



National Minority Supplier Development Council

OneSource Distributors, LLC



FORTUNE magazine

PARTNERS IN GROWTH

Minority-owned companies have become a critical link in corporate America's supply chain.

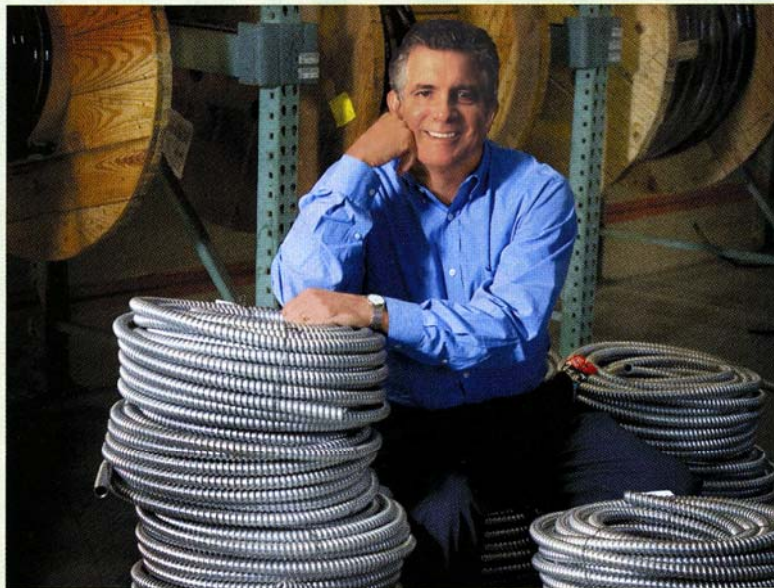
• Powering America •

ROBERT ZAMARRIPA, OneSource Distributors

Robert Zamarripa was living in San Diego in the early 1980s, working for a Los Angeles-based electrical products company and enjoying a nice life. In 1983 the company was sold to a European concern, at which point he decided to leave. "I didn't like their approach or how they treated people," he recalls. With some savings and the kind of optimism afforded most folks in their mid-20s, he started OneSource Distributors.

Now, more than 20 years later, it's clear Zamarripa made the right decision. His company, which provides electrical and electronic automation products to utilities, industrial companies, hospitals, universities, and municipalities, had sales of \$214 million last year. Customers include Disney Corp., Disneyland, Hewlett-Packard, P&G, and Sony.

When Zamarripa was starting out, major corporations hadn't yet latched onto the practice of shrinking their supplier base. "As a small company we were able to get contracts with big companies because we did what we promised we would do: deliver the product on time, at the agreed-upon price, and we always returned phone calls," he says.



Back in the early 1980s, the idea that he was bidding for business as a Hispanic-owned firm wasn't on the radar, either. These days, it's likely to be an asset when OneSource bids for business with utilities since Zamarripa says they are the customers that have the most formalized minority supplier processes in place. "But once we get in the door, we have to earn that business," he says. "Nothing is just given to us."