

2020

Salute to Industry Northeast Indiana Manufacturing Awards

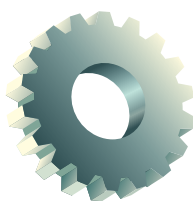
presented by **kpc** MEDIA GROUP INC.

**Top Manufacturers
in our Region**

**Kelley School of Business:
Report on Advanced
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Manufacturing**

**Small Manufacturer
Highlights**

**Facts on Northeast
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MANUFACTURING AWARDS**



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Welcome

Welcome to the inaugural "Salute to Industry Manufacturing Awards" and breakfast, presented by KPC Media Group, Inc., publisher of Greater Fort Wayne Business Weekly.

Readers of our company's regional business journal, as well as KPC Media's 12 other newspapers and news websites in Northeast Indiana, nominated and then voted for a long list of outstanding manufacturers in a number of categories who we are recognizing in this special publication. We had outstanding reader participation in this exciting new endeavor, and we thank everyone who got involved.

The importance of manufacturing to our region and our state cannot be overstated. Indiana is a national leader in the concentration of wages and employees in manufacturing, with 7 of the 12 counties in Northeast Indiana in the top 3% or 4% of all counties in the U.S. with a strong manufacturing base! Just think what this

means when we talk about "Made in America."

In the most recent data available, total Indiana output from manufacturing was \$102.09 billion, an increase of 29% from 2008. In addition, there were an average of 542,000 manufacturing employees in the state in 2018, with an average annual compensation of \$77,234.69. By product area, leading the way were chemical products, motor vehicles and parts, primary metals, fabricated metal products, food, beverage and tobacco products, and machinery.

And we're an important part of U.S. exports, as well. In 2018, 46.95% of the products manufactured here headed to



Canada, followed by 32.83% going to Mexico. This helps create jobs in the state, with 24.7% of manufacturing employment stemming from exports.

Small businesses comprised 85% of all exporters in Indiana, in the most recent data available. All across our region, a number of smaller firms make great products and employ our residents, with many having expanded in the last few years. This movement of product also adds to the logistics employment in our area, when trucking, rail and the warehousing sector jobs are considered.

As the publisher of the Greater Fort Wayne

Business Weekly, founded in 2005, we felt it was important to bring manufacturers and political leaders together to talk about common issues, challenges and opportunities, and to tout the innovative and sustaining accomplishments of area manufacturers. Many of the companies you will read about in this publication sell their products around the world and attract outstanding managers and employees to our region to augment our workforce.

We salute our winners and hope this special publication provides information about companies you may not be aware of – their accomplishments, innovations, expansions, and focus on green initiatives – all of which contribute to making Fort Wayne and Northeast Indiana a great place to live and work.

Best regards,
Lou Phelps, CEO, KPC Media Group, Inc.
Fort Wayne and Kendallville, IN
loup Phelps@kpcmedia.com

The Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana is pleased and proud to Co-Sponsor this year's Northeast Indiana Manufacturing Awards.

We are not your typical Chamber of Commerce; our members are also members of the State Chamber, their fifteen local Chambers, and the same fifteen are members of ours. We all support the principles of free enterprise but what the Regional Chamber really does is to provide sustained advocacy for the private sector of Northeast Indiana in the Indiana Legislature. Our mission is to promote an environment in Northeast Indiana in which individuals, businesses, and communities thrive in a global economy. We focus upon the pillars of 21st Century Talent, World Class Infrastructure, and a Competitive Business Environment.

Each year we develop a legislative agenda by working with our Policy Committee and four sub-committees. Each item that we adopt and include in the agenda ties into our Pillars of Progress or specific Policy Priorities, including to invest in our rural communities and rural agri-business. After the Policy Committee recommends issues, our board of directors considers them and generally include them in our agenda.

Following this format, we succeeded in passage of sixteen agenda items and having them signed into law during the past two years. Our members have identified three issues that we collectively refer to as "The Next Big Thing" as essential to the long-term viability of the region. These three things are, Transitioning U.S. Route 30 from a "Free Flowing Highway" into a Freeway, Regional Connectivity or Rural High-Speed Internet, and Early Childhood Education.

Our advocacy includes the entire Indiana Legislature, but we work very closely with the twenty-one Senators and Representatives who serve the eleven counties of northeast Indiana. We contract with Catalyst Public Affairs Group, a highly thought of Advocacy Organization in the legislature. In partnership with the U.S. 30 Coalition, we retained retired Senator and former President Protempore of the Indiana Senate, David Long, to work with us on the U.S. 30 issue.

The Board of Directors of the Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana include twenty-one CEOs or senior executives reporting directly to the CEO of the Chamber member employing them. One-third of the board is elected for

three-year terms each year at our Annual Meeting. We do not have term limits, and we endeavor to have a private sector member from each of our counties.

The Regional Chamber of Northeast Indiana partners with the Northeast Indiana Regional Partnership, Greater Fort Wayne, Northeast Indiana Works, The LEDO Council, the Northeast Indiana Chamber Coalition, and the Mayor and Commissioner Caucus to develop an annual agenda supported by all. We encourage private sector businesses from every segment of the economy to join with us and add to our ability to advance policies that improve education and training, encourage creatively financed, sustainable, future-ready infrastructure, and tax, environmental, employment, and economic development policies that promote the Region and the State.

William S. Konyha
President & CEO



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Winners and semifinalists were nominated and voted for by the readers of KPC Media's 13 daily and weekly newspapers in northeast Indiana.

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WELCOME FROM CONGRESSMAN JIM BANKS

"Manufacturing is the bedrock of the Hoosier economy." Congressman Banks feels privileged to work with the most pro-industry, pro-growth president of his lifetime, President Donald Trump. Last year, Indiana manufacturing was responsible for nearly 27% of the state's gross domestic product and employed more than 16% of the state's workforce. Indiana has the highest concentration of manufacturing jobs in America, and by most metrics, is the best state in the country when it comes to manufacturing.

Congressman Banks recognizes that the coronavirus pandemic has caused and

continues to cause pain for many Americans and their businesses. For that reason, Banks voted in support of the CARES Act last March, which provided relief to Hoosier businesses and working families. Indiana has started to recover and Congressman Banks believes we are on our way to a full recovery with the state unemployment rate being two points lower than the national average.

On Jan. 3, 2017, Banks was elected to represent Indiana's Third Congressional District in the U.S. House of Representatives. Reelected to his second term in

2018, Banks serves on the House Armed Services Committee as well as the House Committees on Education and Labor, and Veterans' Affairs. Additionally, he chairs the Republican Study Committee's Budget & Spending Task Force, co-chairs the House Armed Services Committee's Future of Defense Task Force and sits on the Naval Academy's Board of Visitors.

Congressman Jim Banks is a native Hoosier, born and raised in Columbia City. He and his wife, Amanda, are the parents to three daughters, Lillian, Elizabeth, and Joann. They are honored to call Northeast Indiana home.



NORTHEAST INDIANA MANUFACTURING EMPLOYMENT AND PAYROLL

COUNTY	Year	Number of Establishments	Total Payroll	Number of Employees	Average Employee Payroll
Noble County, Indiana	2018	124	\$449,374,000	9,533	\$47,139
DeKalb County, Indiana	2018	122	\$618,960,000	10,496	\$58,971
LaGrange County, Indiana	2018	175	\$437,191,000	8,155	\$53,610
Steuben County, Indiana	2018	88	\$247,701,000	5,570	\$44,471
Whitley County, Indiana	2018	68	\$275,194,000	5,003	\$55,006
Wells County, Indiana	2017	52	\$123,822,000	2,888	\$42,875
Wabash County, Indiana	2018	55	\$147,477,000	2,582	\$57,117
Huntington County, Indiana	2018	61	\$183,704,000	4,120	\$44,588
Adams County, Indiana	2018	59	\$248,750,000	5,079	\$48,976
Kosciusko County, Indiana	2013	185	\$709,372,000	13,764	\$51,538
Elkhart County, Indiana	2018	806	\$3,935,262,000	82,465	\$47,720
Allen County, Indiana	2018	468	\$1,605,759,000	26,491	\$60,615
Northeast Indiana Totals		2,263	\$8,982,566,000	176,146	\$51,052.23

SOURCE: U.S. Census Dept. Latest Available Information.



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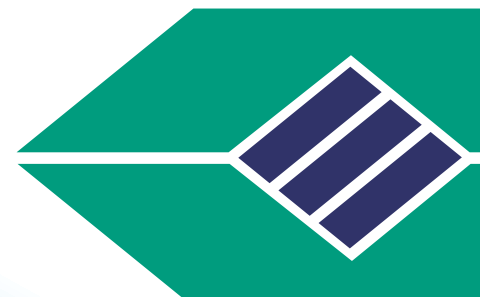
Northeast Indiana, Northwest Ohio and Southern Michigan is home to the highest quality manufacturers in the nation. Our regional manufacturing community drives local economies throughout this region.

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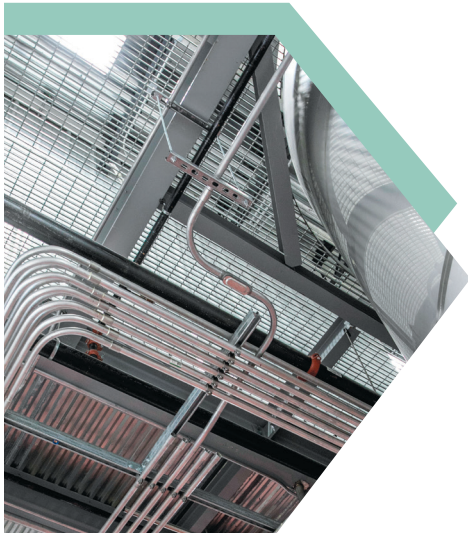


PROUD HISTORY

Votaw Electric has a proud history with over 50 years serving this region. We are looking forward to a successful future working with all of our manufacturing partners.

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- In practical, customer-conscious manner
- With least waste
- In orderly sequence
- Emphasizing quality at the source
- Maximizing value



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Northeast Indiana Manufacturer of the Year

COVINGTON BOX & PACKAGING, INC.



Covington Box is willing to do whatever it takes to meet the needs of its customers.

The business, located at 950 W. Union St., Waterloo, is KPC Media Group's Manufacturer of the Year.

"First and foremost, we're humbled and honored to even be in that category," said president and partner-owner Tony Fifer. "I guess it means to me that there are some people out there, be it customers or community people, who are aware of what Covington stands for and how we treat the employees."

"To me, it just means our philosophy and the way we treat workers as though they are part of this one team, and this team does what it takes to make sure we have customer satisfaction ... It tells me that it's working and it's being noticed."

The company produces corrugated boxes and containers, point-of-sale retail packaging, specialty-coated packaging for the poultry and baking industries, high-graphic printed boxes, die-cut packaging, packaging accessories, as well as hand-crafted corrugated caskets and direct cremation containers.

Most products are shipped to customers in Indiana, Ohio, Michigan and Illinois, but caskets and cremation containers go to customers throughout the country.

"We have a philosophy, when it comes to customer performance, to get the customer what they want when they want it," Fifer said. "I know that sounds vague and simple, but it's really the mentality of all the employees here that they will go the extra mile to make sure something gets done."

"Even if the customer calls the same day and needs packaging delivered to them, the employees here are very good at reacting and getting it done."

Covington Box was established in 1981 in

Ashley by Dean Kelly. Kelly, his son, Glen, Fifer and general manager Mike Rogers are owners and partners in the company.

About 10 years after its founding, Covington Box relocated to a 10,000-square-foot building in Waterloo that was once home to a seed company.

Since roots were established in Waterloo, additions have increased the size to 200,000 square feet. Covington Box also has a facility in Edgerton, Ohio. Eighty-five people work one shift at Waterloo and five people work one shift at Edgerton.

"When I started in 1986, we were doing maybe \$1 million dollars. Today, we're up around \$15 (million)-plus," Fifer said.

Covington Box is one of about 25 corrugated casket producers in the country. Covington's corrugated caskets are made in Edgerton.

"They're nice enough to be viewed in a

church or viewed anywhere for services," Fifer explained. "The whole casket can be buried in a vault like a traditional funeral or it can go directly into the retort for cremation." Like traditional caskets, corrugated caskets come with a blanket and pillow.

"What got us started in the funeral side of this business was about 25-30 years ago, we worked with a local funeral director to come up with a better cremation box that was easier for the funeral directors to load a body in the box," he said.

Last fall, the company made a \$950,000 investment, plus a USDA grant, for a solar energy field at its Waterloo facility, with the goal of reducing electricity costs.

The Waterloo property is 17 acres, and the solar field covers 1.4 acres. That solar field is providing 100% of Covington Box's electrical needs in Waterloo.

"It's literally cut our electric bill from \$7,500

a month to \$50 a month," Fifer said. "It's a huge cost savings with about a six-year payback."

"It was a large investment up front ... but we see the dollars that we put into that solar field that's going to allow us as a company to keep investing into the employees. It's going to allow us to invest into expanding the business and the premises if we need to, as well as continue to give back to the community."

The business continues to grow.

"We've seen growth almost every year," Fifer said. "If you think about it, anybody who produces something, it needs to be packed and protected in some way, shape or form. As long as manufacturers are out there producing, they're going to need us as packaging providers."

"The niche is, with our own tractors and trailers – we have our own trucking fleet – we can deliver to the customer the boxes within 24 hours notice of an order," he said. "I could see adding another facility in terms of being able to accommodate what the market needs."

Fifer sees paths to future growth.

"Everything costs money, so everybody's looking for lean manufacturing, which means, if they've got the extra floor space, they want to put machinery in there and producing their widget, whether it's in the baking industry, the poultry industry, the automotive industry or the medical industry."

"That's when we say, 'Instead of taking a truckload of packaging and have it sit on your floor, taking up floor space, you put that burden on us. We're going to build ahead to your production. We're not going to charge you for the packaging that's sitting on our floor, only what's shipped to you.'"

Story by Jeff Jones

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Semifinalists: Manufacturer of the Year

TENNECO

Tenneco is one of the world's leading designers, manufacturers and marketers of automotive products for original equipment and aftermarket customers, with 2019 revenues of \$17.45 billion and approximately 78,000 team members working at more than 300 sites worldwide.

