



BUILDING A new facility from the ground up last year has paid dividends for Vandalia Tractor Sales in Vandalia, IL.

VANDALIA TRACTOR SALES VANDALIA, IL

Giant step. Business partners Mike Cripe, Don Clark and Dale Harris knew it was just a matter of time before their equipment dealership required more room.

"Expansion was a no-brainer," Cripe says. "Besides revamping our parts department, we needed a larger showroom and a good set-up shop area to handle our customer base."

The trio struck a deal with the city and, to paraphrase an old cliché, "the rest is history."

Vandalia Tractor Sales has 16 em-

ployees. It has nearly doubled the amount of working space that was available at its old site. Located just off Routes 185 and 40W, the dealership covers 8.5 acres. The corner showroom features 7,000 sq. ft. There's also another outlet in Newton, 55 miles away.

Top-notch facilities. The farm store carries a complete line of New Holland tractors and equipment, lawn and garden power machines, plus Kinze and Bush Hog products.

Its streamlined facilities include:

- A wash bay,
- A 60- x 80-ft. outside storage building,

- A 30- x 40-ft. cold storage area to house augers and other parts,
- Sizeable bays for overhead storage,
- Forced air furnace heat, and
- An overhead tube heater.

"One of our most subtle, handiest features is the 70 Vidmar storage cabinets set directly in the wall behind the parts counter," Cripe says. "This \$10,000 investment allows personnel easy access to small part items like cotter keys, a variety of bolts, u-joints and other miscellaneous items."

Another perk is the 16-ft. overhang that wraps 180 ft. around the main building. The dealership showcases

lawn mowers and small tractors here.

Leaving adequate space for a showroom has paid dividends. For example, a producer from 130 miles away stopped in while his wife was shopping nearby. He chatted with one of the salesmen about a New Holland model T8030 tractor featured on the showroom floor. A week later he called and purchased the unit.

"Having top-notch facilities makes a difference with employees," Cripe says. "There is very little turnover here. Our staff cares about the business and understands the needs of our customers. I definitely feel this is an intangible item that sets us apart from other dealerships." FIN