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SOUTHERN ELECTRICAL

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Company Ltd.

BEST VALUE, QUALITY
PRODUCTS, EXPERT ADVICE

Southern Electrical Company Ltd. leads the charge as the largest electrical and lighting supplier in Grenada. Its impressive retail store features a modern electrical hardware environment offering a wide variety of quality electrical items for residential, commercial, and industrial applications, along with “the most versatile and wonderful lighting showroom” in Grenada.

Managing Director, Lera Gooding, shares the company’s proud backstory. “Southern Electrical Company is a family-owned-and-operated business founded in 1996 by Emmanuel Duncan, Sr., himself a qualified electrician. At that time, he worked with a foreign electrical manufacturer here in Grenada. When that company closed their operation, Mr. Duncan saw the void in the





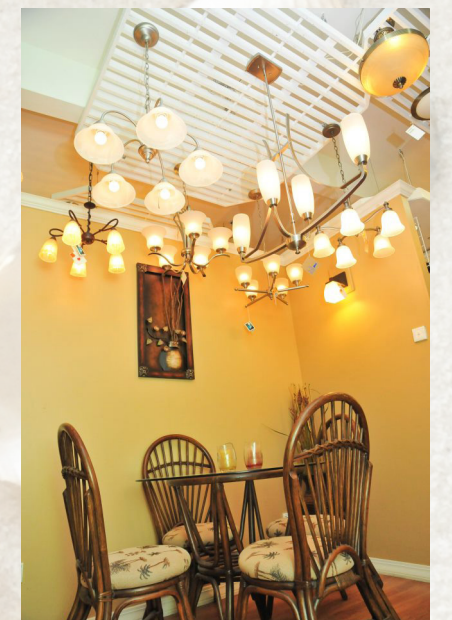
local market and made the decision to optimize on a new approach. Together with his two sons and a former staff member, he established Southern Electrical.”

From conception, the mindset was to create a Grenadian company for the Grenadian people; a company that delivered the highest quality service and products; the kind of products Mr. Duncan, himself, would like to buy. As a renowned electrician in the region, he realized the niche was in providing professional and specialized services to the customers he served, and liaising with suppliers to provide products fitting the customers’ specifications, as well as industry standards.

Gooding adds, “Basically, that is the genesis

of our company. Today, we continue to provide our customers these services to an even greater extent. The evolution since then has given rise to partnership with other stakeholders and policy makers to reduce energy costs. And that is what drives Southern Electrical today.”

At Southern Electrical where customers always come first, savvy business sense, knowledge of the industry and keen interest in technological advancements are proving invaluable for the continued success and



growth of the family business.

Gooding explains the intricacies of product sourcing: “Going through the Caribbean, we have 220 volts in some places, following the British standard, and 110 volts in places like Trinidad, where they’re following U.S. standards. Grenada is a 220-volts market, so a large quantity of our products come from England – all the switching, the accessories, things like that. We do bring some product out of the U.S., some out of China, countries like Puerto Rico, and the other CARICOM members like Trinidad.”

Southern Electrical Company’s retail location is a popular destination for homeowners and contractors, alike. The Lighting Showroom on the second floor features contemporary lighting fixtures, ceiling fans, and innovative lighting solutions for kitchen, living room, bedroom, bathroom, outdoor, and





AT A GLANCE SOUTHERN ELECTRICAL COMPANY LTD.

WHAT: Leading electrical and lighting supplier in Grenada

WHERE: Grand Anse, St. George's, Granada

WEBSITE: www.segrenada.com

garden illumination. Supported by all the major lighting manufacturers, such as Elgo, Kichler, Progress Lighting, and Seagull Lighting, Southern Electrical supplies the most sought-after product available today.

The ground floor of the store focuses on hardware necessary for electrical installations in residential, industrial, and commercial applications. Electrical wiring accessories (switches, sockets, distribution panels and breakers, isolators, transformers, etc.), tools, small electrical appliances, and a nut and bolt center are all available, along

with a friendly, knowledgeable staff ready to impart expert advice. "We currently employ 20 full-time persons, with an occasional need for four to five persons, part-time," says Gooding. "We have just one retail location in the capital city; however, we do provide services and products to our neighboring islands of Carriacou and Petit Martinique. Our team visits the clients there; we communicate by cellular phone; we transport goods by a local ferry. So, we do have that connection outside mainland Grenada."