The company's four business groups, Motorparts, Ride Performance, Clean Air and Powertrain, deliver technology solutions for diversified global markets, including light vehicle, commercial truck, off-highway, industrial, motorsport and the aftermarket.

Tenneco's history as a stand-alone entity began in 1999, when the current company emerged from a conglomerate formerly consisting of six businesses – shipbuilding, packaging, farm and construction equipment, gas transmission, automotive and chemicals. Through various public offerings, sales, spin-offs and mergers beginning in the 1980s, the company divested all of its businesses, leaving Tenneco Automotive as the remaining part of the original company. The automotive entities that remained, including a strong original equipment business and legendary aftermarket brands like Monroe and Walker, each with historic roots reaching back more than 100 years, showcase a rich history that helps define Tenneco today.

In 2005, the company rebranded its name to Tenneco, to better represent the expanding number of markets it served.



Located near Columbia City, Indiana, Micropulse has grown and evolved from modest beginnings based on the company's steadfast commitment to quality, integrity, and innovative approaches that provide customers with immediate and long-term value.

Micropulse was founded in 1988 by Brian Emerick near Columbia City, Indiana. As a new business, Micropulse earned partnerships with leading orthopedic companies built on trust, honesty, and open communication. Today, Micropulse remains privately held under Emerick's leadership with the same imperative values. Customers know they can trust Micropulse to be responsible, accountable, and committed. That is a reputation Micropulse has worked hard to earn and works every day to retain.

Quality is at the very core of Micropulse and it is the foundation of every product manufactured. It's embedded into every step of the process because at Micropulse, things are done right – the first time. A focused and specialized quality plan is determined before a project is initiated to ensure the end result is an instrument, implant, case and tray, or packaged product that customers can trust with certainty.

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Who We Are

At Graphic Packaging International, we produce the paper cup that held your coffee this morning, the basket that transported those bottles of craft beer you enjoyed last weekend, and the microwave tray that heated your gourmet meal last night. We're one of the largest manufacturers of paperboard and paper-based packaging for some of the world's most recognized brands of food, beverage, foodservice, household, personal care and pet care products.

We have over 70 facilities worldwide that provide innovative packaging solutions to help our customers stand out and achieve brand loyalty in a competitive and dynamic marketplace. With a product portfolio that emphasizes renewable, recycled, and recyclable materials, we are as committed to our customers and 17,000+ employees as we are to protecting the environment and giving back to the communities where we live and work.

Graphic Packaging International's history extends more than 100 years, as numerous legacy companies have joined forces to create an ever-evolving corporation. Despite our name changes over the years, our dedication to innovation, quality, and service never changes.



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Teaming Up With Tech

Does your organization have a reliable education partner?

For nearly 90 years, Indiana Tech has provided working adults with the skills and knowledge necessary to make positive and immediate impacts within their workplace. The relationships the university has with employers are key components in its strategy to partner with businesses of all kinds to educate and train up their workforces.

"We're in a unique position to be able to partner with employers that have training or higher education needs," said Steve Herendeen, vice president for enrollment management at Indiana Tech. "Because of the history that we have working with employers, we are able to customize programming to fit an organization's specific needs."

Today, that means working with companies like Heartland, a Global Payments Company. The national company has a call center in Indiana, where 800-plus employees can earn a bachelor's degree in business administration with a concentration in management from Indiana Tech, and it's 100% paid for by their employer.

The Heartland University program gives the company a competitive edge when it comes to both employee recruitment and retention.

Samtec, a national electronics manufacturing company, offers its employees a similar benefit. Samtec associates can pursue their degree of choice, as long as it fits within the company's business model. Samtec pays 100% of the cost.

Why do companies like Heartland and Samtec choose to invest in their workforce at this level?

"We care about our associates and we care about the community, so investing in continuing education is a win-win for both," said Cathy Fields, HR generalist and recruiter at Samtec. "Indiana Tech's willingness to offer on-site classes for our associates gives them back their family time. That ties in well with our culture here at Samtec, to provide associates with a happy work-life balance."

In addition to offering specialized

degree tracks and on-site classes for employers, Indiana Tech can also work with organizations to offer customized training and development programs. For example, faculty and leaders from Indiana Tech developed a series of workshops for one of Indiana's largest hospital systems. While not credit-bearing, those who participated in the program received hands-on experience and support building business proposals that are relevant to their roles at Parkview Health.

"An Indiana Tech alum who works at Parkview Health reached out to us with a need for this highly customized training," said Dr. Kathleen Hanold Watland, dean of Indiana Tech's College of Business. "We worked with the hospital system to develop a needs assessment, followed by a proposal for how Indiana Tech could help address their training needs. It was an honor to provide this training to their associates."

Indiana Tech specializes in meeting employers wherever they are in

their training process, from offering associate degree programs all the way through a Ph.D. in Global Leadership. This includes credit-bearing certificate programs that feed directly into a bachelor's or master's degree.

"Our degree and certificate programs are industry-focused and designed with employers' needs in mind," said Herendeen. "In fact, many of our corporate relationships are the result of alumni ties. Our graduates are out in the workforce, and they come back to us when they're in need of training for their employees. They know what we do, because we did it for them."

"Companies choose to work with us for a number of reasons, not the least of which is our flexibility and adaptability," said Herendeen. "More than that, we can offer our corporate partners something that other universities cannot, and that's a relationship with a personal admissions representative who is going to be there for them—and for their employees—every step of the way."

"We care about our associates and we care about the community, so investing in continuing education is a win-win for both. We work with Indiana Tech to offer on-site classes for our associates, which gives them more family time. That ties in well with our culture here at Samtec."

Cathy Fields
HR Generalist and Recruiter
Samtec

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2020 NORTHEAST INDIANA MANUFACTURING AWARDS

Northeast Indiana-Owned Manufacturer of the Year

From its inception in 1994, API Alliance, located in Huntertown Township of Allen County, has enjoyed steady growth – even in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic.

In 2014, the Indiana Small Business Development Center named the Huntertown business one of 27 “Companies to Watch.” At that time, API employed about 23 people, compared to the 61 that make up the team today.

And now, API has been named KPC Media Group’s Northeast Indiana-Owned Manufacturer of the Year in the inaugural Northeast Indiana Manufacturing Breakfast awards.

“Since 2014, we’ve continued probably 20% growth minimum per year. We’ve had a nice increase both in sales volume and employee growth, and we’re seeing that trend continue. ... It’s because of the people, it’s because of the team,” Mike Gigli, API Alliance’s vice president of operations, said.

Gigli describes the company as a partner in production and engineering solutions for its customers, a contract manufacturer specializing in electronics and electromechanical assemblies. That could include circuit boards, wire harnesses, control panel interfaces, “all the way up to complete product assembly for some customers.”

“What kind of sets us apart is our engineering capability – in-house, our ability to do circuit board design and to

do software services – so we can help customers take their existing controls and bring them into the new millennium with Wi-Fi, Bluetooth, additional sensors, updated design, features and functionality,” Gigli explained. “We can do anything from prototype to full production volume if they need it. We become an extension of our customer.”

Those services allow companies to not only compensate for a lack of floor space or equipment, but also to focus on better delivery of their services without the electronic expertise.

“With a lot of people downsizing and things like that, we offer a way for them to ramp back up to their capacities without having to hire a bunch of people internally,” Kurt Webber, the company’s business development manager, said. “It allows them to focus on their core competencies.”

API’s customers comprise companies throughout the Midwest, mostly within about a 200-mile radius of Fort Wayne. The company has developed solutions for businesses in a variety of industries, from

agriculture to food processing and HVAC.

In its efforts to become an extension of its customer, API’s team encourages customers to work over the shoulder of its engineers, or walk out on the production floor for a hands-on demonstration of the manufacturing process.

One of the company’s current focuses is a developmental platform of engineering building blocks for control development, which offers an off-the-shelf solution to businesses in any industry.

“We specifically customize that to their unique needs, but they’re not starting a design project from a blank sheet of paper, so we can much more quickly get them to prototype and into production without extended cost and extended time to get there,” Gigli said. “That has really kind of helped open the door with our existing customer base to update some of their needs, but also is attracting a lot of new attention from other areas and in other fields. We’re not building or designing something for agriculture, we’re using building blocks that apply in agriculture,

they apply in HVAC, they could apply in the food service industry or educational device design products – just a whole, very diverse area.”

Those efforts include not only the design work, but manufacturing at both the prototype and production level.

“That knowledge and that experience also allows us to do enhancements to customers’ current products that they have,” Webber said. “A lot of people are bringing their older products into the digital age with Bluetooth or Wi-Fi. They’re having touchscreen displays added. We do phone apps for our controls, and we’re also able to monitor the controls and their working applications through the cloud.”

API Alliance is part of a larger family of companies under Adaptive Technologies, Inc., which was established in 1989 and also serves as the parent company of Adaptek Systems, Northern Apex and Automated Laser Corporation. API Alliance was incorporated as part of Northern Apex in 1994. That company was chartered as a contract manufacturer of electronic assemblies and, in 1998, also became involved in radio frequency identification technologies all under the same name. API Alliance split off in 1997 to focus solely on contract electronics assembly and engineering services, and it now accounts for more than 60% of Adaptive Technologies’ more than 100 employees.



Story by Louis Wyatt

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Supporting local farmers and families is critical during this time, and Miller Poultry is doing just that. With their roots in northeast Indiana, Miller Poultry is a family-owned company that has been working with local farmers since 1942. Since their start all those years ago, they have been dedicated to producing high-quality chicken, with the highest animal welfare standards and without the use of things like antibiotics or GMO's. The growth of the business is beyond what the family ever imagined, and while they have grown substantially, they have a continued dedication to quality, and to their valued employees, because without them none of it would be possible. If you are looking for an opportunity to work for a company that stands by its employees and treats them like family, Miller Poultry does just that, and they continue to seek employees to be part of their team.

Because many of Miller Poultry's employees are from the area, giving back and being involved has always been part of the company's standard. Each year, the company donates thousands of pounds of chicken to local food banks to help feed families in need and supports local efforts and fundraisers to help raise money to fund various projects to better the surrounding communities. The company's mission statement says it all: To be a company of dedicated and faithful people producing naturally grown poultry in an ethical and efficient manner for consumers who appreciate and enjoy wholesome, great tasting food. Because they work with growers with farms nearby, you can find their products at your local Kroger, Spartan, Meijer, Whole Foods, Martin's, Mariano's, SuperValu, and many more—just look for their brands which include Miller Poultry, Katie's Best, and Pine Manor Farms chicken."



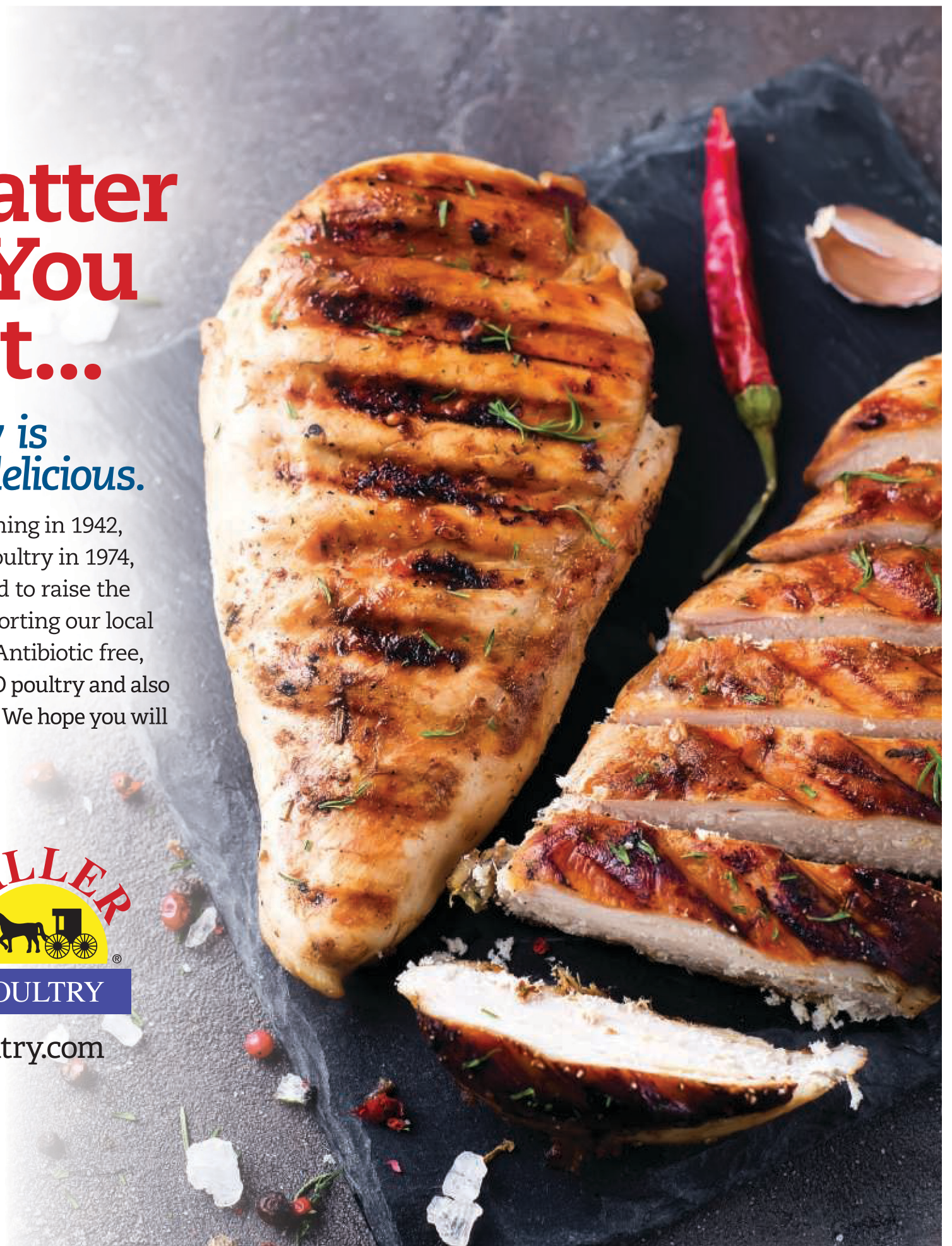
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2020 NORTHEAST INDIANA MANUFACTURING AWARDS

Northeast Indiana Internationally-Owned Manufacturer of the Year

From a small shop in a Churubusco man's garage to an international company, C&A Tool has only seen growth over that past five decades.

