



# INDUSTRY SHAKEUP:

## THE GROWING TREND OF ACQUISITIONS IN THE DOOR AND ACCESS INDUSTRY

By Vicki Jones, Editor

**T**he door and access industry is experiencing a significant transformation driven by a rising number of acquisitions. While acquisitions have long been a part of the industry, their frequency has notably increased in 2024.

Tom Wadsworth explored several past transactions in his D+AS article “The major company changes of 2010-2019.” He noted that by 2012 acquisitions of healthy companies had resumed and flourished throughout most of the decade. However, in 2019 acquisition activity slowed with only two small companies being purchased by larger firms. The slowdown continued in 2020 with no major acquisitions reported.

Recently, however, the trend has reversed with nine acquisitions announced over the past two years — five of which were in 2024 alone. In some cases, acquisitions can reshape the competitive

landscape and potentially create opportunities and/or challenges for dealers, customers, and manufacturers. In other cases, it’s business as usual for the company acquired.

In this article, we’ll focus on four major acquisitions that have made headlines in the past five months: Rytec/Nucor, Midland Garage Door/Martin Door, Action Industries/A-Tech, and Assa Abloy/Lawrence Doors [listed in order of transaction date].

### Exclusive interviews

We had the opportunity to sit down and interview senior management from Rytec, Midland Garage Door, Action Industries, and Lawrence Doors to learn more about how their deals came to fruition, what the future holds for the merged entities, and how these changes will ultimately benefit the dealers and customers who rely on their products and services.

## Notable acquisitions: 2020-2024

### 2020

- No major acquisitions featured in D+AS.

### 2021

- January: Raynor acquires Pro Door.
- November: The Duchess Group sells Chamberlain Group (CG) to Blackstone, the world’s largest alternative asset management firm. Controlled Products Systems Group, a subsidiary of CG, is included in the transaction.
- October: Nice acquires Nortek Security & Controls.

### 2022

- May: KKR investment firms sells C.H.I. Overhead Doors to Nucor, the largest steel producer in the United States, for \$3 billion.
- September: Garaga acquires North Central Door of Bemidji, Minn.

### 2023

- June: EMX Industries acquires Transponder & Receiver Engineered Systems (TRES), a U.S.-based designer and manufacturer of RFID readers and controls for the access control market.
- September: Iowa Spring acquires Northeast Spring; Safe-Way Garage Doors acquires 1st United Door Technologies.
- December: Businessman Michael Stitzlein acquires Denco Marketing Company.

### 2024

- May: The family behind Garaga acquires Novatech Group, Canada’s largest patio door company and a major player in the entry door manufacturing industry.
- June: Nucor Corporation acquires Rytec Corporation.
- July: Midland Garage Door acquires Martin Door.
- September: Action Industries acquires A-tech.
- November: Assa Abloy acquires Lawrence Doors.

# Acquisition #1: Nucor Corporation acquires Rytec Corporation

In July, Nucor Corporation, a manufacturer of steel and steel products with operating facilities in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico, acquired Rytec Corporation, a manufacturer and seller of high-speed, high-performance commercial doors.

The all-cash transaction is valued at \$565 million, which represents approximately 12.5 times Rytec's estimated 2024 EBITDA. Rytec has over 300 employees operating out of two manufacturing facilities in Wisconsin and produces high-speed Spiral rigid rolling doors for warehouses, manufacturing facilities, auto dealerships, and parking garages; as well as fabric doors for cold storage, food and beverage, manufacturing, and clean room applications.

## Q&A with Rytec Vice President of Marketing Michael Watkins

### D+AS: When was the deal finalized?

**Watkins:** The Rytec acquisition by Nucor was finalized on July 23, 2024.

### D+AS: How did the acquisition come about?

**Watkins:** Rytec's longstanding owner, Donald P. Grasso, decided to sell the company in late 2023. After a months-long period of selecting, vetting, and meeting with several high-profile companies and private equity firms, we found a mutual fit of culture, values, and vision for growth with Nucor Corporation.

### D+AS: What about the company culture or values of Rytec made them "a strong cultural fit" as mentioned in the PR?

**Watkins:** The cultural fit begins with Rytec and Nucor's belief that our teammates are the true value creators of our business. We both consider our teammates to be family, and that shared cultural value was extremely important in our discussions prior to the acquisition.

