



Von Duprin
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Founded: 1908

Von Duprin was started in 1908, when it introduced the first “panic release bar” in response to a need for protecting life safety while providing security, a purpose that still guides the firm today. Indianapolis hardware salesman Carl Prinzler missed a scheduled visit to Chicago’s Iroquois Theatre in 1903, escaping a disaster in which 594 people perished when the “fireproof” theater burned. Obsessed with the needless loss of lives, Prinzler was determined to solve the problem of public buildings that often turned into death traps when doors were locked. Prinzler teamed up with his neighbor, Henry DuPont, an architectural engineer, who invented the first working device. The initial model, introduced in 1908, was marketed by Vonnegut Hardware Company under the name Von Duprin, a contraction of Vonnegut, DuPont and Prinzler.

The popular 88 Series crossbar exit devices still manufactured by Von Duprin have similar characteristics to the original design, although significant engineering changes have been made.

Currently, Von Duprin manufactures the widest range of exit devices and outside trim operations, including rim-type and mortise lock, surface and concealed vertical rod, fire-rated and several electrical options. The company’s products are commonly found in schools, hospitals, airports and sports facilities. Although the primary market is North America, Von Duprin products can be found in buildings all over the world. Locally, the company’s products can be found at famous buildings such as the Indianapolis International Airport and Conseco Fieldhouse.

Von Duprin was located in downtown Indianapolis from 1908 until 1986, when the business relocated to its current home on the east side of Indianapolis. In 1972, Von Duprin was purchased by Ingersoll Rand. Von Duprin remains a business unit in the Security Technologies Sector of Ingersoll Rand.

