

PETRO WEST

FUELING THE NEW FRONTIER

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A CUSTOMER-CENTRIC APPROACH

In a market where competitors are few but ferocious, staying ahead of the pack is a chance to reshape how the industry does business. Armed with new leadership and a fresh perspective on digitization and customer centricity, fuel industry specialist Petro West is taking that opportunity and running with it.

Based in St. George, Utah, Petro West has been a mainstay of the fuel systems service and construction sector in the intermountain West for nearly 30 years. Their world class teams build, renovate, and service fueling sites, fuel storage, and transfer facilities for a host of prestigious commercial,

retail, and governmental clients. The firm currently operates five business lines: ground-up construction, light construction and upgrades, service and maintenance, training and testing, and tank cleaning.

The company's technical excellence, institutional knowledge, and reputation were a significant draw

WEST FRONTIER

TO GROWTH IS PUTTING PETRO WEST ON THE FOREFRONT OF CHANGE



for entrepreneurs Adam Vandermyde and Eric Heideman, who bought the company in 2020. In addition to eyeing new lines of business to grow the firm, they saw a path to modernization in an energy industry niche notoriously slow to adopt technology.

Much of the fuel servicing sector's developmental

delay is attributable to a lack of choice, according to Vandermyde, the company's president and CEO. "There aren't a lot of companies like us, and the customer has suffered a bit because their choices are so few," he explained. In such a small field, making it easier for clients to work with service

providers, whether through digitization or improved customer experience, hasn't been a priority.

"We're putting our foot down and saying, 'No, we are not going to be that company.' We are investing in both our customer-facing and backend systems to make it easier for us to do business, for our customers



“WE’RE POSITIONING OURSELVES ON THE CUTTING EDGE OF FUEL IMPLEMENTING APPROACHES THAT ARE THE STANDARD IN MANY OTHER INDUSTRIES.”

**—ADAM VANDERMYDE,
PRESIDENT AND CEO**



to do business with us, and to make it easier for them to manage their stations,” he added. Petro West is developing service and technology offerings to help their fueling customers succeed without the burden of being all things to all aspects of their business.

BUILDING A NEW STATUS QUO

The co-owners are veterans of top tier business consultancies: Vandermyde held leadership roles at Ansira, PwC, and Deloitte; prior to holding leadership positions at Rhinehart Oil, Heideman worked for KPMG. As such, they are accustomed to digital technologies and relationship building, two components they view as critical to Petro West’s success.



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“We’re trying to digitize this business and the (rest of the) industry is not. We’re investing in the technology that most everyone outside of the fuel industry uses because it’s not used in fuel,” Vandermyde said. “We’re positioning ourselves on the cutting edge of fuel implementing approaches that are the standard in many other industries.”

The application of predictive maintenance is

a particularly compelling development, enabling Petro West to remotely monitor and test fuel dispensing systems, resolve alarms, and diagnose other service issues.

“That triangle between the customer, the service provider, and the technology provider really doesn’t exist in the industry,” COO Heideman pointed out. “We can actually contact the customer and ask if they

