

FORMING THE FUTURE

In today's manufacturing environment, it's refreshing to find a new company introducing an innovative product. M.O.M. Tools LLC, Shaker Heights, Ohio, is a start-up company with a patent on a dual-head punch press intended to improve productivity on the shop floor. The company is currently manufacturing its dual-head punches and dies along with ancillary products for metal piercing operations.

What values guide your company?

We value strong business ethics, customer satisfaction, and respect for all employees.

What have you learned recently that would be valuable to fellow industry leaders?

Be open to new ideas and couple that with a desire to learn.

What do you feel are the most important issues facing the industry?

The industry might have rested on its laurels and not been able to recognize the competitive challenges from around the world. Manufactured products that require low-skilled labor are gone from the continental United States forever. Our focus should be to target the high-end manufactured products. Also, manufacturing innovation is a key component to maintain a strong presence in high-end sheet metal fabrication and fastener markets.

Where do you expect to encounter the greatest challenges in the next three years?

China will continue to grow as a formidable competitor in both low-tech and high-tech production. Our industry must continue to develop and embrace new technologies, and set aside the NIH [not invented here] syndrome, or we will not succeed. There must be a free flow of ideas to succeed in the future world of metal fabrication manufacturing.

What are you doing now to create the future you want?

We are endeavoring to establish joint ventures and strategic partnerships to gather new practices and techniques to establish a defense against domestic and nondomestic competitors.

What new technology have you acquired?

The incorporation of the dual-head punch in the manufacturing process will help companies realize a stronger bottom line through substantial increases in productivity.

The dual-head punch addresses problems associated with wear. On average, metal fabrication manufacturers have to replace approximately four to five punches per machine per shift. In economic terms, each time a punch must be changed, the operator has to stop the machine to replace the worn punch, which means production is lost during the tool change.

Our dual-head punch increases the useful life of the punch by at

least 75 to 100 percent, which increases productivity by reducing the number of changeouts. Metal fabrication manufacturers should also experience a reduction in machine maintenance cost, with the punch tool's sharpness lasting as long as or longer than the die. This cost savings is brought about by combining the maintenance process into one cycle through the replacement of the die and the punch tool at the same time.

Our leading-edge technology, the dual-head punch, operates like the traditional single-head punch until the first head experiences significant wear and needs to be changed. At this point, the second head is separated from the first with a patented annular groove.

What internal forces impact your company, and how are you facing them?

The internal force impacting M. O. M. Tools LLC is the development of production techniques and procedures that ensure the best tool and die products available. This is being addressed through rigid engineering and strenuous inspection procedures to ensure good-quality tools and dies.

How do you encourage innovation in your company?

As a new company in this industry, our foundation for launching this new product is built on pure innovation. We must maintain innovation as a significant component of our corporate culture by continuing to seek out and be receptive to new ideas, concepts, and procedures.

What advice would you give a young professional entering the industry?

Maintain a thirst for knowledge. Do not accept existing systems as the way things have to be. Find a work environment that embraces the notion of pushing the envelope.

How has involvement with FMA benefited your company?

As a start-up company, we found FMA to be a resource of significant value in the development of our business plan. FMA provided technical information that would have been difficult to acquire in other places. We found FMA to be very responsive to our questions about the sheet metal fabrication industry.

FMA and TPA members may apply to be considered for *Forming the Future* by completing an application at www.fmanet.org.

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