

# 50 Elk Industries

## The Entrepreneurial Side of Science

**E**lk Industries, LLC was originally formed as a patent holding and licensing company in 1984 and quickly evolved into a vital high-technology company. The owner of the company, Robin Elkins, is a pioneer in his industry and paved the way to the creation of many of the products we use on a daily basis.

Elk Industries serves much of the global laser and electronics community by providing three “core” products.

One of them is the inventor’s services/design engineering consultation, where the company helps other inventors – whom the company calls “idea people” – obtain patents for their products. This phase can also include aiding in design and development of products through a process called prototyping. “Only one out of every 200 patents is worth a dime,” Elkins says. “I’ve been fortunate that mine have come out successful.”

The second core product Elk Industries offers is laser products and services. The company has designed and built more than 20 different FDA/CDRH certified laser products for a wide range of applications, including military, medical and scientific uses. Elk supplies companies like Boeing and Lockheed Martin with laser technology upon request. For example, this year the company manufactured a high-energy polymer laser for Boeing supplied to its Kirtland Air Force Base location. Elkins hopes to broaden the range of lasers offered by the company three-fold in the next five years.

The company’s third core product is electrical and electronic design and development work. Elk has designed and developed – and in some cases built – more than 1,500 original electric circuits and designs. Six of those have resulted in the awarding of U.S. patents.

Elk Industries also benefits from its role as an exporter of products around the world.

Some of the company’s various patents have made their way into mainstream America’s marketplace. These include transformerless battery chargers and analog digital converters, which were sold to Sandia National Laboratories under a Department of Defense contract.

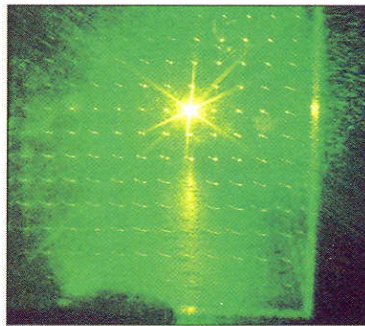
Elk Industries is a micro business with a sole proprietor, Elkins, who handcrafts most of the work himself. “Since the age of 12, when I studied under Dr. James Van Allen at the Franklin Institute, I knew that I wanted to devote the rest of my life to improving the arts and sciences,” Elkins says.

Keeping high-profile clients satisfied is one of Elk’s main goals. “We like a happy customer,” says Elkins, adding, “especially when it’s a company that is difficult to get a contract with.”

Elkins carries many titles: inventor, scientist, engineer and artist. “I’m chief cook and bottle washer,” Elkins admits jokingly. However, he is probably best known for his invention of the first patented digital audio recording system, which covers voicemail and sound on the internet. It was his first patent and has been the subject of licensing agreements with companies such as IBM, Microsoft, America Online, Siemens and others. Seeing Elk Industries become a household name is one of Elkins’ goals for the future.



Robin Elkins is an inventor, scientist, engineer and artist.



Laser optical element, holographic diffraction grating

Holographic diffraction grating film is used to break up white light into all colors of the spectrum.

### Elk Industries, LLC

**Top Executive:** Robin Keith Elkins, CEO

**Location:** Melbourne, Fla.

**Web site:** [www.elkindustries.com](http://www.elkindustries.com)

Elkins currently operates laser and electronics laboratories in Melbourne. Most of the day-to-day work he performs is design engineering consultation or independent inventing. He also enjoys producing artwork.

As an active researcher in the field of alternative energy – sometimes referred to as “green energy” – the company has created a compact alternative to noisy, fuel hungry generators. Called “power solutions,” the product has no exhaust and can be easily recharged by solar panel.

Most recently, after years of laying down groundwork, the company has established its own brand name of solar panels. Elk manufactures them in any size and keeps competitively priced. The solar panels meet or exceed industry standards.

“We are going to third world nations because they need it and they are very interested in solar power,” Elkins says. Clearly, the future is bright for Elk Industries. ■