An important part of having teammates front and center is ensuring that each person who works for us goes home safely at the end of each shift. There is nothing more important than that. Both of our companies have a strong focus on safety and challenging ourselves to improve our safety performance every day. Our goal is to have zero injuries.

Finally, Rytec and Nucor both make investments with the long term in mind. We pick capital investment projects that will generate solid long-term returns for the business.



### D+AS: What does this mean for Rytec's management team and operations?

**Watkins:** Overall, the management team and operations will remain unchanged and operate the business as usual.

As the leading North American manufacturer of high-performance doors, Rytec teammates will continue to manage and improve upon manufacturing operations through its "Smart Factory" investments as well as participate in and pursue additional growth opportunities within and outside of Nucor. Also, Rytec will continue its strong focus on safety and contribute to Nucor's mission to become the "world's safest steel company."

### D+AS: Why should Rytec customers/dealers be excited about the acquisition?

**Watkins:** Dealers and end customers both stand to benefit from the acquisition. Existing Rytec dealers will now have the ability to bundle end

customer project opportunities. They will be able to quote and support both high-performance doors and sectional or rolling steel doors under the Nucor umbrella. This includes access to the C.H.I. Overhead Doors product line, as well as the Rytec high-performance portfolio.

### D+AS: How will Nucor's other businesses benefit?

**Watkins:** With Rytec now on board, multiple Nucor companies involved in steel structures, components, insulated panels, and other related products can offer even more comprehensive material supply and support. The expanded capability is especially beneficial for larger-scope projects.

### D+AS: Was entering the high-performance overhead door market always part of Nucor's long-term growth strategy?

**Watkins:** Nucor is a growth company. Part of its growth strategy is to expand into steel-related businesses outside of its core steelmaking operations.

Half of Nucor's products flow into the construction market, so the company is always looking for opportunities to further diversify and grow the value-added products it can offer customers in this market. Overhead doors were a natural fit and complemented Nucor's other steel products businesses, such as metal buildings, warehouse systems, and data center infrastructure.

### D+AS: Did the success of the C.H.I. acquisition motivate the Rytec acquisition?

**Watkins:** The success of the C.H.I. acquisition and the opportunities it created for Nucor definitely motivated our goals to expand the types of overhead door products Nucor could offer. Rytec's products, which target nonresidential construction, complement C.H.I.'s portfolio, which is geared more toward the residential construction market.

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Rytec's main headquarters in Jackson, Wis.



## Acquisition #2: Midland Garage Door acquires Martin Door

In July, Midland Garage Door announced the acquisition of Martin Door. Martin Door was founded in Santa Ana, Calif., by Leno Martin in 1936. The company, currently based in Salt Lake City, is known for offering high-quality garage doors and innovative designs, which will benefit from Midland Garage Door's extensive market.

Martin Door will continue to operate within Midland as an independent company. To ensure a seamless transition, all customer service, sales, and distribution will continue to operate normally, and both companies will maintain their current product offerings.

Founded in 1979, Midland Garage Door is a leading supplier of residential and commercial garage doors with facilities in Eden Prairie, Minn., Springfield, N.E., and West Fargo, N.D.

### Q&A with Director of Sales and Marketing Chad DeSmith

**D+AS: When did the Midland Garage Door/Martin Door transaction become finalized?**

**DeSmith:** On July 30, 2024.

**D+AS: How did the acquisition come about?**

**DeSmith:** The acquisition came about as part of our strategic plan for growth. Martin was an ideal partner to help accomplish this.

**D+AS: What motivated Midland's decision to expand?**

**DeSmith:** We recognize that expanding our market presence to the West not only strengthens our footprint but also aligns with our long-term goal of delivering greater value to more customers.



**D+AS: What does this acquisition mean for Martin Door and Midland?**

**DeSmith:** Together, we are stronger and better positioned to serve our customers. While operational changes may be implemented to optimize our combined efforts, both companies will continue to uphold their core values and commitment to excellence. The partnership not only broadens our market reach but also fosters innovation and service capabilities that benefit everyone involved.

**D+AS: Why should Midland and Martin Door dealers be excited about the acquisition?**

**DeSmith:** Our customers will have access to a diverse range of products. Ultimately, our combined knowledge and resources position

us to deliver greater value, more products, and the best service to more customers.

Dealers should be excited because it promises new opportunities for growth. The combined strength of the two respected brands creates a stronger presence in the industry.