C&A Tool Engineering Inc. has some of the most advanced equipment and production capabilities in the world, specializing in some of the most intricate markets, such as medical, aerospace and industrial.

Founder Dick Conrow started the company in his garage 1969, and the company now encompasses three locations – two in Churubusco and one in Auburn – roughly 650 employees and more than 750,000 total square feet of manufacturing space.

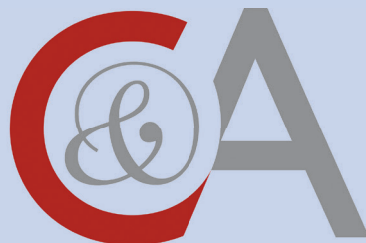
As growth continued and Conrow was preparing for retirement, the right opportunity came forward in a sale to New Hampshire Ball Bearings, a Japan-owned company in 2017. The change in ownership put C&A Tool under the umbrella of the MinebeaMitsumi family of companies, a world leader in precision-components manufacturing.

The sale had many employees and community members on edge about the future of the company, but during the past three years the international partnership has proved to be a stable one, as the company has continued to expand and grow under new ownership.

In 2018, the company announced plans for a \$3.5 million investment in equipment at its Churubusco facility.

"One of the most tangible ways a business shows confidence in their community is to make additional investment that keeps them here for the long-term. C&A has done that several times and we are proud to have them in Churubusco" said Dale Buuck, Whitley County Economic Development Corp. president.

The investment included additional employees, continuing the tradition of growth in Churubusco. And there's still



— **MinebeaMitsumi Group** —



room to grow, as many of the buildings are not at 100% capacity, leaving room for further equipment purchases.

After Conrow's retirement, his right-hand man, Rob Marr, stepped up to fill the role as president of the company. Marr started with Conrow in 1982 when the company had just 10 employees.

"The new owners are very supportive, not only financially but across the board for us," Marr said. "They're bringing new opportunities to us."

In September, Marr passed on his role to John Halverson, a 27-year veteran of the company, continuing its local leadership despite having owners on the other side of the world.

C&A Tool is headquartered at 4100 N. U.S. 33 in Churubusco and the company offers many services, such as "turning and grinding, additive manufacturing, milling and

machining, including the industry's most advanced capabilities in large machining," according to company literature.

Marr describes the business as "an overgrown tool and die operation that migrated into manufacturing."

"We do high-precision, complex components for the medical, aerospace, fuel system and industrial industries," he said.

Marr isn't completely out of the business, as he plans to continue assisting with overall support, more as a consultant.

"As the 'Dinosaur in the Room,'" Marr noted, "it became evident to me that it was time to implement the leadership skills of the next generation. John Halverson is the individual with the skill set to lead us to even higher achievement."

The changeover during the COVID-19 pandemic was a more difficult one, but the company found

September to be the right time.

C&A Tool has found ways to support the local community during the pandemic, donating 360 N-95 and 250 procedure masks to first responders in Whitley County – part of an initiative made possible by the parent company to support local emergency provider organizations.

MinebeaMitsumi supplied its global manufacturing facilities with medical face masks for employee protection, then provided extras to be donated to the community.

"We are so thankful for the donation made by C&A Tool and MinebeaMitsumi Group," said Dan Monaco, the deputy director of the Whitley County Office of Homeland Security & Emergency Management. "When companies like this set an example of investing in local community and recognize the needs of our emergency workers, it does more than just support the community in a time of great need, it serves as a catalyst to spur on acts of generosity and reminds the community that we're all in this together."

C&A Tool has hosted many international visitors to its facilities, including appearances from Yasunari Kuwano and Kazyoshi Tokimaru from MinebeaMitsumi Inc., and Daniel Lemieux of New Hampshire Ball Bearing at one of its annual luncheons.

"Thank you for embracing the acquisition," Lemieux told employees. "Thank you for welcoming us all into your community and carrying on the legacy of this great company."

According to a list compiled by the Greater Fort Wayne Business Weekly, C&A Tool has the fourth most employees of medical device manufacturers in northeast Indiana at 626, and is the 16th largest northeast Indiana manufacturer based on employees.

Story by Nicole Minier

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Semifinalists: Internationally-Owned Manufacturer



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Bosch manufacturers products serving the mobility, home and industrial and trade sectors, creating innovative products to create ease and solve problems.

Bosch also offers wide community support in the areas it serves through the Bosch Community Fund, the corporate foundation for Bosch in North America was established in 2011 to provide community engagement and philanthropic support on behalf of our company. The Fund focuses on the enrichment of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education and advancing environmental sustainability initiatives. The company partners with 501(c)(3) organizations and educational institutions across the country to provide quality project-based learning hands-on learning opportunities for students and professional development for teachers.

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BAE Systems provides advanced defence technology protects people and national security, and keeps critical information and infrastructure secure. The company searches for new ways to provide customers with a competitive edge across the air, maritime, land and cyber domains.

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BAE Systems has leading positions in its principal markets – in the US, UK, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and Australia – as well as established positions in a number of other international markets and is one of the largest global defense companies.



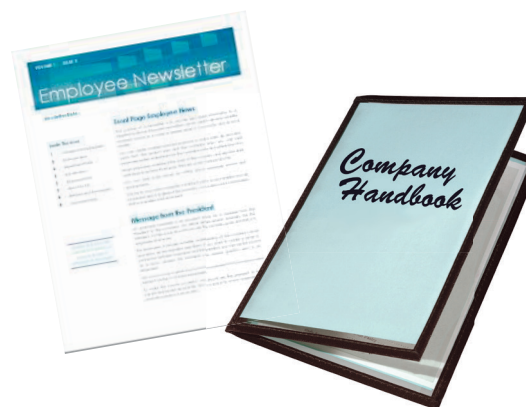
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more space for organization between project pieces and inventory. McLaughlin Furnace Group is continuing to add more new equipment for manufacturing capabilities, such as two 10 ton cranes, 8,000 pound forklift, and CNC bandsaw.

McLaughlin Furnace Group is currently manufacturing their first complete batch heat treat line that is set to be installed by the end of 2020. This line brings innovation and technology that hasn't been seen in the heat treat industry. Whether it's service, repairs, rebuilds or new builds, if it is vacuum or furnace system related, McLaughlin Furnace Group is on top of it.



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Our proprietary plastics renewal technology is poised to be a game-changer due to its proven ability to use single-stream plastics one through seven — including contaminated, littered plastics from our waterways – and transform this waste back into useful products.

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Only 9% of the plastic manufactured in the United States each year is recycled. This is a problem. The rest ends up in an incinerator, a landfill, or as litter in the natural environment, where it is destined to sit for thousands of years.

Project Highlights



Job Creation

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Economic Investment

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Resource Recovery

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WORKING WITH NUWAY

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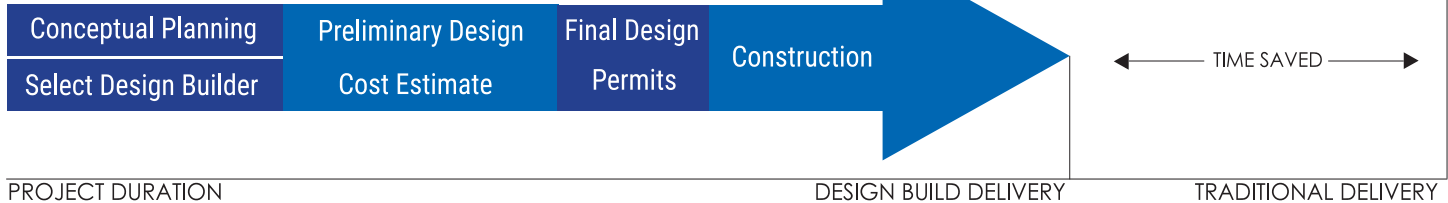
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2020 NORTHEAST INDIANA MANUFACTURING AWARDS

Northeast Indiana Corporate Citizen of the Year – Manufacturing Sector



Edge Manufacturing of Bluffton is about second chances.

That mission of caring for its employees, regardless of whether they stay at the business, as well as its contributions to the Wells County community has earned Edge Manufacturing the inaugural Corporate Citizen of the Year for Northeast Indiana.

The Corporate Citizen award was selected and sponsored by The Chamber Coalition of Northeast Indiana.

Owner Eric Gerber said he wants his managers and supervisors “to share our same Christian values and principles. We want to run our company ethically and honorably and believe in second chances. We seek out people who may otherwise be overlooked.”

He will hire people who are on probation or parole or who are in a work-release program. He wants to help employees develop skills that they can take on to a new job. The business also offers financial budgeting classes.

The genesis for Gerber’s business, 800 Dougherty St., came from his custom cabinet company that morphed in 1991 to the niche he has found in providing heavy-duty containers to medical, government and other industries. Edge had 4-5 employees when it moved to Bluffton. It now has 50 workers and provides custom tooling and fabrication, thermo-forming, CNC routing and other services. Its products include stainless-steel wash baskets, inmate property boxes and fiberglass nest and stack boxes.



The company’s inmate boxes are sold to the FBI. Justice departments are another market for the company’s containers, which can be secured with padlocks to hold evidence related to crimes, unlike cardboard boxes that can be tampered with, Gerber said.

Edge takes products and modifies and improves them to meet customers’ needs, primarily in production and material handling, he said.

Gerber admits that although he was born in a Christian home in Bluffton and raised in Adams County, “I wasn’t always an angel,” and the only difference between himself

and others is that they got caught.

Knowing how he was blessed in life is what drives him to give a helping hand to others who might not have been so fortunate.

He’s straightforward about why he does this.

“They’re very loyal, grateful, and they’re human beings,” Gerber said.

Gerber, 49, is proudest of a former employee who had three felonies and was facing an arrest warrant. He helped the man face his destiny, which they expected to be more jail time.

“You can’t have a future if you don’t clean up your past,” Gerber said he told the employee.

The man ended up having his charges dismissed and Gerber helped him get a Class A commercial driver’s license. He’s now married and living in another state where he drives a truck for a living.

“He’s probably my proudest example,” said Gerber, who’s married with three children.

Gerber sits on local organizations’ boards and said he is pleased with Wells County.

“I’ve never see a county help a business so much,” he said.

Edge was nominated by Erin Prible, executive director of the Wells County Chamber of Commerce.

“Edge Manufacturing started operations in 1993 and provide solution tasks with a focus upon logistics, fabrication, and custom tooling. The company has built a state-wide reputation for providing second chances by employing ex-convicts. Owner Eric Gerber states that in his life he has been granted a second chance through Jesus Christ and his goal is to give employees the tools and encouragement to see purpose in their lives. The team at EDGE ensures that employees are loved, appreciated, valued whether that remain at EDGE over the long-term of move to accept new opportunities. This work improves Wells County, the Region, and the entire state by providing second chances to employees,” the nomination stated.

Story by Lisa Esquivel Long

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Semifinalists: Corporate Citizen

POLYWOOD®

Polywood is one of the largest employers in Syracuse, celebrating 30 years in business in 2020. The company manufactures a wide variety of all-weather durable recycled plastic furniture. Polywood Recycles an average of 400,000 plastic milk jugs each day. The business was started by the two founders from their garage with the mission of stewardship. The business has grown substantially over the years and are now adding a 400,000 square foot expansion that will create an additional 400 jobs. The expansion includes their investment in relocation of the local youth athletic complex.

Back in 1990, Polywood was the first to create outdoor furniture from recycled plastic materials. "Made with genuine Polywood lumber" is a brand promise – furniture is built to be enjoyed season after season after season. More importantly, Polywood aims to help create spaces where friends and family can gather, relax, and connect.

As the use of plastic in the U.S. grew, the need to transform the overabundance of recycled plastic into something new was greater than ever. High-density polyethylene (HDPE) plastic, in particular, is extremely durable and weather resistant. Outdoor furniture was the perfect application.

Today, Polywood recycles an average of 400,000 milk jugs per day. Truckloads of recycled milk jugs are transformed into genuine Polywood lumber which is then used to construct our wide array of Adirondack chairs, rocking chairs, benches, gliders, deep seating, dining, and more!



Zimmer Biomet is a global leader in the Orthopedic Industry, employing more than 5,000 people locally and 25,000 worldwide. The Zimmer Biomet Foundation started in 2019 as a tool to give back to the communities where they are working. In 2019 they matched a \$1 million grant on a dollar per dollar investment set to make solve workforce housing issues in Kosciusko County. They continue to support Cardinal Services, an NFP entity disabilities to live with dignity by granting more than \$1 million for its new facility. It is also a large supporter of the Chamber's Launch Pad, an early learning and childcare coalition.

Zimmer Biomet has been based in Warsaw since it was founded in 1927. Today, Zimmer Biomet has operations in more than 25 countries around the world and sells products in more than 100 countries.

Zimmer Biomet focuses on alleviating pain and improving the quality of life for people around the world. The company's commitment to patients shapes all day-to-day decisions at Zimmer Biomet. Relentless customer focus, innovative solutions, disciplined execution and our dedicated people enable us to deliver products and procedures to treat a broad range of musculoskeletal health conditions.



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STUDY: Indiana manufacturing, logistics industries in early stages of technology adoption

BY CINDY LARSON
clarson@kpcmedia.com

Sometimes called the fourth industrial revolution, Industry 4.0 is the move toward applying technology, data and advanced processes to the advanced manufacturing and logistics industries.

Conexus Indiana, in partnership with the Indiana University Kelley School of Business Center for Excellence in Manufacturing, conducted a study to measure how Indiana’s manufacturing and logistics businesses are applying the Industry 4.0 technologies.

Conexus Indiana is a nonprofit based in Indianapolis that helps Indiana businesses of all sizes adapt Industry 4.0 technologies.

These new Industry 4.0 technologies include additive manufacturing, cloud computing, advanced modeling, artificial intelligence, autonomous machines and more.

