

Building the 25 - A Slightly Biased Insider's View

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In 1975, the Oak Ridge contract for a 25 MV tandem accelerator was the only game in town for electrostatic accelerator manufacturers. For NEC, it provided the bridge from the days of 8 MV, 12 MV, and 14 MV accelerators for basic research to the 1980's, when the rapid growth of a new market for small accelerators for applied uses began. We attempt to separate first hand experiences from subsequent myths by recounting incidents in the negotiations, design, construction, and testing of the NEC Model 25URC, the world's largest electrostatic accelerator. From the simple situations to the sublime, from the big picture to the details, and from standing in control to running in chaos, we tried to keep in mind that there are no problems, only challenges and sometimes opportunities. Underlying our Oak Ridge experiences, we remain grateful for the full cooperation, broad experience, and friendliness of many persons associated with the laboratory.