Special-Lite®



SELECT Hinges® Headquarters

Location:
Kalamazoo, MI

Application:
Manufacturing, Corporate Office

Install Type:
New Construction

Products:
LiteSpace® Aluminum Framing System
Interior Aluminum Framed Glass Doors (SLI-15)
Hybrid FRP Doors
Aluminum Flush Doors

Overview
The story of SELECT Hinges and Special-Lite is one of shared history, aligned values, and a partnership built on quality. SELECT Hinges, known for its precision-engineered continuous hinges, and Special-Lite, a leader in high-performance doors, frames, and bathroom partitions, share more than just customers. Their roots are intertwined, and their products complement each other. Together, they have helped shape the commercial building landscape in their home state of Michigan and beyond.

History
The origin of SELECT Hinges is a direct result of industry disruption in the 1980s. When another company acquired a well-known hinge manufacturer, many independent representatives who carried those hinges also represented Special-Lite. These reps voiced a clear market need: a high-quality continuous hinge to fill the void.

Grant Young, now the owner of SELECT Hinges, and Henry L. Upjohn II, known for his engineering precision at Special-Lite, recognized an opportunity. With their combined expertise in aluminum extrusion and anodizing, they set out to develop a hinge that was not just a substitute but an improvement.

Two groundbreaking innovations emerged from their collaboration.

SELECT introduced hinges with exact hole patterns. Unlike previous methods where hinges were cut and drilled post-production—leading to inconsistent hole placement— SELECT'S accurate templating ensured that doors and frames could be prepped with confidence. A hinge installed decades ago could still be replaced today with a perfect fit.

SELECT further distinguished itself by anodizing hinges after drilling and slotting, rather than before. This critical step ensured that even the bearing slots and fastener holes received a hard, smooth anodized finish, enhancing durability and performance. It's a detail that still sets SELECT Hinges apart today.

By the mid-1990s, the companies amicably charted separate paths, with Young taking full ownership of the hinge business and Upjohn focusing on doors with Special-Lite. Despite this, the connection between the companies remained strong—figuratively and, for a time, physically. Until 1999, SELECT Hinges operated out of a temporary office in the parking lot of Special-Lite's Decatur facility. Kimberly Payne, SELECT's longest-serving employee, was hired in 1998 after her interview in that very office.

Demonstrating a shared commitment to durability and long service life, a 25-million-cycle test was successfully completed using SELECT's hinge and Special-Lite's Hybrid FRP Door (SL-17). Both are reminders of the companies' shared roots and the close culture that defines both organizations.





Shared Culture, Values, and Impact
Today, the relationship between SELECT Hinges and Special-Lite continues to grow. The SL-11HD is one of the hardware models Special-Lite stocks as part of its factory-installation program.

When SELECT started planning for their new facility in 2017, they turned to Special-Lite for their door, frame, interior, and partition solutions. Interior aluminum framing and doors were used to create sleek new offices for management, sales, and customer service. A bifold window, unique to Special-Lite, helps bring fresh air to their production facility (on the days Michigan's weather cooperates). Split finishes offer rugged durability on the production-facing side and a sleek aluminum finish on the exterior.

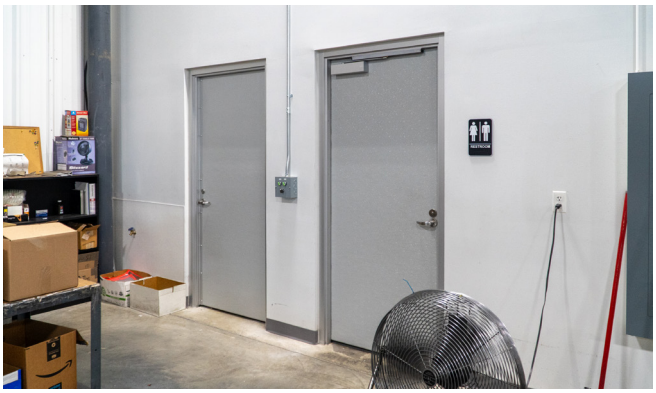
Other than Special-Lite's corporate headquarters, SELECT's facility is (to date) the only facility in the world where every door, frame, bathroom partition, and window is made by Special-Lite.

SELECT Hinges proudly produces its hinges in Michigan, sourcing virtually all materials, down to the fasteners, from within the United States. This is mirrored in Special-Lite's reputation for high-quality, American-made doors.

"We mirror the attention to detail, high quality, and customer-first mentality that Special-Lite is known for. It's in our DNA—we started under the same roof," Chris Orme, U.S. and Canadian Sales Director, said.

Orme's three decades in the door, frame, and hardware industry includes time at a wholesaler and as a manufacturer's representative for The Eisen Group, have made him well-versed in both product lines. He also has a deep understanding of how these companies complement each other.

SELECT Hinges and Special-Lite share a legacy rooted in innovation, quality, and community. From a small temporary office to world-class facilities, from early technical breakthroughs to modern-day projects, the two companies have grown together—and continue to offer products with superior durability, attention to detail, and quality.









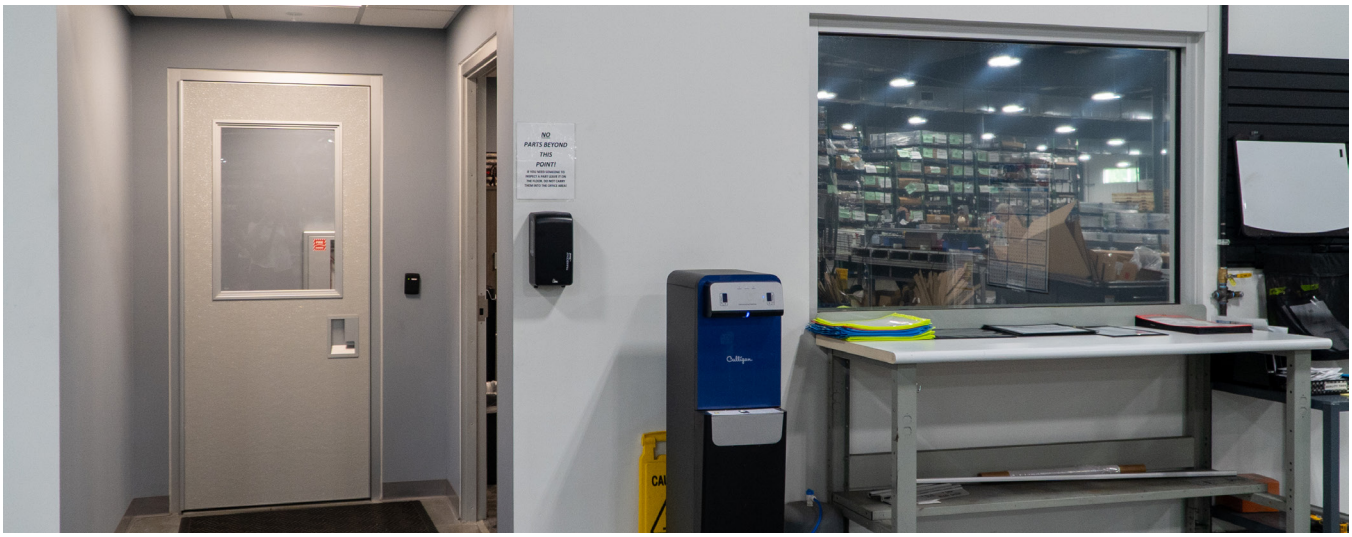

SELECT HINGES™


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NOTICE


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NO
PARTS BEYOND
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