“Just as mass production and assembly lines were supplemented with CNC machining and automation during the Second and Third Industrial Revolutions, we are well on our way into the Fourth Industrial Revolution — commonly referred to as Industry 4.0 — where autonomous technologies, smart systems and data and machine learning promise to significantly improve manufacturing operations,” the report says.

Also from the report:
“When manufacturers were asked what Industry 4.0 technologies they expect to adopt first or which technologies they believe will be most in demand, they point to technologies that have experienced early success.

“Participants said that Cloud Computing, Sensor Technology, Big Data and Analytics, and Internet of Things are most anticipated. However, Additive Manufacturing also represents significant interest among manufacturers, despite its lack of prevalence and prominence to date.

“Several other technologies that have been slow to show benefit, including COBOTs, Machine Learning, Artificial Intelligence and Augmented and Virtual Reality, remain the least anticipated in the 5-year outlook among manufacturers.

“Cloud Computing has a favorable outlook among manufacturers surveyed likely because of its enterprise-wide applications. Information technology (IT) departments are moving a number of functions to the cloud with software platforms for sales and business develop-



NICOLE MINIER

U.S. Sen. Todd Young visits Ultra Electronics USSI in Whitley County to tour part of the facility that manufactures equipment for the U.S. Navy.

CHART 9 DEDICATED BUDGET FOR INDUSTRY 4.0 (BY EMPLOYEES)



ment (CRM), human resources (HR) and payroll, office productivity, accounting and Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP), among other functions.

“Operations technology (OT) departments within the manufacturing facility are gaining traction and may drive certain

technology adoption trends. OT professionals bridge the gap between IT, who may have had limited exposure to the production floor, and the frontline production personnel, who are seeing a technology surge. OT management are increasing or expanding manufacturing operations to the

cloud.”
The issue is important because Indiana’s advanced manufacturing and logistics industries combined are the state’s leading employer and contribute more than any other industry to Indiana’s gross state product, according to the report. We have



CONTRIBUTED

Mark Howell

a very diverse base of manufacturing,” said professor Mark Frohlich, Indiana University Kelley School of Business associate professor of operations management.

The collaboration originated at last year’s Indiana Manufacturers Association Hall of Fame event, Frohlich said. “It started off really casually.”

Conexus approached him about a collaboration in which they would look in-depth at Industry 4.0 practices to see if Hoosier manufacturers are embracing them.

The study collected data from 380 Indiana advanced manufacturing and logistics companies — most manufacturers — to identify trends in Industry 4.0 technology adoption. Conexus came up with the questions by querying its membership and then collected data from its membership.

Those who participated in the study were from a wide cross-section of businesses across the state including, the report says:

- More than a dozen different manufacturing sectors, including aerospace and defense, automotive, food/beverages, healthcare, hi-tech and industrial products, with a composition that well represents Indiana’s sector mix
- Small, medium and large enterprises (as determined by both revenue and number of employees), were all well-represented in the responses
- An overwhelming majority of responses were from well-established organizations with a long track record of

operation, which represents the mature businesses that have traditionally been the core of Indiana’s manufacturing economy

Frohlich researched literature on the subject. Then, he said, every couple of weeks they’d get together and say, “what do you think about this?”

Just as the survey portion of this study was concluding, the COVID-19 pandemic was beginning to take hold in the United States.

The survey closed on March 6, 2020, on the same day that Indiana confirmed its first case of COVID-19. In the months that followed, numerous Indiana manufacturers stepped forward and changed technologies to shift from automotive parts to ventilator assembly, and face mask and other personal protective equipment (PPE) production, while logistics firms adapted to ensure that critical items were delivered safely and on-time further down the supply chain.

Similarly, many Hoosier manufacturers adjusted to dramatic disruptions in their supply chains with reduced workforce, decreased product demand, and re-imagined factory floors and employee safety as workers re-entered the workplace. COVID-19 has heightened awareness of the digital tools and infrastructure needed to respond to major unplanned disruption, and it may yet prove to be the turning point that accelerates digital transformation.

Jeff Nordman, executive vice president, Aisin USA Mfg., Inc., said, “A recent addition at Aisin was the utilization of an IR camera system to take team member temperatures as they enter work. This allows us to efficiently screen all of our more than 2,000 team members in a short amount of time while also maintaining social distancing. The Aisin culture of embracing new technology helped us

“

A recent addition at Aisin was the utilization of an IR camera system to take team member temperatures as they enter work. This allows us to efficiently screen all of our more than 2,000 team members in a short amount of time while also maintaining social distancing. The Aisin culture of embracing new technology helped us implement this change quickly. As operational technology is ever-changing, we have to be ready to take any opportunity to meet customer expectations and continuously improve our competitiveness.”

Jeff Nordman, executive vice president,
Aisin USA Mfg., Inc.

implement this change quickly. As operational technology is ever-changing, we have to be ready to take any opportunity to meet customer expectations and continuously improve our competitiveness.”

Participants included manufacturers in various sectors including aerospace, defense, automotive, health care, high-tech and industrial product fields. Small, medium and large companies participated in the study. Many responses were from well-established organizations in the state — 78% of respondents were from companies that have been around 25 years or longer. Legacy companies are more likely to develop a strategic plan for adopting new technologies, the study found.

“Indiana is an advanced manufacturing powerhouse, consistently outpacing the nation

in manufacturing employment, productivity and output,” The study says. “Recognized as the most manufacturing intensive state in America, accounting for more than \$100 billion of Indiana’s economy, Indiana’s manufacturers employ more than 520,000 Hoosiers, or 17 percent of the Hoosier workforce— the largest share of any industry sector. With the addition of the logistics industry, which works hand-in-glove with the manufacturing base, these two industries are responsible for more than one in five Indiana jobs.”

“Many technologies listed in the survey were rated as having been beneficial as opposed to not,” the study said.

“All eight of the most implemented technologies were overwhelmingly rated beneficial by manufacturers. These include:

- Cybersecurity
- Cloud Computing
- Sensor
- Technology
- Additive Manufacturing



CONTRIBUTED

Professor Mark Frohlich, Indiana University Kelley School of Business associate professor of operations management.

- Big Data and Analytics
- Advanced Modeling
- Internet of Things
- Autonomous
- Robotics or Vehicles”

The study found some things that respondents were not using.

“Interestingly, two of the most touted, potentially society-changing advanced technologies, Machine Learning and Artificial Intelligence, show very few instances of implementation among survey respondents.

“In instances of actual implementation, there is a nearly even split on whether implementations were beneficial. This could signal that Indiana manufacturers are still rising toward the ‘peak of inflated expectations’ on the Gartner Hype Cycle6 with relatively few Indiana manufacturers so far being early-adopters of these new and largely untested technologies.”

It found that companies had different approaches to putting money into the technologies, some up front, others as a response to a customer’s need.

“Larger, legacy manufacturing companies are more likely to dedicate a budget to technology adoption, with those expenditures often representing a significant portion of their total capital investment budgets.”

They include automotive and aerospace



ROD KING

East Allen Career Center Executive Director Tim Wiegand stands by a FANUC robot, the kind students in the automation and robotics program are learning to program, operate and maintain. More than 3,000 of these robots are in use in companies throughout Allen County, and industries are clamoring for trained operators.

and defense.

“Some of the largest and most mature companies in Indiana include automotive and aerospace and defense companies. Those companies were also well-represented in the survey results, and it’s no surprise that they are among the industry sectors reporting a dedicated budget for technology adoption. In addition, manufacturers in the communications sector and those who do not associate themselves with one of the categories listed in the survey say they are dedicating a budget toward technology adoption.

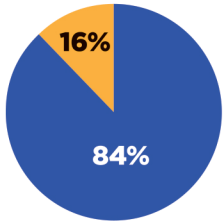
“Surprisingly, all other sectors indicated that they are tending to not invest in Industry 4.0 technology transformation, although those companies were well represented as survey respondents. For example, 27 percent of respondents produce

industrial equipment, yet that important Hoosier manufacturing sector represented only 11 percent of those budgeting for technology adoption.”

According to the report there are more than 7,100 manufacturing firms in Indiana, with the largest manufacturers (those with 5,000 workers) employing 35% of manufacturing workers and contributing 41% of payroll.

CHART 8 DEDICATED BUDGET FOR TECHNOLOGY ADOPTION

No ●
Yes ●



Manufacturers that employ fewer than 5,000 employees make up more than 64% of the workforce and contribute nearly 60% of payroll. Indiana also has a diverse industry base, with manufac-

turers producing automobiles and automotive parts, chemical products, medical devices and pharmaceuticals, aerospace and defense equipment and industrial goods.

Mark Howell, president and CEO of

Conexus Indiana, said he believes the report is encouraging for Indiana manufacturers’ long-term competitiveness. “Enthusiasm was higher than I expected,” he said.

Key findings from the study show that larger companies in Indiana are more likely to be adopting smart manufacturing than smaller, less-established companies.

When asked what Industry 4.0 technologies they expect to adopt first or which they believe will be most in demand, respondents put cloud computing, sensor technology, additive manufacturing (3D printing) and big data and analytics at the top of the list.

The study revealed companies are looking at and/or adopting new technologies for three key reasons:

- Enhancing/optimizing workforce productivity

- Eliminating/reducing errors
- Improving the customer's experience

"Clustered right behind those top priorities are Increasing Efficiency, Supply Chain Integration and Automation, which in various ways all relate to the top priority of productivity.

"However, no objective in the list of more than a dozen received less than 20 responses as either a primary or secondary rationale for implementation.

"This illustrates and emphasizes that today's advanced manufacturer is juggling a complex set of demands with high (and growing) expectations for meeting all of them.

"In fact, the low-hanging fruit of focusing on just a few objectives is passing; hence the business case for adopting Industry 4.0 is complex."

The biggest obstacle to technology adoption, according to 42% of the survey respondents, is budget restrictions. Lack of internal technical skill was cited by 32% as a major obstacle, and 41% cited complexity of integration/implementation with legacy systems.

"Security concerns were the least cited barrier," according to the study. "This could be due to companies having no problem justifying implementation when security is the driver, or perhaps they have a false sense of security and plan to act only when an issue arises. Alternatively, because many manufacturers have upgraded their cybersecurity systems and protocols in recent years, they may not be that worried now about securing Industry 4.0 technologies."

Small companies don't need to be left behind.

"The good news for those small companies citing ROI as a barrier is that a business case justification might be easier to overcome than the very real challenges of updating or retrofitting legacy systems," the report says. "The survey showed that customers care about service, quality, speed and product design; in that order. Technology adoption, if properly executed, almost always offers immediate positive impact on quality, speed, and service (the top three priorities) even if it is costly in the near-term to implement.

"Fortunately, capital investment is a distant fifth on the list of hurdles; perhaps leaving room for investment if the ROI case is carefully constructed."

Many of the respondents were not aware that these futuristic-sounding technologies were actually ready for commercial use. Some of the comments from respondents included, "This is the first we've heard of Industry 4.0"; "We do not know what Industry 4.0 is"; "I don't know what this is. First I've heard of it."

The report concludes that while larger companies have a budget and road map for Industry 4.0, smaller and midsized companies are embracing digital technolo-



MATT GETTS

Casey Seitz works on an exhaust fan assembly at the Bosch plant in Albion. Bosch plans to add 102,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehousing space.

gies but don't have the budget or detailed plans to fully embrace it.

As more companies adapt Industry 4.0 technology, the labor market will be impacted, but not by displacing workers, Frohlich believes. Jobs will change, and workers will need different and higher-level skills.

"Industry 4.0 kind of makes people more productive," Frohlich said. It doesn't take away jobs, but it changes them. For example, a worker who once may have worked on an assembly line hoisting 30-pound parts up to 1,200 times a day might have suffered from back problems or repetitive strain injuries. With Industry 4.0 practices, that same worker now might control the robot that now does the job once done by human hands. Frohlich said they're called cobots, short for collaborative robots.

But some people still fear new technology will take away their jobs. "I think that could be kind of a natural human

response," Howell said. "I think the data points differently than that."

The report says, "We have all seen headlines like these; 'Robots 'to replace up to 20 million factory jobs' by 2030'? Or, will 'hundreds of millions of people worldwide ... have to find new jobs or learn new skills'? It's hard not to be concerned about how technology may impact the workforce in the not too distant future, but there have been some positive findings from the manufacturers on the leading edge of digital transformation.

"The report: 'Fourth Industrial Revolution: Beacons of Technology and Innovation in Manufacturing,' by the World Economic Forum, in collaboration with McKinsey & Company, states that Lighthouse Manufacturers or those global firms that are providing 'real-world evidence to dispel widespread myths and misunderstandings posing obstacles to innovative technology adoption at scale' are not deploying Fourth

Industrial Revolution technology to replace operators...[the] report suggests that less than 5% of occupations consist of activities that are 100% automatable with today's technology, while 62% of occupations have at least 30% of automatable tasks.

"Consequently, employees in production enjoy a working routine which is becoming less repetitive, but more interesting, diversified, and productive."

Like Frohlich, Howell believes manufacturing and logistics jobs of the future will still be here, but they will be (or already are) different. For example, he cites auto manufacturing welding. Just like the assembly line example, welders don't actually do the welding, but they operate the machinery that does the welds.

