



# OHIO VALLEY MANUFACTURING

Since 1999 Ohio Valley Manufacturing has provided value-oriented machining services for a range of industrial manufacturers. With in-house specialization in blanking, stamping and tool and die machining, the family business stands out as a premier player serving automotive and heavy truck and trailer manufacturers as well as companies producing recreational, agricultural and lawn and garden equipment.

Customers have long relied on Ohio Valley for the company's strong grasp on emerging technologies, attention to detail and efficient, friendly service. This strong focus on service and value has been carried through three generations, including current owners John, Jeff and Steven Fanello, president and vice presidents respectively.

Steven Fanello, vice president of sales and the youngest of the Fanello brothers, conveys that a family atmosphere carries through all aspects of the company. "It all started in the 1950s when our grandfather, Mick Fanello, and his brother started and grew a successful manufacturing company into a

14-facility empire in the mid-1990s," he recounts. "Our father, Mike Fanello, decided to step away from his father's success in 1999 to join forces with his sons and that's when Ohio Valley Manufacturing was born."

### Fast reaction time

Ohio Valley's small, family-controlled business model allows the business to adapt to a changing market with greater efficiency than many competitors. The Fanello brothers can make decisions quickly, staying in line with the company's long-term best interest without the heavy bureaucracy that slows down companies that have to answer to shareholders.

In the wake of the recession, this efficiency and ability to apply appropriately scaled solutions have been crucial to the business' ongoing success. The market crash in 2008 that affected the sales and operations of many of Ohio Valley's largest customers could have been catastrophic for the family-owned company, but quick thinking and an efficient gear shift allowed Ohio Valley to avert a crisis.

## A FAMILY TRADITION IN BLANKING, STAMPING AND TOOL AND DIE MACHINING

Produced by Ryan Fecteau and Written by Jeanee Dudley

In the early 2000s, approximately 90 percent of the company's revenue came from tier-2 automotive customers. This position in the supply chain had been significant to the company's structure since its inception. Around 2006, the team diversified operations, adding lines and in-house resources to serve heavy truck and equipment customers with heavier gauge needs. A few years later when the automotive industry nosedived, Ohio Valley was able to redistribute resources, taking on more heavy truck and equipment work to balance the operation.

For a time, roughly 75 percent of the company's volume was in heavy truck and trailer work. In 2016, the market has shifted again and Ohio Valley is once again ramping up production for tier-2 automotive customers. "This year heavy truck work will likely be around 60 percent, with tier-2 automotive at 35 percent and the rest lawn, garden, agriculture, etc."

### Keeping in step with the market

The Ohio Valley team has recently taken on multiple new tier-2 automotive programs for 2016, serving suppliers of major automotive companies. Meanwhile, the business is still strong in heavy truck and trailer, with Hendrickson — a manufacturer of heavy-duty trucks and trailers — still the company's largest customer.

"We are continuing to grow with our top customers, as they continue to lean on our expertise to assist them with designing new products to be the most cost efficient, while always keeping a focus on quality," notes Steven.

An expansion project in 2014 made space for increased capacity, including a 3,000-ton blanking press and feedline capable of feeding .500-inch-thick material. Coupled with the company's 4,000-ton press, Ohio Valley can handle higher grade materials, which have become more popular in both heavy truck work and for weight reduction in automotive manufacturing.

“The higher tensile strengths in today’s steel that the automotive companies are using forces Ohio Valley Manufacturing into using heavier tonnage presses to stamp the thinner gauge material in some cases,” notes John. “With these capabilities expanded in-house, Ohio Valley is positioned to continue to expand its market share.”

Ohio Valley has significant potential in the post-recession economy. “Over the last couple of years coming out of the recession, we’ve seen a lot of people starting to kick off projects and invest in new programs,” Steven explains. “We’re seeing the benefit of that in a lot of areas. We’re doing a lot more now with only a few more employees than we were before the recession.”

Changes in technology keep the business in a state of constantly improved efficiency. Ohio Valley has added automated stacking units, computers at all presses, in-house software and pallet barcoding for optimized traceability. The company utilizes electronic data interchange (EDI), allowing information to flow through all steps of production. The company’s in-house information technology staff continues to adapt and upgrade programs, including proprietary software, to keep the business streamlined.

In addition to logistics-oriented technology, Ohio Valley has also ramped up its social media presence. Working with New York-based Thomas Net, the business maintains steady updates to

its LinkedIn, Twitter and blog feeds as well as some Facebook activity. “We’re not there because we have a particularly strong purchasing network on social media,” Steven clarifies. “The benefit to us is that it has allowed us to be optimized on search engines. When people are looking for our services, we come up quickly and our web presence has led to a lot of direct business.”

### Keeping that family feel

While social networks play an important role, the most important network for Ohio Valley is the one in-house. With approximately 110 employees, the Fanello brothers consider the business one big family—a philosophy passed down through the generations from Mick to Mike, who died unexpectedly in 2010, and is a legacy that the current owners are proud to continue.

“We have always had a closely knit team,” notes Steven. “I know a lot of people say it, but we operate as a family with our core team, not just my brothers and me. That extends out to every employee here.” To show their appreciation, the Fanello brothers provide high-quality health care plans and a matching 401(k) benefit package for employees.



Congratulations to **Ohio Valley Manufacturing.**

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At the holidays, the family atmosphere shines brightly. Around Christmastime, employees are invited to an annual cookout. In shifts, team members barbecue, many employees contribute with side dishes, while relaxing out in the shop. At Thanksgiving, the Fanello family provides certificates for turkeys, a tradition started by their grandfather, Mick.

"It's in our blood; the No. 1 focus is on employees, treating them right and creating a good workplace," says Steven. "That's one thing our grandpa always did and our father continued to take part in as well. My brothers and I look forward to continuing the traditions of Grandpa and Dad." And as the family grows, Ohio Valley Manufacturing will continue to promote a family atmosphere alongside safe and efficient machining services. •



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To all our friends at  
**Ohio Valley Manufacturing**  
 a big thank you, much continued success  
 and congratulations!