

successful in winning that product from its competitor by offering better quality, technology and price."

Production occupies one-third of the new plant's floor space while the remainder is used for the warehousing of raw materials and finished goods.

The newest facility is being used as the central warehouse and shipping operation for all three plants. It receives all Halla's raw materials as well as finished goods from the other two plants for shipment to customers.

Centralizing the warehousing, shipping and receiving at the new plant has allowed Halla to close its other leased warehouse on the former Corby Distilleries property in Corbyville.

What makes Halla's success even more remarkable is that the manufacturer almost went out of business in 1992 when its sole customer closed its car manufacturing plant in Quebec.

The Korean company opened its Belleville operation at 440 College St. West — its first venture into North America. The parent company's decision to open here was tied in to the opening of the Hyundai car assembly plant in Bromont, Que. Halla supplied the Quebec plant — producers of the Sonata — with air conditioning systems.

The operation received components from Korea and its 20 workers assembled the

components and then shipped the final products to Quebec.

Adversity struck in 1992 when the Quebec manufacturing plant closed its doors.

Allen said Halla faced a difficult decision — close too or find other business. It chose the latter and Allen said the company has never looked back.

It began by supplying accumulators to Ford. Accumulators are components in air conditioning systems that act as a reservoir for the coolant and are shaped like a large soft drink bottle and are made of either steel or aluminum.

Halla produced 200,000 accumulators for the Ford Mustang that first year.

Today, the firm manufactures well over two million accumulators.

Over the past dozen years, Halla has introduced other product lines for its automotive customers, including the H-Vac modules and tube and hose underbody and underhood lines.

Allen said the company's ability to rebound from near disaster is a credit to its workforce.

"The team members are the number one asset and continue to be the key in Halla's success," he said. "Without their dedication and teamwork, we would have never survived, let alone grow into an industry leader...sales continue to be very strong and we look forward to continued growth."