But in a state where manufacturing is critical to the economy, employees are needed to fill those positions. And unlike

— Continued on page 33

XPLOR POSSIBILITIES

Featured
Available
Properties



46845

4705 CLUBVIEW DR

SALE PRICE: \$1,150,000
BUILDING SF: 33,609 SF
LEASE RATE: \$4.25 PSF
PROPERTY: 1.70 AC



46808

1931-1951 LAKEVIEW DR

BUILDING SF: 14,542 SF
AVAILABLE: 2,104-2,428 SF
LEASE RATE: \$5.00 PSF
PROPERTY: 1.83 AC



46825

5430 DISTRIBUTION DR

SALE PRICE: \$750,000
BUILDING SF: 12,500 SF
LEASE RATE: \$6.75 PSF
PROPERTY: 1.16 AC

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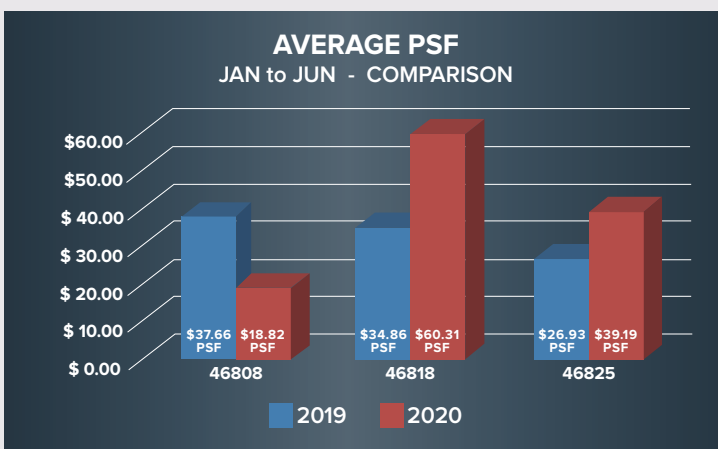
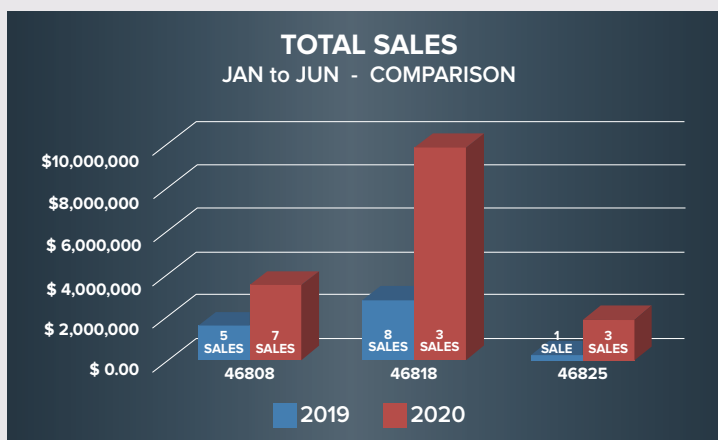
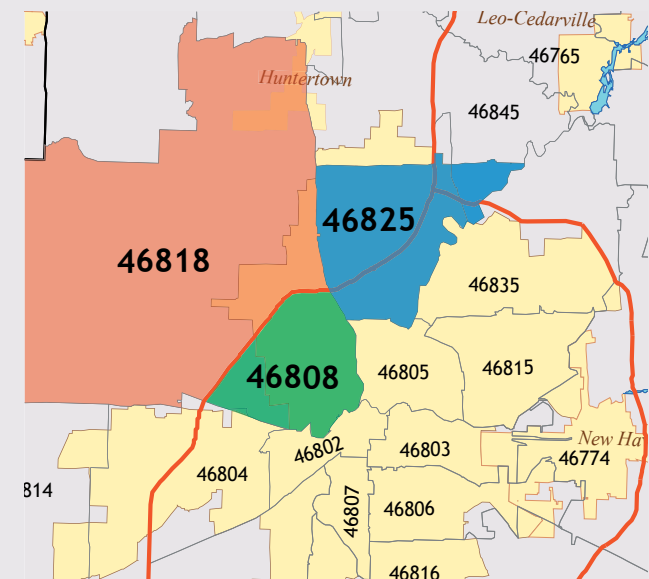
MARKET



REPORT

Industrial Real Estate Landscape By Zip Code

Below is a comparison of sales for the first half 2019 and 2020. Featured data was quantified by zip code in the Northwest Fort Wayne sub-market for historical significance and relevance to the industrial real estate market in Fort Wayne.



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The Coronavirus pandemic, social distancing practices, and protocols to slow the spread of the virus have affected all sectors of commercial real estate. While the office, hospitality, and retail sectors appear to be the hardest hit, the industrial sector has remained steady despite negative economic indicators. According to the most recent Society of Industrial and Office Realtors (SIOR) index of sales/acquisitions, leasing and development compiled, the industrial index fell 18% in 2020 Q1. The West saw the most significant drop of 19%, while the Midwest fared best with only a 7% drop. Historically, Indiana is a stable commercial real estate market with strong roots in the industrial sector.

Sale prices for Northeast Indiana typically mimic national averages but do not traditionally experience extreme high and low fluctuations. The Northwest Allen County sub-market, specifically the 46808, 46818, and 46825 zip codes, is an industrial hot spot, providing the focus of this analysis. The total number of transactions in the first half of 2019 and 2020 are comparable, with the total sale volume for 2020 outpacing 2019 by nearly \$9 million dollars in these zip codes. When analyzing the full scope of property value there are many indicators that impact end sale price including building size, acre-

age, ceiling heights, dock/overhead doors, and power.

As the "Total Sales" chart shows, in the first half of 2020, all three zip codes fared higher total sale figures than in 2019. Average per square foot sale prices increased by \$1.13 across the board from 2019 to 2020. With a total of 14 sales in 2019 and 13 sales in 2020 between January and July, there is reason for optimism for the second half of this year.

This data is encouraging during these unprecedented times; although, the full scope and effect of the pandemic is yet to be identified. Demand is high with industrial rates for leasing and sales have remained steady in Northeast Indiana. This can be attributed partially to the shift of more online shopping, which has created an increased demand for industrial warehousing and shipping facilities. This demand is anticipated to continue for the foreseeable future.

As we continue to watch the second half of the year, we are optimistic for the continued demand for the Northwest Allen County industrial real estate sub-market. Our team of professionals are monitoring the market for any future investment opportunities that may arise as a byproduct of this unusual year.



2020 NORTHEAST INDIANA
MANUFACTURING AWARDS

Northeast Indiana Best Manufacturing Workplace

When you're in business for more than 150 years, you don't get there without thousands of workers over the decades.

A family-owned business, Kendallville's Flint & Walling puts value in its workers and their families.

It's why Flint & Walling is the winner of KPC Media Group's inaugural Best Manufacturing Workplace award.

Founded in 1866 in Kendallville, Flint & Walling remains at the site of its founding at Oak and Mitchell streets, and now employs 225 people in its offices, daytime and evening shifts.

Unlike some manufacturers that are running 24/7, with employees pulling long hours with few days off, Flint & Walling is a company that generally holds its workers to 40 hours per week, because the manufacturer wants its employees home to spend time with their families.

The company also offers a 100% free family insurance option and a strong benefits package, ensuring that employees are well looked after.

Flint & Walling is known for a staff of long-term veterans, although there's been a changing of the guard in recent years as the company welcomes in a new generation of workers to the job and the culture.

"Many of our long-term employees have retired in the past 10 years. With this transition, F&W has been working to improve our training and visual documentation to insure all the best practices of our long term employee base is transferred onto the next wave of employees. All generations through the years share the same goal; a consistent and safe work place with fair pay and benefits," said human resources manager Hillary Corwin.

At work, Flint & Walling employees are doing what the company has done for more



than 150 years – building pumps of all types and sizes. If there's water that needs to be moved, Flint & Walling probably has something that can get the job done.

Assembled in small-town America, Flint & Walling serves many customers in rural America, too.

"Unlike our competition within the water industry who are exclusively offshore, we are family owned and attempt to make the majority of our products using USA labor," Corwin said. "We believe this allows us to manage our product quality and be the best in service and delivery. Our customers are typically self-owned and support rural and small town America and they desire a great consistent product with same day technical support to help them succeed in their business."

A company with as storied a history as Flint & Walling has seen just about any and everything history has to offer, but 2020 has presented a pandemic challenge to many area manufacturers. As certain sectors of the state shut down earlier this year, manufacturers across northeast Indiana took some of the biggest hits from the slowdown.

Flint & Walling wasn't immune from that, but saw its production bounce back quickly and the company worked to get its workforce back on its feet. While COVID-19 hasn't gone away, Flint & Walling has worked to ensure its employees stay safe while

"F&W also allowed any employees not comfortable to work the production lines during this time period to remain home with no impact to their jobs. With the water

industry being an essential need for life, our sales have returned to most of our expectations and the work force for the production line has been called back to support the effort," Corwin said. "We continue to ensure a clean work space to the best of our ability with both internal and third party cleaning happening daily. We also issue temperature checks at the beginning of shifts to remind all to be self-assessing their health daily to keep everyone safer."

As the Kendallville Area Chamber of Commerce's Industry of the Year in both 2007 and 2019, Flint & Walling has continued growing in recent years, adding new equipment, updating its lines and growing its product offerings – including a Zoeller Motor Company operation on West Mitchell street – the company keeps moving ahead toward its 175th year.

"We are moving fast to continue re-inventing what we need to do at F&W. The West Mitchell plant has expanded its work force to support a second motor line for another line of sump pumps. The Oak Street plant is updating several key pieces of manufacturing equipment in 2021 to modernize our production facility for the upcoming years of production. The technical staff available to support our production line has doubled in size in the past 18 months to help ensure we continually improve our quality and reduce costs to continue making F&W viable and competitive in a very tough global water industry. This area of manufacturing is a tremendous area to be located," Corwin said.

And, of course, Flint & Walling will continue to build and rely on a strong workforce to get the job done, Corwin said.

"The workforce is eager for good jobs, we have great support from the City of Kendallville, and we look forward to being part of this community for a long time."

Story by Steve Garbacz

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Back in 1979, Chuck Surack had a 4-track recording studio in the back of his VW bus. He'd record bands in local clubs, then take the tapes back to his home to mix and master them. Like every musician and studio owner, Chuck was always looking for new and better gear.

That's where the problem reared its ugly head – there wasn't a music/pro audio dealer around that provided the kind of service, support, selection, and pricing that would make Chuck a satisfied customer. At the same time, Chuck had begun creating sounds for the ground-breaking Kurzweil K250 keyboard, and selling those sounds to many of the biggest names in the industry. Those sound-design clients were also seeking a retailer they could trust. Chuck saw a niche, and Sweetwater's retail division was born.

From day one, Chuck was committed to providing a retail experience for his customers that was unparalleled – the sort of experience he always sought as a customer. Word of his commitment to service, his gear knowledge, and the support he offered spread, and Sweetwater quickly expanded, outgrowing several buildings along the way, and constantly expanding its staff.

It will come as no surprise, but the key to this growth is the staff. Each member of the Sweetwater family is as firmly committed to customer satisfaction as Chuck is. To work here requires experience and knowledge, but also a level of professionalism and integrity that isn't found at other retail establishments. We search the world over to find the very best people, then invest in their success through the most extensive training anywhere – and that training continues for as long as a person is employed.



Crossroads RV's strong values for production performance is the foundation of the product promise. Since 1996, Crossroads has provided solid products and have expanded its distribution base to a national level. The company take pride in our lean philosophy of keeping the frills minimal in our organizational structure, yet quality of product, service, value and comfort high for customer satisfaction.

Building strong relationships with the dealer community is important to success. Crossroads understand the stronger our dealers, the stronger your satisfaction. The company help our dealers' success by maintaining protected territories for each dealer, so they can focus on fulfilling expectations at a level we require.

Located in Topeka, Crossroads has five manufacturing facilities and employs over 600 people who team together to manufacture high-quality products.

— Continued from page 29

factory jobs of the past, today's jobs require some additional training. With a serious skills gap, manufacturers and logistics companies may look to other states.

Frohlich noted it's sometimes hard to get young adults interesting in manufacturing jobs. "It seems like it gets a bad reputation." Then he ticked off the benefits: you don't have a huge college debt to pay back; hourly wages are good; some companies offer on-the-job training. A two-year associate degree in advanced manufacturing would provide an inroad to these jobs. Even high schools sometimes partner with manufacturers, who subsequently hire students after graduation.

"The most important skill in manufacturing is just showing up," he said, adding that potential employees need common sense and a willingness to learn.

Another aspect of working in manufacturing is the perception that factories are dirty, unpleasant places to work. But Frohlich said today's factories are often clean, state-of-the art facilities. He cited as an example the medical device makers in

this area. "A lot of people don't see what a modern factory looks like," he said.

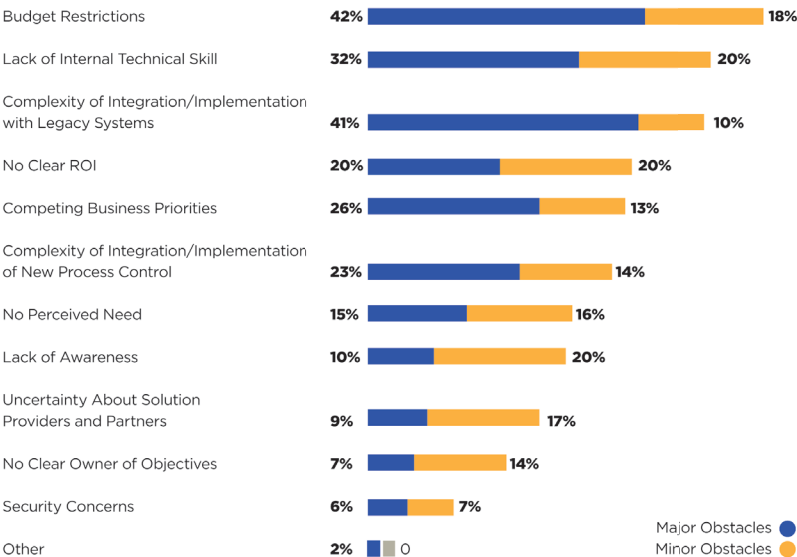
The jobs of the future are here, now, and will continue to change as manufacturing and logistics firms embrace Industry 4.0 technology. Howell is optimistic that people will take advantage of all the opportunities they have to get the training they need to fill these advanced manufacturing jobs.

Overall, Howell sees encouraging signs for Indiana's manufacturing and logistics businesses long-term.

In summary, the report's key findings are:

- Companies are pursuing new Industry 4.0 technologies to enhance workforce productivity, eliminate/reduce errors, and improve customer experience
- The labor market will be impacted by Industry 4.0 technology, but not by displacing workers. Instead, jobs are going to change and workers will need different and higher-level skills; and
- Access to capital is a major impediment to technology adoption, especially among smaller companies that haven't yet created an Industry 4.0 roadmap or budget for this type of technology adoption.

CHART 20 OBSTACLES TO ADOPTION (ALL RESPONDENTS)





API Alliance Provides Profit Generating Solutions With Electronic Design, Software Development, & Assembly Options
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API Alliance is a Manufacturer Of Custom Electronics, Electronic Controls And Electro-Mechanical Assemblies.