Southern Electrical also has a wholesale division as a separate arm of the business, where project-size sales are handled. "For example," says Gooding, "if there is a new development going on – a new hotel, or apartment building, or school – we provide specialized service to the contractor and the developer. Not only from a retail front, but more from a technical, wholesale, direct-to-the-contractor type of sales and service, Southern Electrical basically project manages the supply of materials to the customer, supports him in the technical aspects of the documentation,

the drawings, materials specified in the orders; that's our project side. Then we have the wholesale side, where Southern Electrical simply sells products at trade prices to other retailers. And that's reciprocal, as well." Three important factors differentiate Southern Electrical from competitors: Customer service; expert advice. "Part of our branding is 'Best Value', 'Quality Products', and the last part of that is 'Expert Advice'. We always talk about the product, the uses of the product, with the customer. So, even if he already has a certain



item, we direct him to features that provide a better solution. We're focused on selling the customer what they want, as opposed to somebody walking in the door and merely picking up something."

First to market; being on the cutting edge of technology. "It's important to keep up with what's new. Energy savings, energy-efficient products, developing our own brand with factories and printing companies overseas. We have a branded product on the shelves that belongs to us."

Positioning the brand and the company in the market, in such a way that the contractor doesn't feel threatened that Southern Electrical

is competing with him on a project.

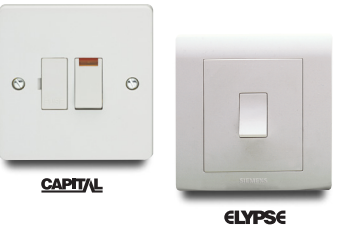
Gooding acknowledges, "We're an electrical and lighting hardware company. Two other competitors on the island just specialize in electrical, but they are also contractors. When you have a small island like Grenada - 100,000 people - there may be 55 contractors. One of the ways we separate ourselves is that we have never gone into the contracting business. This was part of Mr. Duncan's vision for Southern Electrical: The contractors never have to be concerned about purchasing goods from a company that may be competing for a contract or job. So, he stayed out of the contracting business and just became a supplier. It's separating



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ourselves by not being competitive to our main customer – which is the contractor."

Southern Electrical is avidly exploring new product technologies to improve energy efficiency, as well as complementary services for existing products. They believe this is critical to maximize return and enhance their service to customers. Other initiatives include expanding on their non-compete relationship with contractors; cooperative agreements with suppliers; extending their geographic market; and honing prices and strategies.

Gooding adds, "Some of our shorter-term expansions would be setting up showrooms in homes, specifically for targeted clients. When it comes to lighting, helping clients see how the products would fit into the different projects. Planning for the longer term is on the plate for



discussion this year with our Executive team and the Board.” (Southern Electrical is a privately held company with a Board of Directors.)

“Freight and related costs is a key issue for our company, especially in a small, competitive market,” she continues. “Going forward, we will work on strategies and forge partnerships that will help to lower cost and make the goods more affordable to our customers. Another point is the government’s ability with the utilities to get on the solar alternative energy bandwagon – which we can also benefit from as suppliers and with social responsibility in terms

of providing alternative energy types of products.”

The customer base for Southern Electrical is the corporate section of Grenada, hotels, the university, contractors, and homeowners. “The dynamism of our brand speaks for itself: ‘Best Value, Quality Products, Expert Advice.’ We’ve been around for 20 years, we’re not a fly-by-night. Our products have gone through the ringer, so we recognize what’s good or not, we know what makes sense, and what’s applicable to our market, which is quite unique.”

Then, there’s the expert advice. “You may come to the store with a request, but you just don’t know

what you’re looking for. This is not a D-I-Y, where you come in and if it’s not on the shelf, too bad. This is a place where we have the technical knowledge and flexibility to get you what you need, and you walk out the door a happy customer.

“We are always sitting on the technological edge. Given today’s global interest in climate stabilization, we’re focused on energy-efficient products. That’s one of the pin-points of sourcing for us; what’s hottest in solar capability that’s available for us at 12 degrees north of the equator – we’re in a perfect position for it.”

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