The RUST Engineering Company was formed in 1905 in Birmingham, Alabama as a partnership among three brothers, S.M. Rust, E. J. L. Rust, and E. M. Rust. In the beginning years of the company, they sold and installed a patented water-tube boiler invented by an older brother, E. G. Rust.

RUST Engineering Company was incorporated in 1920 with headquarters remaining in Birmingham. Over the years, RUST continued to build and install steam plants, generating equipment and chimneys to serve their clients; however, most of the contract work was in the field of heavy industrial plant design and construction.

To date, more than 25,000 contracts have been completed for more than 9,000 clients in 40 industries working in 48 states and 22 countries. Two major projects are the tobacco processing cigarette manufacturing plant for R.J. Reynolds Tobacco Company and the seamless steel pipemill for U.S. Steel. Other major projects in Alabama include pulp and paper mill design for Hammermill Paper Company, Selma; Mead Corporation, Mahrt; MacMillan Bloedel, Pine Hill; and Champion International Corporation, Courtland. RUST also holds a five-year contract with Reynolds Metals located in Sheffield, Alabama to modernize their plants. RUST has been a leader in projects for both federal and local governments in areas such as energy, water, and wastewater treatment.

The Corporation withdrew from family ownership in 1967, when RUST became a division of Litton Industries. In 1972 the Corporation was acquired by Wheelabrator-Frye Inc., a firm specializing in air pollution control. In 1981 the acquisition of Pullman, Inc., by RUST’s parent company, Wheelabrator-Frye, resulted in consolidation of RUST’s Northeast Regional Operations with the Swindell operations in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. It was also during this same year that the RUST Engineering Company became a major operating division of Kellogg-RUST Inc. of Houston, Texas.

In 1982 RUST International Corporation was formed as a consolidation of all operating divisions formerly associated with The RUST Engineering Company. Under the new organization, The RUST Engineering Company became a wholly-owned subsidiary of RUST, providing construction and construction management services.

In the ensuing years, RUST has developed into a multi-disciplinary entity providing services in refuse-to-energy, environmental, municipal and wastewater treatment management. Ranked fifth in the top 400 U.S. contractors by Engineering News Record in 1988, the total installed cost of all projects exceeded $2.7 billion. Estimated bookings for 1989 are in the $3 billion range.

RUST International’s commitment to the state of Alabama is exemplified by its hiring more than 700 new employees in 1988 with 300 moves to the Birmingham area. Many of RUST’s engineers serve on the faculties of institutions of higher education in the state.