API Alliance offers four pre-established paths for Simple and Flexible Electronics Assembly and Engineering Options. But also the flexibility to choose just the services and options you need.

1 API Assembles your Existing Design and Products

- Electronic Manufacturing Services • Build To Print • 5 Option Procurement Plan

2 Electronic Control Platforms to Meet your Immediate Needs

Options include fully programmable modular input/output control boards with wireless options, Ethernet I/O boards. Additional options are available to meet your specific needs.

3 Improve or Redesign Your Existing Product

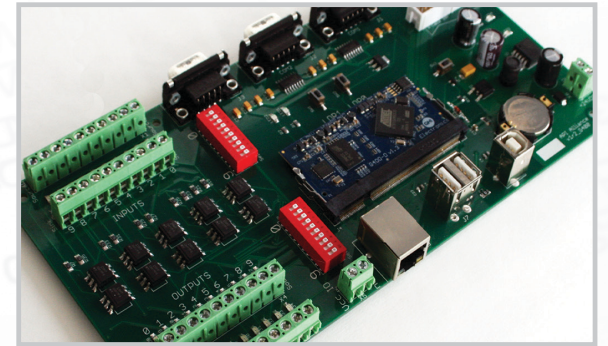
API's modular platforms allow you to redesign and assemble a new control using our readily available, proven technologies.

- Add wireless or wired connectivity to your current design
- Options to add new functionality or features

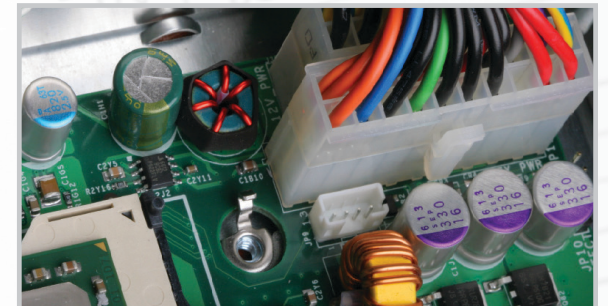
4 New Turnkey Design

We'll work with you to create the innovative new design which will perfectly suit your requirements. Count on your *Partners in Design & Production* from start to finish.

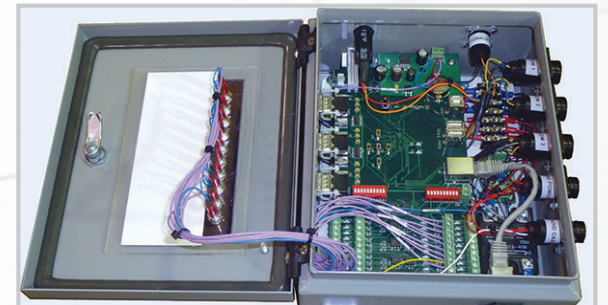
- Concept • Design • Prototype • Assembled Product



Standard Quick-Start Modules with Proven Technologies



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Control Box Assembly



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14220 Plank Street, Fort Wayne, IN 46818



API Alliance is a manufacturer of custom electronics, electronic controls, and electro-mechanical assemblies. The company was founded in 1994 as a division of Northern Apex and split into a separate company in 2008. Since our founding, we have been providing our customers with quick-turn prototypes to complete electronic solutions including turnkey PCB assembly. We offer a full array of services including engineering and project management.

API Alliance specializes in serving several vital industries, including Agricultural Equipment; Food Processing Equipment; Air Handling Equipment; Motors and Pumps; HVAC; and RV Controls. Additionally, we service multiple other industries needing electronic control assembly, design, and software development services.

API has steadily expanded its workforce to meet the demands of a continually increasing customer base. "API retains a high percentage of the assembly and engineering work it receives," said Mike Gigli, Vice President. "Customers often turn to API instead of hiring

additional full-time workers. We are considered an extension of many of our customers' engineering and assembly capabilities. Customers that outsource some work to API can then focus on their core business while API does the subsystems."

Companies face a wide array of pressures to reduce operating costs while also expanding their scope of business and increasing revenue. Partnering with API helps customers keep their manufacturing in the mid-west and can be an affordable means of accomplishing the conflicting agendas of doing more work with less time and money while making them more competitive. "If there are things that they cannot do in their own facilities and still be cost-effective, we can typically do those things for them with our expertise in design engineering services combined with our flexible assembly approach," said Kurt Webber, Business Development Manager.

API Alliance has extensive in-house capabilities that allow them to concept, design, test, and assemble electro-

mechanical, electrical, mechanical assemblies, and subassemblies. "Our customers come to us because they need to add a capability to a pre-existing product or because they have a new product idea and need technical expertise to make it a reality," Webber said.

"For instance, a customer came to us with the need to be able to remotely monitor fluid temperatures used in their production facility. We developed Bluetooth enabled sensors that fit the application, were moisture and temperature resistant and worked within their budget. We then developed software that allowed them to monitor the temperature remotely on their smartphones. Now they don't have to physically stand over it to monitor it," Webber said.

API stays in constant communication with customers about their needs, offering ideas for how to improve products. "API's staff takes ownership of the results, working with customers to achieve the best outcome. This often requires working together through a phased design process,"

Gigli said. "This ongoing, collaborative, transparent, customer partnership—this institutional mentality of an open-door policy—builds lasting customer relationships."

"API accepts orders as small as one unit-for a prototype-and as large as 500,000 a year. Most orders fall within the range of 50 to 10,000 per year. The company's original goal was to show manufacturers could get affordable design and assembly done in the U.S. instead of moving work offshore," Webber said.

"API can bring additional resources to projects as one of 4 subsidiaries of Adaptive Technologies Inc. Combined, the group of subsidiaries employ more than 100 and work in hardware, software, electrical and mechanical engineering. Having those additional capabilities readily available and on the same campus is a real advantage in fulfilling the needs of our customers," Gigli said.

Visit www.apialliance.com to learn more about the services that API Alliance can provide.



BBB focuses on building trust, rewarding ethics

BY LISA ESQUIVEL LONG

llong@kpcmedia.com

Better Business Bureau Serving Northern Indiana does more than protect consumers from scams and shoddy work. It also rewards businesses for doing things right.

The national private, nonprofit organization, based in Arlington, Virginia, formed in 1912. The region's BBB, at 4011 Parnell Ave., Fort Wayne, celebrates its 100th anniversary in December 2020. It serves Adams, Allen, Blackford, Cass, DeKalb, Elkhart, Fulton, Grant, Huntington, Jay, Kosciusko, LaGrange, Lake, LaPorte, Marshall, Miami, Noble, Porter, Steuben, St. Joseph, Wabash, Wells and Whitley counties.

Currently, more than 3,400 businesses and charities proudly display the BBB accreditation sticker on their front door. To receive accreditation, member businesses must meet a variety of standards, verified by the BBB. For charities, those standards include board oversight and size, what percentage of its total expenses are for program activities and the availability of annual reports.

BBB accreditation isn't a fad – some

businesses have been accredited for decades. BBB recently announced anniversaries that included the Elkhart Clinic, which has been accredited for 60 years, and First State Bank, for 55 years.

"The BBB Accreditation Seal shows your commitment to integrity, ethical business practices, and customer service," BBB says on its website.

BBB helps consumers with business and charities ratings and reviews as well as filing complaints. The organization encourages those contemplating contracting for work to do their research. Not all businesses are accredited, but they still get letter ratings — A+ to F — from BBB based on such things as the business's complaint history with BBB, the transparency of its business practices, and licensing and government actions known to BBB.

In addition to ratings, BBB provides a variety of consumer advocate education to protect yourself from scams. For example, is that really a census taker at your door? BBB offers tips such as never give out your Social Security number, and connects

you with verified sources. Are you being told you missed jury duty? Scammers will tell you that you have to pay a fine and ask you to wire money or put cash on a prepaid debit card and share the personal identification number, the BBB warns.

One scam netted thieves \$10,000 by posing as a computer repair company.

Even the pandemic is an opportunity for scammers. From fake puppy sales to stimulus check theft: there's a scam for that.

"Government agencies and legitimate business names and phone numbers are often used by scam artists to rip you off," BBB says.

The BBB Scamtracker at www.bbb.org/scamtracker helps consumers beware of the latest tricksters. Consumers can sign up for scam alerts and report scams at the site.

Want to keep identity thieves from grabbing information from your trash? BBB has Shred Day for customers to get rid of paystubs, tax records, medical papers, ATM receipts and other sensitive financial information. Shred Day will be held 9 a.m.-

noon Sept. 26 at the Afdent parking lot, 4041 Parnell Ave., Fort Wayne. A five file-box limit will be accepted for free, although a minimum \$5 donation is suggested, with funds benefitting the BBB's Charitable and Educational Foundation.

Not just for consumers, though, BBB provides education and support to area businesses, as well. Since 2006, BBB Serving Northern Indiana has honored businesses for their integrity with its Torch Awards for Marketplace Ethics, adding nonprofits to the honors in 2010 and a Person of Integrity category in 2008. In 2016 it began honoring a Pillar of the Community, with Fort Wayne Children's Zoo, Rotary Club of Fort Wayne, Embassy Theatre Foundation and Fort Wayne Citilink being recognized over the years.

"Now more than ever, demonstrating strong ethics is critical," President/CEO Marjorie Stephens said in an announcement for the opening of this year's Torch Awards for Marketplace Ethics nominations. "The Torch Awards are the perfect opportunity to elevate businesses that are going above and beyond, even in a time of crisis."



STANDING BESIDE SMALL BUSINESSES FOR OVER 100 YEARS



UNIVERTICAL

Product/Services

What is the main product(s) or service(s) your company provides?

We produce copper anodes and specialty chemicals for the electroplating industry.

What are you primary customers or clients?

Printed Circuit Board Manufacturer, Semiconductor Plating, Plating on Plastic Providers, Electronics Manufacturers, Proprietary Manufacturers of Specialty Chemicals, and Gravure Cylinders for the Printing Industry.

How is your product made or your services performed?

By melting and forming copper and blending chemicals.

How has your product or services changed/improved in recent years?

The value added. Our customers dictate how we have to provide customization for evolving needs i.e. special formulations, delivery time, packaging, etc.

What quality of service standards or services or awards have you received?

Registered to the current standard, ISO 9001:2015. We have several customer certifications. Our founder Charles Walker was inducted into the Electroplating Hall of Fame in our industry. Producing the best quality products has made Univertical a world leader in our industry. The fusion of our ISO Quality System with our Lean Manufacturing and 6 Sigma programs ensures benchmark products from the order to your door each and every time.

Where is your product or services delivered or distributed?

To 30 countries around the world. We have two manufacturing plants, one in Angola, and one in Suzhou, China.

Company History

How long has your business been a part of the Steuben County community?

We have been in Angola since 1998.

Who is the company's founder?

Charles Walker

Who is the current owner?

In 2013 we were acquired by our parent company, Alconix Corporation.

Employees

How many employees does your company have?

Around 75 employees in Angola.

How do employees contribute to service, quality and value of your company?

Our employees take ownership of and have pride in what we do. Serving our customers is the #1 priority. Loyalty to company, customers, vendors, and fellow employees. We make commitments and keep them. Family culture with personal interaction. Specialized knowledge is built on the job by specialized training.

What ways do your do employees make

a difference in either the way they do their jobs or the way they service their communities?

We are engaged with the local community. Our employees donate items to T.L.C. We participated in United Way's Day of Caring, we try to reach beyond the company walls and participate in the community. We participate in Boomerang Backpacks Program.

Do employees have continuing education opportunities? Advancement opportunities?

We do offer continuing education and tuition assistance. Employees receive ongoing training to broaden their skill sets. We are a growing company and with that creates a need for more employees at different levels within the organization.

Mission Statement/Philosophy

We exist to be the Global Benchmark of Quality in everything we do.

CELEBRATING 82 YEARS OF SERVICE TO THE PLATING INDUSTRY AND 22 YEARS IN STEUBEN COUNTY!



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We are involved in many businesses...

95% of what we make goes into the plating and surface finishing and ends up in a diverse group of applications including Aviation, Automotive, Electronics and Coinage. The products we manufacture are used in a multitude of products that consumers use everyday, including...chrome parts on cars and motorcycles, plated cylinders for the printing industry, faucets, travel racks and other shiny metal & plastic parts that have been plated. Many copper pennies in circulation contain copper made here in Angola!

Where we're going...

- In 2020, we are upgrading and expanding production line.
- We are actively pursuing opportunities to grow our business and add new jobs.
- We currently employ more than 75 people in Angola and are heavy consumers of area goods and services.



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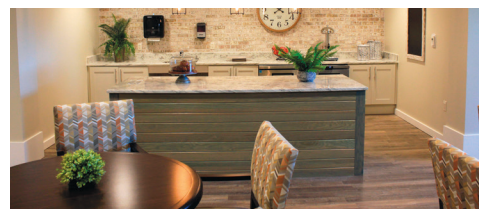
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2020 NORTHEAST INDIANA MANUFACTURING AWARDS

Northeast Indiana Manufacturers' Workplace Diversity Award

The best person for the job.

That is the philosophy when it comes to hiring at No-Sag Products, a division of Liggett & Platt Furniture Components.

The manufacturer has been a fixture in Kendallville since 1948, when the first factory was opened just north of downtown. The company moved to its current location in the 1980s upon the creation of the city's industrial park.

The Kendallville facility, with around 95 current employees, manufactures springs for furniture. In 2019 it manufactured over 75 million springs for the La-Z-Boy Corp.

Over its 72 years in Kendallville, No-Sag has had a reputation of welcoming and working with veterans and active duty military. Today the company's workforce makeup is around 7-8% military.

Over the years the manufacturer has been recognized for its hiring practices and dedication to veterans. On Nov. 7, 2019 No-Sag General Manager Russ Dunton, and Jason Maneke, human resources manager accepted the Hire Vets Medallion from Deputy Secretary of Labor Sam Shellenberger in a ceremony at the Department of Labor in Washington D.C.

In 2008 the Kendallville location was honored with The American Legion Certificate of Appreciation from the National Economic Commission of The American Legion for its hiring practices.

The company has provided jobs to veterans from World War II to the latest conflicts in Afghanistan.