**D+AS: Any new product news or collaborative projects underway?**

**DeSmith:** We are in the early stages of learning about each company's strengths. Stay tuned for upcoming announcements as we continue to develop solutions that serve our customers.

**D+AS: How will the acquisition be beneficial to the distribution of both companies' products?**

**DeSmith:** The combined distribution networks will enhance our efficiency and reach, allowing for service to a wider range of customers across different regions.

**D+AS: What are Midland's long-term goals?**

**DeSmith:** Our goal is to bring more value to our customers without compromising our core values of caring for people, delivering quality products, and providing outstanding service.

As Midland Founder Ralph Nordick said, "Business is spelled P-E-O-P-L-E," and this principle continues to guide us as we move forward together, ensuring that people remain at the heart of everything we do.

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Midland's headquarters in West Fargo, N.D.



## Acquisition #3: Action Industries acquires A-tech

In September, Action Industries, a leading provider of garage door weather seals and parts, acquired A-tech, a distributor of overhead garage door products. The acquisition enhances Action's distribution capabilities and service for its North American dealer network. A-tech's primary distribution centers in Pennsylvania and Missouri will complement Action's five existing locations, which will improve delivery times and provide access to key markets.

The acquisition is part of Action's growth strategy achievements in 2024 following the acquisition of Coach House Accents, development of new commercial window systems, expansion of Flex Brush manufacturing capabilities, and exclusive distribution of Zap operators.

### Q&A with Action Industries CEO Marc Calcaterra

**D+AS: When did the Action Industries/A-tech transaction become finalized?**

**Calcaterra:** On September 30, 2024.

**D+AS: How did the acquisition come about?**

**Calcaterra:** The executive teams of both companies have been connected in the industry for many years. The timing was right this year, on both sides, for a discussion to happen and a partnership to form. Key additions to Action's leadership team in 2024 have supported a timely post-acquisition integration while allowing Action to continue its growth trajectory.

Chief Commercial Officer Scott Trainor has unified sales and customer care teams. Vice President of Supply Chain Ty Shirley has further developed product procurement, warehouse, and logistics operations. Chief Marketing Officer Kurt Krejny has focused on building Action's brand and enhancing the B2B online ordering experience.

**D+AS: What about A-tech's products, company values, and/or culture made them a good fit for Action Industries?**

**Calcaterra:** We highly valued A-tech's reputation in the industry along with having a mutually shared focus on quality products and timely customer care. A-tech's sales team and defined territories, order fulfillment and customer care, extensive logistics experience, and strong product access to national manufacturers were also important factors that aligned with our growth objectives.



Additionally, the long-term trust that A-tech has built with their residential dealer customer base is complementary to the strong relationships Action has with its commercial dealer customers.

**D+AS: Will management and/or operations change for A-tech? If yes, how?**

**Calcaterra:** Yes; we are in the midst of driving further innovation for dealers with the combined entity. A-tech warehouses and transport trucks will be carrying Action products and will soon be available to A-tech customers (including local warehouse pick-ups). A-tech products are now available to Action dealer customers.

Shipping routes will now include Action customers. Both teams are actively collaborating, and the companies' technology systems are undergoing integration.

**D+AS: How has Action Industries expanded in geographical reach with this acquisition?**

**Calcaterra:** Action now has seven locations across the United States, including our headquarters in Ohio and distribution centers in Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Missouri, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin. The acquisition has allowed us to further expand our footprint into key markets like the Northeast and Western states.

**D+AS: Will the ordering process change for A-tech customers/dealers?**

**Calcaterra:** A-tech's existing customers/dealers will be able to place orders through Action Industries' website, streamlining the online ordering process. Plus, approved dealers will have access to more products and shipping programs.

