

“THE DUCT-FREE ZONE”

By Gerry Wagner, Vice President HVAC Technical Training
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I have a little fun with the fact that most inverter mini splits come from the Asian markets, Japan, Thailand and China for example. In my training events, I will tell my audience that I'm going to let them in on a BIG secret...one that my employer and the host distributor doesn't want me to expose...I build it up so my audience thinks I'm about to divulge something unseemly or scandalous!

What I then tell them is that the GREE mini split product comes from China. I get a bit demonstrative and say, “can we get over this please?”

Hey look...when I was a kid, a product coming from Japan or China was not considered a good thing. Products produced in the Asian markets back in the 60's and 70's were considered inferior...and frankly, many times they were.

Many of you know that I have two passions outside of my work...cars and guitars!

My sister, after graduating from college and securing her first post-graduate job, purchased a brand new 1972 Datsun 1200. I was eleven years old in 1972 but already a bonafide motorhead! I have to tell you, I thought she was NUTS! Why would anyone buy a Japanese car? My perception of Japanese cars at the time was not positive...and I'm being polite!

Guitars originating from the Asian markets had the same stigma. Sears & Roebuck and Montgomery Ward, catalog distributors back in the day, sold guitars under the Silvertone name that were actually made by Teisco or Kawai of Japan. No real aspiring guitar-god back in the 70's wanted anything

less than an American made Fender or Gibson!

Last month I had the opportunity to travel to Zhuhai, China and visit the GREE Electric Appliance Company, the people who make the GREE mini split product.

I have to admit, before leaving for the trip I had some preconceived ideas of what I would see there that date back to my elementary education in Catholic grammar school. Let's just say what the nuns taught me back in the day about China was less than complimentary...again, I'm being polite.

I have been to many manufacturing facilities here in the US...mostly hydronic product production facilities like boiler foundries and most of them are typical in their appearance and function. The GREE campus...and that's what it is...a campus, was anything but typical!

The production line was absolutely antiseptic...when someone says, “it was so clean you can eat off the floor, well, it applies to the GREE factory!

Cleanliness is nice, but quality is how we will ultimately judge a product and I have been a fan of the GREE product long before I ever became a trainer for their product here in the US. Now, after witnessing for myself, the attention paid to design, production and quality of the GREE product, I am further convinced of its superiority.

I posted some pictures of the GREE facility on LinkedIn...just go to my LinkedIn profile where it says ACTIVITY and click on SEE ALL and then scroll down until you see the pictures of the production line. That post along with the post just below

it, a picture of me with Madame Dong Mingzhu, Chairwoman of GREE, have been viewed more times than any other of my posts...and indication to me that I'm not the only one impressed with what I saw.

...and lets not ignore the fact that GREE is run by a woman! A company with sales in 2017 exceeding 22 billion US dollars, ranked #294 by Forbes Global 2000 Companies...is run by a woman! Pretty progressive for any country, nonetheless China!

GREE's mantra is “made in China, loved by the world.” You know what? I think they are right!

Takamine Guitars, named for Mount Takamine in Sakashita, Japan have become some of the most respected and widely played acoustic guitars on the planet.

Nissan and Toyota have become two of the highest selling car companies worldwide.

...and inverter mini splits made by Fujitsu, Panasonic and Daikin of Japan as well as GREE and Midea of China have become recognized as some of the highest quality, technologically advanced, climate control products in the world!

I'm sorry Sister Mary Ellen, but the times, they are a changin'...

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