One of those employees was Sam Crossley, who started with the company in 1961. Crossley and his wife Linda are longtime employees of the company. Sam, a shift supervisor, retired from the company after 47 years in 2008 and has since passed away. Linda continues to work for the company in



the front office on a part-time basis.

Linda said the company was very supportive of her family when Sam was drafted to go to war during the Vietnam War. Upon returning from active duty Sam's job was waiting for him at No-Sag.

"We are like one big family here," she said.

Tim Knox, a current employee and an Army veteran said, "They have been good to me, a matter of fact they are good to all veterans.

"When I went to reserve status for the Gulf War, they were really supportive," Knox said.

Since starting at the company, Knox has taken advantage of the company's apprenticeship and schooling program. He has

completed three degrees and is currently working to complete a bachelor's degree in engineering management.

The program is certified through the Department of Labor for tool and die laborers and manufacturing laborers. The company pays for the training as long as employees carry a "C" average.

Maneke said when openings in the program become available "the best person for the job" is accepted into the program.

Oscar Handshoe, a 28-year Air Force veteran was hired Sept. 8 at the Kendallville facility. He said he turned to the manufacturing facility because he was looking for a job close to home.

Handshoe's mother worked for the facility and he said he was drawn to it's family atmosphere.

In winning the Hire Vets Medallion Award, nominees are evaluated on their veteran hiring practices, percentage of veterans in the workforce, training, education and other service offered to veterans and support of active duty veteran employees, among other criteria.

For the past 12 years the company has marked the 9/11 anniversary with a picnic and remembrance ceremony. Each picnic has a speaker and donations are made to various veterans organizations. The last donation went to the Honor Flight.

Ron Bowie, a 14-year National Guard veteran, is currently a business unit and data analysis specialists for the company. Bowie was a member of the 1st Battalion 293rd Infantry Division in Fort Wayne before transferring to Fort Benjamin Harrison to be a part of the National Guard band. Today he plays with the American Legion Band, which performs during Honor Flight celebrations at the Fort Wayne International Airport.

All three employees agree that their military experience has given them the skills, training and leadership needed to be part of the No-Sag team.

Handshoe said the team work he learned during his years in the Air Force can be transferred to the factory floor, when it comes to working with other employees.

During an earlier interview Dutton said, "Vets have a skill set that gives them a leg up." He added that veterans are disciplined, receive training well and are on time.

"Vets have sacrificed a lot," Maneke said. "The least we can do is give them gainful employment."

Story by Andy Barrand

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Having established a regional presence in 1906 in North America, the Bosch Group employs 34,600 associates in more than 100 locations, as of December 31, 2019. In 2019 Bosch generated consolidated sales of \$14.4 billion in the U.S., Canada and Mexico.

Bosch manufactures products serving the mobility, home and industrial and trade sectors, creating innovative products to create ease and solve problems.

Bosch also offers wide community support in the areas it serves through the Bosch Community Fund, the corporate foundation for Bosch in North America was established in 2011 to provide community engagement and philanthropic support on behalf of our company. The Fund focuses on the enrichment of science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education and advancing environmental sustainability initiatives. The company partners with 501(c)(3) organizations and educational institutions across the country to provide quality project-based learning hands-on learning opportunities for students and professional development for teachers.



Rea Magnet Wire has been blazing trails in its manufacture for more than 85 years, looks forward to building on a legacy of quality, innovation and responsive support.

Rea has a heritage of innovation and setting the highest industry standards. Along with advancements in magnet wire, the company has grown through an unwavering commitment to integrity, service and responsiveness to our customers. Today's Rea continues to be privately owned and is guided by a leadership team that fosters open communication, career growth, diversity and corporate responsibility.

As one of the world's largest manufacturers of magnet and nonferrous wire products, Rea produces copper and aluminum insulated magnet wire, electro-mechanical cable and bare wire used in the manufacture of motors, generators, transformers and coils. From cars and computers to power grids and alternative energy needs, Rea has built a reputation by providing robust products that are right for customers – right for their manufacturing processes and right for the life of their products.

Every day, Rea collaborates with customers in solving problems and finding the right solutions for their applications. Operational excellence, customized logistics/supply chain solutions and long-term strategic thinking create value and further their success.

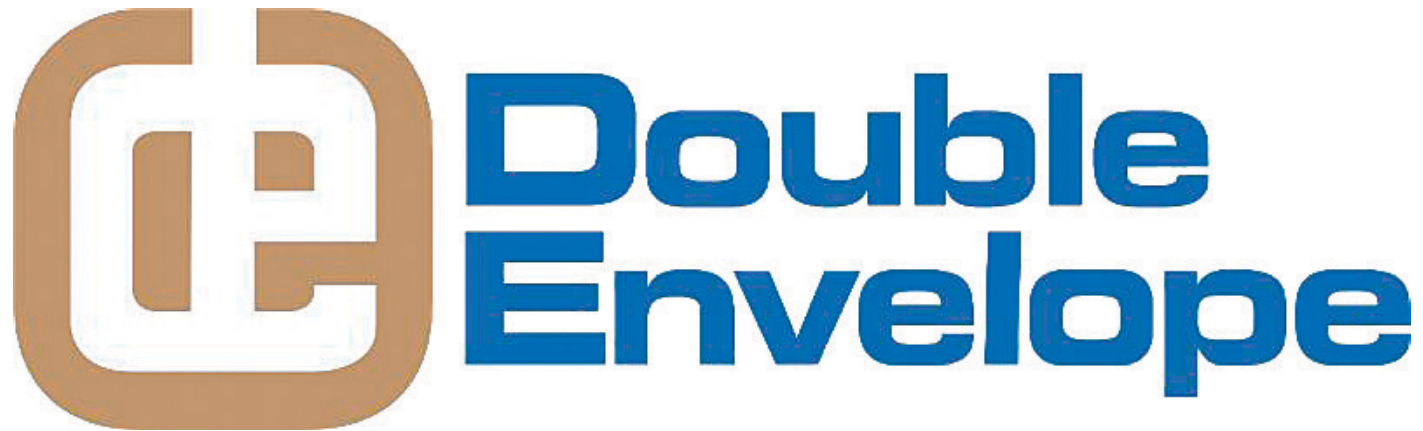
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Double Envelope specializes in the manufacturing of commercial, custom printed and specialty envelopes for the transactional and direct mail industries. With more than 400 employee owners in Virginia, Florida, Maryland and Indiana, producing more than 7 billion envelopes annually, Double Envelope has grown to become the 3rd largest envelope manufacturer in the United States.

Double Envelope's continued growth has been the result of our constant commitment to process improvements and ability to adapt to our clients' needs. We focus on strategic opportunities where we can be more than just an envelope supplier to our clients. We look to develop long-term partnerships by being problem solvers and creating value-added solutions that promote increased productivity and measured cost savings. Our objective is to build long-term partnerships by being flexible and developing a customer support strategy that best fits the need of each individual client.

In 2010 the company made two strategic acquisitions which expanded the capacity,

capability and geographic reach of Double. One was the acquisition of Wolf Envelope in Angola, which created a platform to expand and serve the major markets in the Midwest.

Double Envelope is proud of its reputation for courteous service and uncompromising dedication to quality envelope manufacturing for more than 100 years. Whether the need is for packaging a product, accommodating general business communication or designing a special direct mail carrier and return envelope, we are prepared to assist from start to finish with our innovative flexibility to meet the need. Double Envelope remains highly focused on responsive service and developing unique and custom solutions for its customers. The acquisitions have been seamlessly integrated into Double Envelope and provide the ability to efficiently move work between plants. This effort is supported by sharing and standardizing best practices as well as investment of systems to efficiently manage in a multi plant environment. Disciplined strategic growth along with a dedication to execution has made Double Envelope the preferred supplier for many of the largest and most demanding mailers in the U.S. today.



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Double Envelope specializes in the manufacturing of commercial, custom printed and specialty envelopes for the transactional and direct mail industries serving some of the nation's largest businesses. We print their envelopes and ship to inserting companies where the sales flyers and customer statements are inserted prior to mailing.

Double Envelope purchased the assets of Wolf Envelope in 2010 and continues to operate the business from the same location.

Our Angola location has 90 full time employees. The company invested over \$4,500,000 in new equipment in 2018-2019. Angola is the largest producer of product within Double Envelope, averaging over 180,000,000 units per month.

Double Envelope and its parent company, BSC Venture Holdings, Inc. (www.bscventures.com) is proud to be 100% employee owned.

Double Envelope is proud of its reputation for courteous service and uncompromising dedication to quality envelope manufacturing for over 100 years. We remain highly focused on responsive service and developing unique and custom solutions for our customers. Disciplined strategic growth along with a dedication to execution has made Double Envelope the preferred supplier for many of the largest and most demanding mailers in the US today.

Operator-Inspector positions currently available. Three eight-hour shifts available 5 days a week with occasional OT on Saturdays as well as machine lines working two 12-hour shifts - 2 days on, 2 days off and every other 3-day weekend (36 hours one week and 48 hours the next). We run 24/7 and employees can work the schedule that best suits their personal lives.



BUTLER MILL SERVICES COMPANY

Product/Services

What is the main product or service your company provides?

Butler Mill Services handles, processes and sells steel slag which is a co-product of the steel making process.

Who are your primary customers?

Our primary customer is Steel Dynamics Butler along with Iron Dynamics and our secondary customers are asphalt companies, excavating companies and individuals that use our aggregate products to make driveways.

How is your product made and services performed?

Our aggregate products are screened, crushed, sized and tested for quality on site. Our steel mill services are performed using heavy mobile equipment and highly qualified operators.

How has your product/service changed in recent years?

In recent years, we have added a patented new product called Duraberm, which is used as a low-cost driveway stone. The heavy mobile equipment fleet we use to perform our services for SDI Butler & IDD

has been upgraded significantly in the last five years.

What quality of service or awards have you received?

We have gone more than 14 years without a lost time safety incident. We are ISO 9001:2015 certified.

Where is your product or service delivered or distributed?

Our aggregate products are distributed to asphalt paving companies, excavating companies and individuals that are building a driveway or roadway. All of our services are conducted for SDI on site.

Company History

How long has your business been a part of the DeKalb, Steuben, Noble or LaGrange community?

We have been supplying quality stone/aggregate products in the local community for more than 25 years.

Who is the company's founder?

Ed Levy Sr.

Who is the current owner?

Ed Levy Jr.

How has the company grown over the years?

Our site at SDI Butler has been around for 25 years but our parent company Levy has been operating for more than 100 years.

What changes have been significant in the growth of this company?

More than 100 years ago, our company started in steel mill services but we have expanded into other industries like asphalt paving, concrete, quarries, mining, ready mix concrete, sand and gravel, including international locations.

Employees

How many employees does your company have?

We have 50 employees at Butler Mill Services.

How do the employees contribute to the service, quality, and values of your company?

Our employees take pride in performing safe and environmentally friendly services for Steel Dynamics and our aggregate/stone customers.

How do the employees contribute to innovation or the future direction of your company?

At Butler Mill Services, we generate new ideas by learning from our employees and customers on a daily basis. We also benchmark using our other sites around the world.

What ways do your employees make a difference in either the way they do their jobs or in the way they service their communities?

Butler Mill Services employees turn a co-product of the steel- & iron-making process into a valuable aggregate/stone that can be used throughout the local community in various applications.

Do employees have continuing education opportunities? Advancement opportunities? Recognition?

Butler Mill Services employees have opportunities for education and advancement and are recognized on a monthly basis for accomplishments in safety, environmental and operational requirements.



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2020 NORTHEAST INDIANA
MANUFACTURING AWARDS

Northeast Indiana “Green” Manufacturer of the Year

You might not know where Reliable Production Machining and Welding is.

But, chances are, you could point out its solar field, at least from within view of S.R. 3 in Kendallville.

In the fall of 2017, Reliable installed 3,500 individual solar panels, creating a 1.2 megawatt array at the end of Ohio Street leading to S.R. 3.

The field produces 75% of Reliable’s energy and uses net-metering, which means extra energy absorbed during the day is stored to power its manufacturing facilities at night.

And, it’s a project that’s in the process of paying for itself, Reliable President Chuck Drerup said.

“We figured the payback to be somewhere between seven and 10 years,” Drerup said.

Not only does the solar field benefit Reliable, but its development stimulated other local businesses – for example, Drerup said, a company in Avilla installed the array.

Plus, it’s something that helps to ensure Reliable’s longevity. It’s a family-owned company Drerup has been a part of his entire life, as have many of his employees.

“We plan on being here for many, many years. It’s a long-term investment. It’s a tool that should provide energy 20, 30, 40 years into the future,” Drerup said.

Solar credits that the panels produce are leading to a bit of extra cash for Reliable, too, Drerup said.

Reliable’s solar field is a promising endeavor for the company’s future, Drerup said. One of the only pieces that’s missing now is finding enough workers to hire.

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic, Drerup said Reliable and other manufac-



turers on Ohio street were having trouble stabilizing their workforce.

“Everybody’s having a hard time getting people right now,” Drerup said. “If you drive down Ohio Street, you’ll see all kinds of for-hire signs.”

However, employees that Reliable does retain prove to be loyal to the company for a long time, Drerup said.

“I would say 70% of the (employees) have been here for 20 years. It’s the bottom 25% that changes quite often,” Drerup said.

During the beginning stages of the pandemic, Chief Operating Officer Greg

Salway said Reliable offered pay for people who decided to still come to work, and allowed others to choose to stay home.

The plant continued to be flexible with worker needs during the pandemic while making the workplace safe to work while avoiding the virus, adhering to social distancing and PPE guidelines, Salway said.

Reliable had humble beginnings in 1946, when Harvey L. Charles started the company in a casket manufacturer’s basement in Kendallville.

Within a few years, Reliable moved operations to the old Kendallville Gas Works facility – an

80,000 square foot upgrade.

Originally, Reliable made products like nose housings, pulleys and commentator plates for some starter and generator rebuilders. In the 1970s, that line expanded to providing for the RV industry and marine and trailer manufacturers.

Reliable started supplying wheel hubs and brake drums, reaching over 500,000 units per year. In that time, supplying to the garden tractor industry and starter rebuilder industry was still going strong, too.

The 1980s for Reliable meant opening a third facility specifically for making axles and trailer supply products.

