



**PIONEERS OF PINLESS
LEADER OF LIFETIME WARRANTIES**
THE ORIGINAL PINLESS LEGACY BRAND

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Amish Country Inventor Goes All-In on Pinless Reel Trailers

Lancaster, Pennsylvania *"Sometimes, you get lucky and the stars really do align, handing you a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity that has the potential to evolve into a nationwide brand,"* says Noel Smith, president and founder of Reelstrong Utility Fleet. With 12 years of experience as a fabricator and a background in welding and mechanical work while working for an underground directional driller during college, Smith found himself consistently grappling with welding, repairing, and replacing reel-securing pins on reel trailers. Recognizing the widespread nature of this issue after surveying numerous linemen and contractors, he realized it was far from isolated. In fact, cable reels were dislodging on the road frequently, leading to major accidents across America due to reel securing pins coming loose. This realization sparked a big idea for Smith.

At 36 years old and on the brink of graduating college with just one class remaining, Smith, a late-bloomer, faced a pivotal decision: either wait an entire summer to finish college or seize the opportunity to start a company called Reelstrong before someone else beat him to the punch. Ultimately, choosing not to finish college, Smith immediately set out to seek investors to help develop a "PINLESS" line of reel trailers. With the initial seed investment secured, he rolled up his sleeves and got to work.

"Lancaster County, PA, was a true godsend to Reelstrong," Smith states. "It was 2006-2010, in the middle of the recession, so my investors were conservative but promised to keep investing if they saw results as I progressed." With no manufacturing facility in place, Smith had to bootstrap the project from the very start. This is where the Amish community played a crucial role, for which Smith remains deeply grateful.

"In the beginning, it was just me, with no engineer or CAD technician to bring my designs to life, and no shop to build my prototypes," says Smith. "I had to rely on a combination of general engineers and Amish CAD operators and manufacturers to bring my ideas to fruition." Notably, Jake King, an Amish-born individual from Pleasant View Welding, played a pivotal role in assisting with ideas and constructing the initial prototypes. Despite lacking a shop or an engineer on staff, Smith persevered.

"I quickly discovered that the Amish make exceptional engineers and product designers," says Smith. "Despite their lack of exposure to advanced technologies, their resourcefulness, driven by a need to continually experiment and devise solutions on the farm with limited resources, makes them one of the best creative resources I've encountered in the mechanical equipment field. The

Amish truly are a secret weapon in engineering that the world needs to recognize.” This revelation led to a fruitful partnership, with Jake King now owning Belmont Trailers in Leola, PA, and manufacturing all of Reelstrong's overflow trailers for quicker lead times to customers.

"Reelstrong has been in business for 18 years, and Mr. King holds a special place in his heart for a company he helped get off the ground," says Smith. "I'm proud to know Jake, and I feel fortunate to have grown up in Lancaster and have firsthand access to the gem the Amish community is and has been to our company. We wouldn't be here without them. Their honesty, integrity, pride in all they do, and quality-driven nature are truly a blessing."

The company's future remains “real strong” as the team operates from its new, significantly larger corporate headquarters and production facility, complemented by Belmont's overflow assistance. With this strategic positioning, Reelstrong is primed to effectively market its Pinless equipment to a wider national audience.