

# US DEVELOPERS JOURNAL

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**AMCHEL COMMUNICATIONS, INC.**  
CLIMBING TOWERS, BUILDING BUSINESS

THE MAGAZINE FOR CONSTRUCTION EXECUTIVES

# AmChel Communications, Inc.



## Climbing Towers, Building Business

*Produced by James Tingley & Written by Shannon O'Neill*

Ron Robinson is the president and founder of the uniquely named AmChel Communications Inc., an independent construction company focused on creating and supporting infrastructure for the cellular industry. The company does most of its business in the Dallas Fort Worth area of Texas, but don't be fooled by the local roots; AmChel has built projects as far away as Kansas to Wisconsin and is a licensed general contractor in the state of Louisiana. AmChel works with some of the top cellular companies in the world, such as Metro PCS, T-Mobile, Verizon, Sprint, Nextel, and Ericsson.

AmChel is involved in the many facets of cellular infrastructure, taking on tasks ranging from tower construction, to antenna and cabling installation, to site testing and overall project management. Main civil construction duties include generator and foundation pads, installation of electrical and telephone conduits, access roads, fencing and preparing and finishing sites for the installation of these structures. In regards to tower and radio frequency, or RF, installations, the focus is assembly and erection of monopoles, guy and self support towers, the installation of antennas and coax systems, completion of tower mapping and maintenance, emergency restorations, and general site upkeep.

Their location in north Texas means AmChel can provide their services to local businesses in the large Dallas Fort Worth metro area: using a hometown company helps other businesses manage costs and allows AmChel great success in completing projects on time and within budget.

Ron Robinson started AmChel in 2001, but he has been involved in the wireless industry since 1988. His two decades of experience in this relatively young field means his knowledge and his connections to others in the business run deep. Ron got his start as an installer in the fiber optics industry. He worked in fiber optics from 1983 through 1988, when he started climbing towers. At this time, he began climbing the corporate

ladder as well, working his way out of the field and towards the corner office, beginning with a promotion to operations manager. He was then recruited by Trinity Wireless in order help develop a service division that eventually grew to approximately 252 employees nationwide as a regional manager. Once the lead investors of that company began to buy out individual divisions, Ron decided to branch off and form AmChel Communications Inc. as an independent organization.

The strength and the willpower to go out on his own came partly from Ron's family, who trusted and believed in him. In his words, their support is a key reason in AmChel's successful growth: "in seven years I went from a guy who borrowed \$92,000 to start my own company— I started working out of our house, then I rented a place for two or three years, now I own my facility, and developed it into what [the company] is now."

Ron named his company AmChel in honor of his children, daughters Amber and Chelsea. Tragically, Amber died in a skiing accident before Ron began the company. Finding a positive light in this tragedy, Ron says that she helped give him the strength to start AmChel and taught him an even more important lesson: family comes before all else.

Through hard work, AmChel built a reputation for client satisfaction and workplace safety. Safety for AmChel's team is Ron's number one priority. His employees are trained and certified in tower climbing safety and rescue, and the company has never had a liability claim of any kind.

Ron's strong loyalty to his trusted employees means that the company has remained remarkably stable—many of his workers have been with AmChel since before the start of the business. Ron believes in the concept of "organic growth," for AmChel, meaning they aim to "hire and train employees with apparent high potential and to promote within the company...and to grow in controlled manner as customer requirements increase." AmChel now has 28 employees and generates an annual revenue of between \$5 and \$6 million.

The in-house team consists of two civil crews, three RF crews, one test crew, and three project managers. Ron uses approved local subcontractors for some duties and for times when business is particularly brisk.

Today Ron's main duties as president include overseeing day to day operations, developing business and customer relationships, reviewing bids, developing policies, and resolving all manner of conflicts—though avoiding conflicts in the first place is one of Ron's strengths. AmChel has grown based "purely on reputation and rapport," as he puts it, and connections both inside and outside the company, built over time, have lasted. The wireless business is "relationship based, directly [between the business and the client], or through referrals by a friend, or by word of mouth" from pleased customers.

AmChel is certified by a number of industry organizations

like Radio Frequency Services, EUPEN and Andrew in connector installation, and ComTrain certified in Tower Safety and Rescue. The company also belongs to several associations such as NATE (National Association of Tower Erectors), The Texas Construction Association, The Better Business Bureau of North Texas, and The Wylie Chamber of Commerce.

The economy will dictate Ron's moves in the future, and he remains cautiously optimistic. Despite the current downturn in most industries, wireless systems are growing and expanding and AmChel seems well positioned to "grow in a controlled manner." In the next one or two years Ron says it's "going to get better...we're constantly getting new customers; I don't think it will get worse because we are still growing." As Ron Robinson and AmChel Communications continue to grow in experience, business seems sure to follow.

**COMPANY AT A GLANCE**

Established: 2001  
 Employees: 252  
 President : Ron Robinson

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2800 Capital Street  
Wylie, TX 75098  
United States