A fourth facility, which expanded production space beyond 125,000 square feet came in the 1990s.

In 2010, Reliable received the name it uses to this day, Reliable Production Machining and Welding, a change from the previous name of Reliable Tool and Machine and inclusion of Mazak Vertical CNC Machining Center.

Today, Reliable serves the agricultural, lawn care, construction and RV and boating industries, as well as providing aftermarket and retail parts.

Reliable utilizes CNC machines, or computer numerical control, to manufacture its parts. Put more simply, instead of factory workers using wheels and pulleys to operate machines, they use a system of robots and pre-programmed devices to make products.

“We’re basically a CNC shop, that, for the most part, we make parts for customers, to their specifications,” Drerup said.

Reliable is currently hiring at its Kendallville plants.

Story by Sara Barker

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Semifinalists: Green Manufacturer



In 1888, a man named Marvin Stone invented the original paper straw and patented his idea. That patent became the foundation for the company Stone later created—the same company that manufactures Aardvark, The Original Paper Straw, today. Stone's patent and his innovative spirit for all things round and tubular lives on with Aardvark.

Aardvark paper straws were re-introduced in 2007, in response to a growing anti-plastic movement. Restaurants, hospitals, and other services industries, the main buyers of plastic straws in the US, were forced to look for more sustainable, eco-friendly options.

As a leading US manufacturer of small-size cylindrical tubing solutions, Precision Products Group Inc. was asked to create a straw that was more environmentally friendly. The answer was in their archives: Marvin Stone's original 1888 patent for the first paper straw. Putting a modern spin on Stone's original concept, Aardvark was able to create a straw, using natural papers, that was more sustainable and more durable than any other paper straw on the market.

In 2018, Aardvark Straws was purchased by Hoffmaster Group, Inc. Aardvark Straws now adds a new product offering of sustainable paper straws to Hoffmaster's ever growing line of eco-friendly products.

Today, Aardvark paper straws can be found at retailers and distributors that offer made in the USA and Eco-Friendly products. Aardvark paper straws are the only paper straws on the market that are made in the USA, use only FDA compliant, food-grade materials, and are marine degradable and compostable.



Brightmark started in 2016 as a group of engineers who decided to turn their attention from other corporate ventures to being part of some of the most transformative innovations in our fight for the environment.

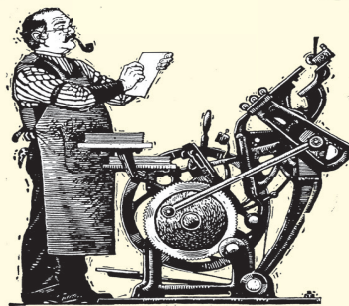
Through science-first approaches and powerful partnerships, Brightmark is transforming organic waste into renewable natural gas and creating innovative approaches to plastics renewal.

Only 9% of the plastic manufactured in the United States each year is recycled. The rest ends up in an incinerator, a landfill, or as litter in the natural environment, where it is doomed to sit for thousands of years. Post-use plastic is choking our waterways, littering our communities, and harming our wildlife.

Brightmark's plastics renewal facility in Ashley will divert 100,000 tons of plastic waste each year from landfills and incinerators and convert it into 18 million gallons of ultra-low sulfur diesel fuel and naphtha blend stocks and 5 million gallons of wax. That's more plastic than the weight of 5,400 tractor trailers or seven Brooklyn Bridges.



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Who we are....

For more than 150 years RRD has kept up on the latest trends in printing. We provide companies with communication solutions that span the lifecycle of a program, while our individual capabilities can support a specific project or phase. Our Angola team converts and prints pressure sensitive labels, intelligently imaged projects, integrated labels and many custom solutions supporting customers in every industry.

When and where have you seen RRD?

We are there with you, every day. From the roll that prints your receipt in the super market, to the tracking label that ensures that critical package is properly delivered to your doorstep. Maybe it is a packing slip, window label, retail marketing label, price sticker in the store or that product ID label on the plumber's putty you used on your last DIY project. Our employees are working hard to manufacture quality products that touch consumers across the globe and enable our customers to effectively communicate with their audience every single day.

The next Frontier of Communications....

Change and challenge have been our companions for more than 150 years. We have and will continue to evolve as we embrace the changes that are redefining our industry and continually seek new and better approaches to manage the communication solutions that keep businesses and organizations running. Locally, we continue investing in our employees and the technology that allows our customers to improve communications. We have significant capital investments in Flexographic printing presses, label tabbing and affixing finishing lines, automated rewinders and intelligent imaging line upgrades that allow us to print things such as 2D or QR codes that you would scan with your smart phone for product information.



The Angola plant has 200 dedicated full time employees. Our employees take great pride in what they do and have a safety first mindset in working to keep each other safe each and every day. They have truly been the backbone of our ability to be flexible and creative over the years, continuing to develop and pursue new value added solutions that keep us on the leading edge with our customers' needs. Our employees work hard to see that they make a difference for the customers they serve and the important communities in which they live. We could not do it without them!

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RP WAKEFIELD

Product/Services

What are the main products or services your company provides?
Hardwood moulding/hardwood mantels

Who are your primary customers or clients?

Contractors, cabinet companies, do-it-yourself people, etc.

How is your product made or your services performed?

We buy kiln dried, raw lumber, rip and mill the wood to size.

How has your product or services changed/improved in recent years?

We now produce furniture legs for our customers and some RV parts.

What quality of service standards or awards have you received?

We have received a couple of awards from our customers for good products and on-time service.

Where is your product or services delivered or distributed?

We deliver and ship on our truck in a 30-mile radius, but we also ship via

common carrier to Michigan and around Indianapolis.

Company History

How long has your business been a part of the community?

Since 1954

Who is the company's founder?

R P Wakefield sold to Donald Ruegsegger/Robert Simon/Robert Wyatt sold to Brian Ruegsegger (current owner)

Who is the current owner?

Brian Ruegsegger

How has the company grown over the years?

Went from a plywood supplier to a hardwood supplier to cabinet companies.

What changes have been significant in the growth of this company?

Vision to supply the customer's request—purchase machines to make this happen.

Employees

How many employees does your

company have?
30

How do the employees contribute to the service, quality and values of your company?

Each employee is cross trained to follow the product while processing to the finished product.

How do the employees contribute to innovation or the future direction of your company?

Since the employee does work on the product, input from them is taken seriously.

What ways do your employees make a difference in either the way they do their jobs or in the way they service their communities?

We allow the employees to contribute to the United Way and food drives from the nearby food pantries.

Do employees have continuing education opportunities? Advancement opportunities? Recognition?

We do recognize employees for their

time with our company. We have advanced from within the company.

Future Plans/Expansions

How is the internet playing a role in your company's future?

We advertise on the internet and also purchase on the internet. Take orders, and also receive invoices.

Mission Statement/Philosophy/Community Activities

What guiding principles or philosophy does your company take pride in?

We feel our customers and employees are the backbone of our company. We treat each customer equally. We treat our employees fairly and try to understand when problems come.

How is your company involved in the community?

We sponsor many activities: United Way, The Filling Station in Butler, various school activities and community activities. We are also active in the DeKalb County Chamber of Commerce.

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2020 NORTHEAST INDIANA MANUFACTURING AWARDS

Small Northeast Indiana Manufacturing Company Highlights



Allegheny Coatings, a metal protection application manufacturer, serves a diverse assortment of customer segments spanning the automotive, aerospace, agricultural, general industrial, appliance, and various other industries, where customers require specific, focused coating standards.

Opened in 2000 as a purpose-built expansion of the original Angola, IN facility, the Allegheny Coatings Fremont facility was established as a reliable, high volume spray applicator for steel parts requiring extended corrosion protection. In 2006, the company's Fremont facility was sold to Curtiss-Wright Surface Technologies, and operated as Metal Improvement Company. In 2017, Allegheny Coatings repurchased the Fremont facility to expand its offerings

in the Midwest. The facility has since received significant financial investment to improve services and add capabilities, including dip-spin processing to service bulk fastener and hardware customers.

Under Allegheny Coatings's leadership the facility has experienced significant revenue growth, including double digit growth for three straight quarters in 2019 and a strong first quarter of 2020. Since reopening post-Covid-19 shut down, production volumes have steadily increased and continue trending toward pre-Covid-19 levels.

The Fremont plant General Manager is Jeff Hall, leading a team of 40 employees. The 72,000 square foot facility is located at 302 McSwain Dr, Fremont, IN. 46737.



The story and growth of First Gear is an exciting one! The company began by producing precision gears for Indy-Car engine manufacturers. The demand for knowledge, quality, and precision at that level of competition is uncompromising. That passion for excellence remains at the core of First Gear's culture. Today the company serves discriminating customers in aerospace, medical, defense, robotics, motion control, motorsports, food processing and general industrial applications. First Gear supports customers from prototype development through high volume production.

In the summer of 2020, the company moved to a 47,000 square-foot facility in Allen County, close to I-69 in Fort Wayne, which tripled their manufac-

turing space. They operate with modern automated equipment, directed by comprehensive computer and gear cutting manufacturing expertise - from raw material through finished gears and final inspection.

First Gear combines thorough understanding of all state-of-the-art gear machining processes and systems to ensure their conformance to industry and customer requirements. The company also uses statistical process controls for monitoring and measuring quality, a feature that is integrated into their inspection equipment. First Gear is AS9100 Certified, ITAR Registered and an ISO 17025 Certified calibration lab.

The company is led by Tim Lankenau, President, and has a workforce of 26.



Custom Bottling & Packaging is a minority-owned business with roots in Northern Indiana. The manufacturing lines are capable of filling one oz. to one gallon containers, with speeds up to 120 bottles per minute. Each production line is fully automated allowing for quick change-overs and low loss allowances; reducing product costs and turnaround times.

The company's product categories served include: Household/Home Care, Automotive, Institutional, Industrial, Lawn

Care, Value Added Packaging, Twin Packs, Pallet Displays, Shrink Wrapping, POP's, Kitting, Pick Packing and Multi Packs.

The company has added additional shifts, completed a building expansion and has expanded its product line.

Kriss Stackhouse is president of the company, located at 100 South Parker Dr., Ashley, IN. 46705, has approximately 25 employees, and has now been in business for 10 years.



The RP Wakefield Company, which recently celebrated 50 years in business, is a manufacturer of hardwood, plywood, MDF, and particle board components to many industries in Northeast Indiana, Northwest Ohio, and across the Midwest.

The company manufactures dimensional parts and wood moulding of all types including: Cabinet frame stock; Edge glued material; Panel stock; Cutting boards; Plywood parts; Wood components for RV and mobile home interiors; Raised panels for doors;

Fireplace mantels; Drawer Box Sides; Architectural Moldings; Frame pieces for upholstered furniture. Wood wall treatments; and S4S sanded lumber. The also operate a retail store in Waterloo for retail and wholesale customers.

Through the years, R.P. Wakefield has acquired a vast array of wood working equipment, used to produce quality moulding and other hardwood products.

Brian Ruegsegger is president of the company located at 600 West Maple Street, Waterloo, IN. 46793.



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- 2**
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- | | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> CFO | <input type="checkbox"/> CEO/COO | <input type="checkbox"/> Executive VP |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Controller | <input type="checkbox"/> Director of Finance | <input type="checkbox"/> CIO/MIS/IT |
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2. Please indicate your business or industry (check one):

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| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications/Media | |

3. Number of employees in your company:

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Less than 25 | <input type="checkbox"/> 25-99 | <input type="checkbox"/> 100-499 |
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3

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Vestil at a glance

Vestil Manufacturing Corporation is an industry leader in the production and distribution of material handling equipment. We feature over 1,000 different product lines, many of which are in stock and ready for immediate shipment. We stand behind our products with people that listen to our customer's needs and find the best solution for their application. We deliver value to our customers by engineering new designs and products which increase productivity, improve workplace ergonomics, and decrease worker injury. We provide a broad product line to our customers in an efficient manner allowing for the best possible customer experience.

A look at the past

Vestil Manufacturing Corporation is a fourth-generation family-owned and operated business. We were founded in 1958 in Albion, Michigan when the owners of T & S Equipment started a new company with the intention of manufactur-

ing truck and rail dock equipment. T & S Equipment started with 20 employees and 11,000 square feet of manufacturing space. The dock seal division of United Tractor was purchased in 1968 for the purpose of expanding the product assortment. During the 1970's, the company redefined its product strategy to include material handling equipment. A concerted effort was made to focus specifically on custom-made electric/hydraulic equipment. In 1982, Vestil moved from Michigan into a new larger building in Angola, Indiana to allow for future growth opportunities. In the late 1980s, the material handling industry began to grow as employers sought to lighten the load on their employees. Vestil built a new manufacturing facility to meet that demand in 1989. This new facility addressed immediate space needs and laid the foundation for additional growth. 6 expansions followed from 1990-1997. Vestil achieved even greater organizational

growth in 1998, 2005, and 2010. In 2018, a new fulfillment center with a state of the art warehouse management system was constructed to extend our 48-hour quick ship program to even more products in order to better service our growing customer base.

A look at the present

Vestil Manufacturing Corporation operates several facilities in the same industrial campus. We have a team of full-time engineers focusing on mechanical, fluid power, electrical, and industrial disciplines. Our sales and support staff are dedicated to providing the best customer experience possible. We also take pride in being a leader and frontrunner in providing the best content and quality product data in the industry. A team of media specialists are standing by to assist you with our rich repository of content to best represent our products. This includes a state-of-the-art multimedia studio, product spec validation, and portal

management. Vestil offers the most diverse product line in the industry through a philosophy of innovation. We believe that new product development and being first-to-market is the life-blood of our organization. Vestil products are manufactured using over 100 different pieces of equipment. That list of equipment includes 2 sheet metal lasers, a tube laser, 2 CNC plasma tables, 2 CNC lathes, 3 CNC mills, 3 CNC band saws, 4 press brakes, 2 shears, a standalone warehouse management system, 106 steel and aluminum MIG welders, a state-of-the-art machine shop, over 80 welding stations, 3 robotic welders and an automated small package shipping line.

A look at the future

The future for Vestil Manufacturing Corporation is bright! 2019 was another record sales year for the company. Outstanding, dependable people and continued excellence from our customers will lead the way. Vestil, we've got it!



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