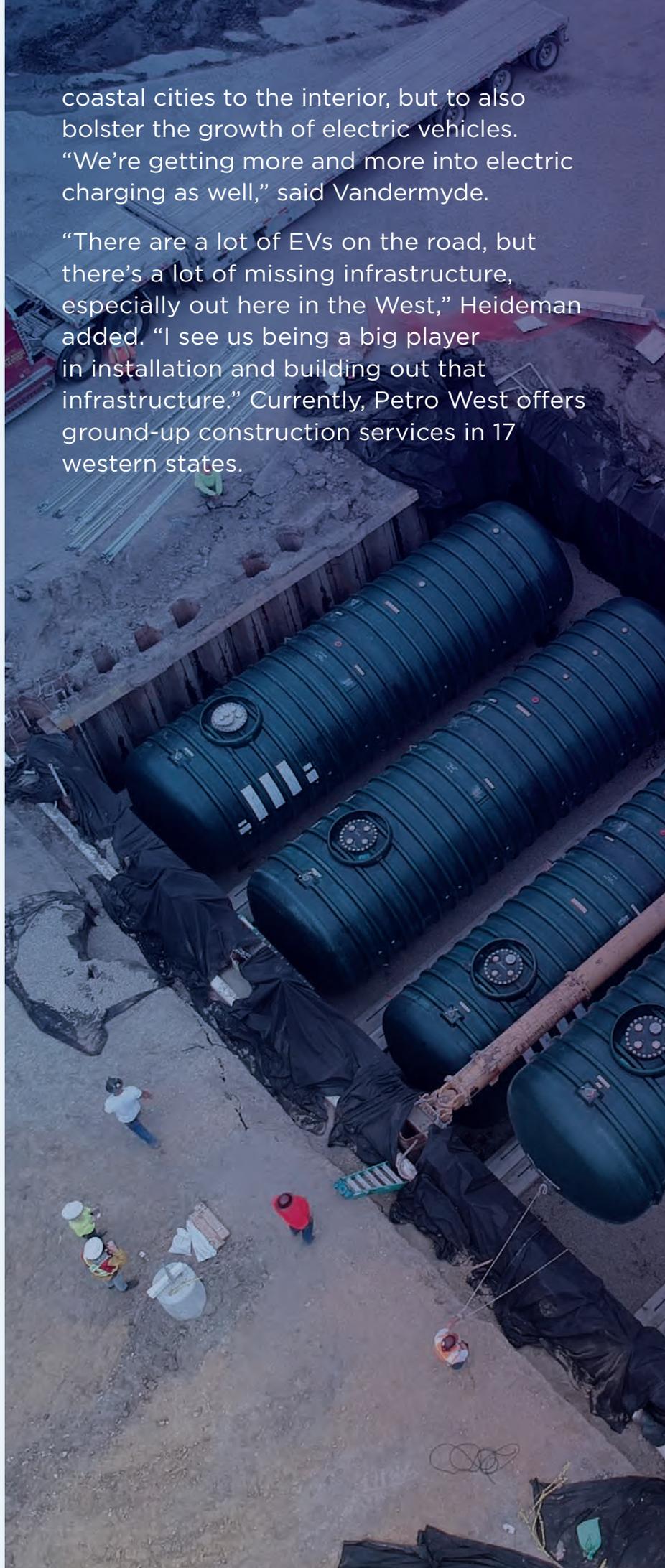
would like us to send out someone to fix a problem. That’s an evolution of the service industry, but it’s just barely in the beginning stages and we hope to be on the forefront of that.”

In addition to building, maintaining, and upgrading fuel systems, Petro West is positioned to help expand the infrastructure needed in the American West to support not just new gas stations to serve population shifts from



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-ERIC HEIDEMAN, COO



coastal cities to the interior, but to also bolster the growth of electric vehicles. “We’re getting more and more into electric charging as well,” said Vandermyde.

“There are a lot of EVs on the road, but there’s a lot of missing infrastructure, especially out here in the West,” Heideman added. “I see us being a big player in installation and building out that infrastructure.” Currently, Petro West offers ground-up construction services in 17 western states.



Two of the fastest growing metro areas in the nation, Provo-Orem and Las Vegas, are indicative of the region's burgeoning infrastructure needs. A host of new gas stations are being built to accommodate rising populations. "I call it the beautiful circle," the CEO said. "We see three or four years of very solid growth on the construction

side, which leads to more service customers. Older stations need to upgrade to the latest and greatest technology. All of these things really lend themselves to each area of our business quite well."

A new tank cleaning business line is proving to be beneficial as well. "There's a lot of old stations that need upgrades, but when it comes to tank cleaning as well as tank removal, there are a lot of old tanks around that at some point will have to be removed," Heideman said.

The company is a distributor and certified trainer for industry giant Gilbarco Veeder-Root. Petro West's state-of-the-art training center in Las Vegas provides a fully immersive learning experience and certification on the latest equipment in partnership with Gilbarco Veeder-Root and Passport. "Even our competition will send their technicians to our certification program," Vandermyde said.

Internally, leadership is steering the company's culture from one characterized by micromanagement to one of trust, empowerment, and open communication.

"We're making sure our people have the tools, knowledge, and freedom to make decisions to get their jobs done," he continued.

After an acquisition, learning to trust new leadership can be tricky for legacy workers, especially if they've been conditioned to ask for permission to make even low-stakes decisions, as Petro West's staffers had been. "In some ways it's been a very difficult shift for them," he confirmed. "Now instead of having to get approval for every single move they make, we're telling them, 'You're smart, you can figure it out. If you have questions, we'll help provide some guidance, but otherwise we trust you. You make the decision.'"

When it comes to customer centricity, Petro West is upending existing norms to raise the bar for the industry. As Vandermyde put it, "We are really focused on following through and doing what we say no matter what the consequences are. We do the right thing because we want to be the type of company they want to work with, not just a company they *have* to work with." ■

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