**D+AS: How will both A-tech and Action Industries customers/dealers benefit from the acquisition?**

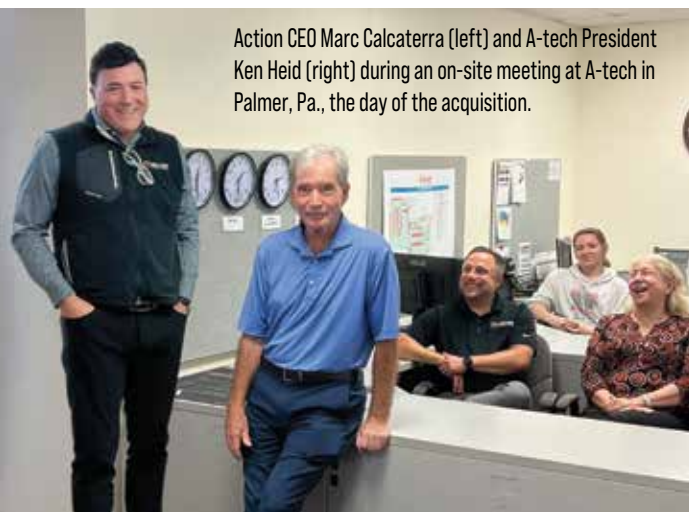
**Calcaterra:** Integrating A-tech's network and trusted transport fleet will help us deliver faster, better service. Our customers will benefit from the expanded and unified sales and customer care teams. Also, there will be smaller geographical territory assignments for regional account managers, which will allow for more focus on solution-based offerings and in-person visits with dealers.

**D+AS: Why should dealers be excited about the acquisition?**

**Calcaterra:** Dealers should be excited about the addition of A-tech's logistics operations, transport fleet, and timely white-glove delivery of products for stocking programs — along with Action's expanded product offering for A-tech customers — including U.S.-made weather seals.

This partnership strengthens Action's dealer relationships by aiming to reduce lead times, and A-tech's customers will gain access to Action's extensive product line, including U.S.-made weather seals.

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Action CEO Marc Calcaterra (left) and A-tech President Ken Heid (right) during an on-site meeting at A-tech in Palmer, Pa., the day of the acquisition.



## Acquisition #4: Assa Abloy acquires Lawrence Doors

In November, Assa Abloy acquired Lawrence Doors, a manufacturer of rolling doors, grills, and counter shutters. Founded in 1925, the California company is known for its high-quality steel and aluminum rolling door products.

Lawrence Doors primarily operates through dealers in the West and Southwest regions of the United States while also selling directly to contractors and end users through its six retail branches located in Southern California and Nevada.

The company has a diverse portfolio of brands tailored to specific product categories: Lawrence Doors for general doors, Pacific Rolling Door for specialty doors, Alumatek for closures, and Criterion for grilles.

### Q&A with Lawrence Doors Product Manager Steve Hahn

**D+AS: When did the Assa Abloy/Lawrence Doors transaction become finalized?**

**Hahn:** On November 1, 2024.

**D+AS: How did the acquisition come about?**

**Hahn:** As owners Paul Lawrence and Paul Freberg considered the future without a 4th generation succession in place, they explored options to ensure that the near 100-year legacy of Lawrence Doors could continue.

**D+AS: What motivated the decision to sell and/or Assa Abloy's decision to acquire Lawrence Doors?**

**Hahn:** The primary motivation to sell was as I explained above. As far as the acquisition was concerned, I believe a thriving business with strong, experienced leadership and an extensive rolling door product line, further supported by multiple service centers and a well-established dealer network, were very attractive to Assa Abloy.

# ASSA ABLOY

# LAWRENCE DOORS

**D+AS: What does the acquisition mean for Lawrence Doors' customers, dealers, and employees?**

**Hahn:** I see the acquisition as a positive move offering a bright future. It is essentially "business as usual." There are no visible changes planned that should negatively impact current customers, dealers, or employees – and hopefully they will all benefit from improvements that I expect will occur. We are still Lawrence Doors and manufacturing the Lawrence Doors product line, but now with additional resources to help us be even better.

**D+AS: How will Assa Abloy customers potentially benefit from the acquisition?**

**Hahn:** The acquisition will provide Assa Abloy customers with a new source for their rolling door products. I expect we will be expanding the product line and making modifications to some current products to better accommodate their customers' needs in different markets.

**D+AS: Lawrence Doors has a long history in the industry spanning nearly 100 years. Why now? Why Assa Abloy?**

**Hahn:** The timing seemed right as a great opportunity to sell presented itself when it did. Assa Abloy acquires strong, healthy companies that can continue operating essentially as-is and retains them in their portfolio long-term.

Lawrence Doors remaining intact long-term was an important goal that the Pauls were striving to achieve in their selection of a buyer. And it's a good fit overall. We had something they wanted. Plus, being acquired by an entity with vast experience in related industries potentially offers a lot of benefits.

**D+AS: Will you (or anyone at Lawrence Doors) remain involved in any capacity?**

**Hahn:** I will continue to be involved in some capacity for some time as the current upper management team and full staff are being retained. ■

