



## Increasing Its Customer Base and Efficiency, J.R. Hoe and Sons Uses The Internet to Bid Jobs Online

**Name:**  
J.R. Hoe and Sons, Inc

**Internet:**  
[www.jrhoe.com](http://www.jrhoe.com)

**Products/Services:**  
Metal casting, fabrications, and machined parts

**Location:**  
Middlesboro/Bell County

**Leadership:**  
H.H. Hoe, President

**Employees:** 45

**Founded:** 1909

**Reach:** Regional

**Innovative Insight:**  
*"At J.R. Hoe and Sons, quality is defined by the satisfaction of our customers. We are here to solve the customer's problems."*

**Way Internet Has Made You More Competitive:**  
*"High-speed Internet gives us the ability to be competitive in online bidding. Real-time bidding increases the outcome and our customer base."*

**Advice to Growing Companies:**  
*"Research the Internet options before spending the money and have the mindset to use the technology and discover the benefits of its applications."*

**Ways to Continue to Attract the Best Workers:**  
*"J.R. Hoe and Sons is a family oriented company that believes in the idea of treating people right."*

**Middlesboro, KY-** "Hoe of KY" is etched on manhole covers across the eastern United States from Indiana to Georgia. Since 1909, J.R. Hoe and Sons, Inc., in Bell County, has been a leading regional manufacturer of metal castings, fabrications, and machined parts.

Today, J.R. Hoe and Sons, Inc. uses modern technology to solve customers' problems while providing unbeatable quality and service. Technology is used in the entire production process, including design, account management and manufacturing.

Modern technology, specifically high-speed Internet, is crucial to the everyday activities of J.R. Hoe and Sons. According to Rob Arch, J.R. Hoe and Sons Engineer, the company chose wireless Internet access for its "ease of use and speed."

Engineers at J.R. Hoe and Sons are charged with the task of conceptualizing a customer's idea. The engineering department uses computer aided design (CAD) software to transfer the concept to a two-dimensional design. CAD technology speeds up the technology process to assure convenience and timeliness to the customer.

High-speed Internet allows the engineering staff to easily communicate with our customers and provides quality and control to our customers. High-speed Internet capabilities also allow our Corporate Headquarters to maintain continuous communication with the Louisville Sales Office, 200 miles away. While manufacturing is done in the corporate office, orders placed in Middlesboro, KY are automatically transferred to the Louisville Sales Offices to be invoiced.

J.R. Hoe and Sons also uses Internet technology to attract large industrial accounts. Often on-line bidding with multiple manufacturers is conducted in order to get the best quote with large-scale industrial companies. On-line bidding sessions have a specified time frame, which is extended in the case of close bidding. The bidding is done in "real-time" and can intensify in the last minutes. High-speed Internet is crucial to every second of the bidding.

"Dial-up is deadly in online bidding," said Jeff Ramsey, IT Director.

In addition to account dealings, J.R. Hoe and Sons incorporates modern technology in the manufacturing of metal parts. The company uses MeltLab Software in order to monitor the heating of metals to a specified melting point. MeltLab displays a series of temperature readings from testing stations heating the metal. Reading capabilities create a regression analysis of the metal's hardness.

When cutting metal, J.R. Hoe and Sons use state-of-the-art computer numerically controlled (CNC) technology to cut metals or plastics within 1/16 of an inch. Information about the medium and specific instructions are programmed into the controller and can be repeated at any time.

J.R. Hoe and Sons' impressive list of customers includes major subway efforts in the Atlanta and military projects in Fort Knox and Fort Campbell. In addition, the company recently supplied the complete metals package for the Cumberland Gap Tunnel project.

With all its success, J.R. Hoe and Sons is focused on the needs of the customers. "We strive to make the customer aware that they can come to us at anytime during the process," Arch said.

### **About KY 120:**

In the fast-pace world of technology-driven business, it should be recognized that best practices can be studied and emulated. As a part of the [connectkentucky](http://www.connectkentucky.org) initiative, CiTE (Center for Technology Enterprise) is profiling business initiatives in each of Kentucky's 120 counties. For more information visit our Web site at [www.connectkentucky.org](http://www.connectkentucky.org) or call 270.781.4320.