco and Ritchie Bros. conducted the auction on the pier where it was off-loaded from the ships.

Most of the equipment was unused, so no one was certain if we'd recover our investment, but the auction proved to be the right decision: at the end of the day, we got 12 percent more than any of us figured.

If your concerns are integrity, responsibility and a trouble-free business relationship plus a chance to work with some people you will be able to call a friend, give Ritchie Bros. a call – we still do.

