

Sonetics In Brief

- Privately held
- Growing +20% per year
- Headquarters in Portland, Oregon, USA
- Customers in all 50 States and around the world

Sonetics Corporation, and its Flightcom and Firecom divisions, were started by an electronics engineer working from his garage in Portland, Oregon, in 1983 with little more than an idea and a strong entrepreneurial spirit that continues to drive the company's growth today. The original company was founded to solve a vexing problem – how to both protect hearing and better hear a flight instructor during training for a private pilot's license. Brian VanderPloeg could not have imagined where his tinkering would take him or his ideas. As an active member of the Experimental Aircraft Association, VanderPloeg soon discovered that there was a robust market for the advanced aviation intercom systems he was developing.

VanderPloeg, and his wife and business partner Jane, officially launched Oregon Avionics in 1983 and were soon besieged with requests for their communication systems. Demand further skyrocketed when *Aviation Consumer Magazine* named Oregon Avionics' system the "Best Portable Intercom" in 1986. VanderPloeg continued inventing while also putting together supply and distribution chains to serve his ever increasing customer base. Those efforts led to the creation of parent company Sonetics Corporation in 1988, under which Oregon Avionics became the Flightcom division.

Points of Difference

- Wireless technology pioneers
- More than half a million users
- Custom engineering and development
- Comprehensive service and technical support
- Nearly 30 years of experience

Flightcom focused on producing an expanding line of innovative, technologically advanced communication products and accessories that became the technology of choice for hundreds of thousands of private pilots and their passengers. Flightcom grew by 1,325 percent in a five-year period in the early 1990s, and today serves not only private pilots, but commercial and military aviation as well. What started in a Portland garage has now expanded to a fast growing company with employees supporting customers across North America and around the world. Flightcom's original products have grown into an array of innovative headsets and communication systems providing both hearing protection and robust communication in the air and on the ground. Flightcom's newest generation of products provide comprehensive solutions for pilots and crews, with advanced wireless technology for aircraft ground pushback and marshaling, de-icing, cargo, and maintenance. The wireless systems enable ground crews and mechanics not only to increase communication efficiency and overall productivity, but also to prevent accidents and injuries on the airport ramp and anywhere aircraft and ground staff are moving. Flightcom wireless systems are currently deployed by several major commercial airlines, including Southwest, US Airways, and Piedmont.

While the Flightcom division was growing, Sonetics began to focus on the numerous additional markets in which VanderPloeg's advanced communication systems would be applicable. Its first expansion was into the team communication side of fire and emergency services. Two local pilots, who were using the familiar Flightcom intercom technology, asked the company to find a way to apply the same innovation to their work as firefighters. They sought a solution to the challenge of engine and siren noise that interfered with voice communication for fire apparatus crews and was causing hearing loss among the firefighter community.

As a result of early success in team communications for the fire and emergency services market, Sonetics created its Firecom division in 1989 and began production of headsets,

intercoms, and radio interfaces to solve these problems for firefighters and ambulance crews. Over the years, Firecom has maintained very close relationships with its customers to continually research and develop new advancements that improve safety and communication effectiveness. The Firecom division pioneered the development of completely wireless fully self-contained DECT-based headsets. Firecom wireless headsets increase safety and effectiveness by giving firefighters hearing protection, full mobility, and continuous contact with their local crew and radio communication – all without being tethered by communication cable to an intercom or belt pack.

The combined success of Flightcom and Firecom led to Sonetics' recognition by *Inc. Magazine* as one of the 500 Fastest Growing Companies in the nation in 1991 and 1992. It has also led to the development of new solutions using Sonetics' proven wireless technology in a variety of other high-noise, high-risk environments. Sonetics introduced these solutions in 2011 under its own brand, with DECT-based wireless headsets incorporated into fixed, portable, and mobile communication systems that are helping work teams in industrial, construction, public works, and marine environments increase team effectiveness, productivity, and safety. The systems provide local full-duplex hands-free team communication with optional two-way radio transmit-and-receive capabilities compatible with more than 400 models of radios from more than 20 manufacturers.

Today, Sonetics continues its rapid growth as it helps more than 500,000 customers in 90 countries solve their toughest communication problems. Sonetics' rugged headsets, communication systems, and radio interfaces ensure all team members can hear and be heard, even in the most challenging environments. Sonetics is currently growing in excess of twenty percent per year as it finds a ready and eager market wherever there's a need to leverage team effectiveness to enhance the operation of high-value assets or to keep team members safe. Sonetics' growing workforce is primarily located at its Portland, Oregon headquarters where its engineering and operations teams design, source, manufacture, and support products sold worldwide. Hundreds of dealers and resellers partner with Sonetics to deliver and support customers in each of its markets and countries around the world.

For More Information

www.soneticscorp.com
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Through the years, Sonetics' business has expanded to support teams in numerous environments, including commercial aviation, military, firefighting, emergency response, public works, marine, construction, and industrial operations. The entrepreneurial spirit, commitment to customers, and driving mission to provide the best communication solutions to ensure the productivity, safety, and effectiveness of work teams in challenging environments lives on.