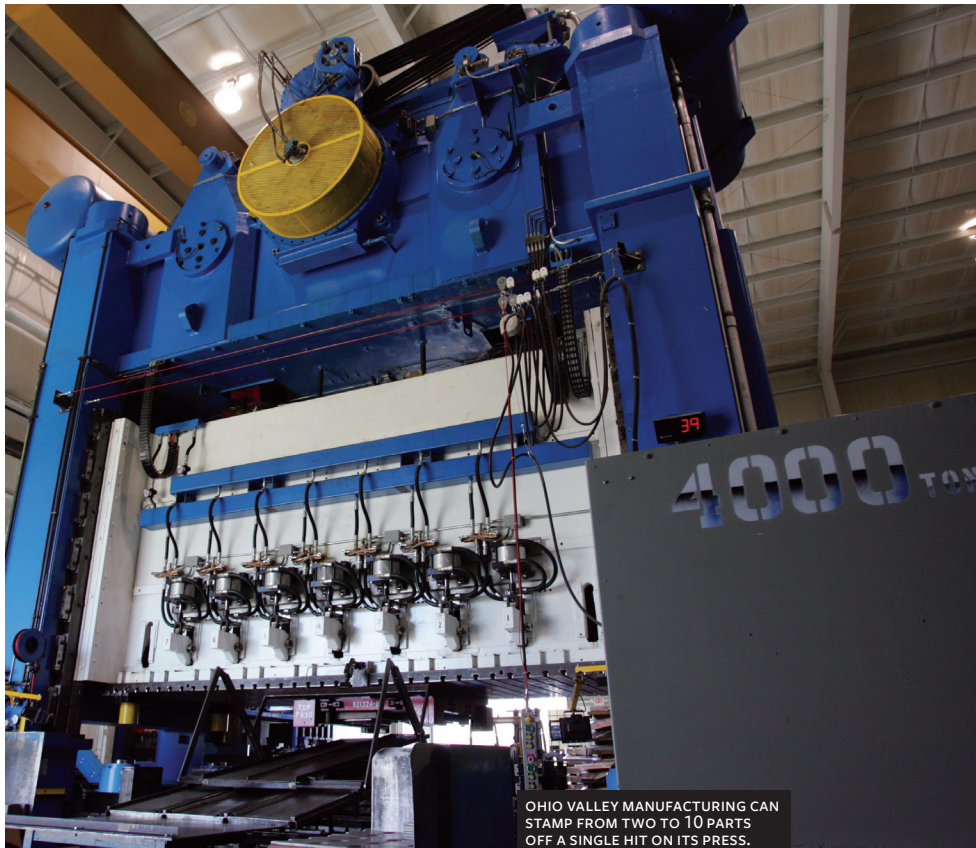


www.ohiovalleymfg.com / **Employees:** 100 / **Specialty:** Heavy-gauge stamping and precision blanking
/ **Steven Fanello, VP of sales and marketing:** "We don't ever lose any customers once we have them."

MIDWEST



HEAVY DUTY

OHIO VALLEY MANUFACTURING STAMPS OUT THE COMPETITION THROUGH ITS IMPRESSIVE CAPACITY. **BY CHRIS PETERSEN**

For nearly 15 years, Ohio Valley Manufacturing has been providing high-quality heavy-gauge stamping and precision blanking services to customers in market segments including heavy trucks and trailers, agriculture and automotive. As Vice President of Sales and Marketing Steven Fanello explains, the primary reason for the company's success is rooted in its vast storehouse of experience and expertise. Combined with its capacity to handle larger jobs than the average competitor, Ohio Valley Manufacturing has what it takes to maintain its leadership position in the marketplace.

The company was founded in 1999 by Fanello's father, Mike Fanello, who spent more than 30 years working for his family's blanking, stamping and tool and die business. After the original company went public, Mike Fanello left to start Ohio Valley Manufacturing with his three sons, Steven, John and Jeff. The company started out with no more than two presses, but soon the experience the Fanello family brought to the table helped it grow rapidly. In 2000, the company brought in about \$5 million in sales, and today its sales are more than seven times that. Steven Fanello says Ohio Valley Manufacturing has

expanded its facilities multiple times as well as its workforce, adding many people who have more than 40 years of experience in the industry. "We've used that experience and expertise to grow the company," he says.

Today, Ohio Valley Manufacturing is known throughout the industry as one of the leaders in heavy-gauge stamping, precision blanking, tool and die manufacturing, robotic welding and roller leveling. The company's diverse range of equipment allows it to handle exceptionally heavy, large-bed applications, making it a highly sought-after partner for heavy manufacturing customers. Despite this dominant position, Ohio Valley Manufacturing continues to add to its capabilities, and its latest expansion project is expected to further solidify its position as a market leader.

BIGGER CAPACITY

During the recession, many of Ohio Valley Manufacturing's competitors either closed their doors or diversified to broaden their customer bases. This has created a smaller but more fiercely competitive landscape for the company, but even though its competitors have stepped up their game, Ohio Valley Manufacturing still has a significant edge.

One of the company's strongest advantages is the capacity of its equipment, which for stamping applications ranges from 250 to 4,000 tons. The company's presses also boast large bed sizes, which allows it to run larger tools for automotive and heavy truck components as well as stamping more parts each time the equipment is used. Jeff Fanello says the larger beds mean Ohio Valley Manufacturing can stamp anywhere from two to 10 parts off a single hit on the press, whereas most competitors can only accommodate one or two parts at a time. This creates greater efficiency for customers as well as better utilization of materials.

The company's blanking capabilities allow it to accommodate material from 0.02 inches to .615 inches in thickness, up to 72 inches wide and more than 100 inches in length. Ohio Valley Manufacturing says it can provide customers with blanking using one of more than eight production methods and from low-volume to large-scale runs.

As impressive as the company's expansive capacity is, Ohio Valley Manufacturing continues to look for ways to improve on it and provide better service to its customers. John Fanello says the company is in the process of expanding its production facility once again, adding one large-capacity stamping presses that can handle more heavy-gauge material for customers in segments like heavy trucks and agriculture.

STRONG FUTURE

Being based in Ohio gives Ohio Valley Manufacturing access to a strong pool of experienced tool and die workers, but Steven Fanello says finding skilled labor remains one of the company's biggest challenges. The company has partnered with a local college to establish an apprenticeship program. Employees have the option to attend classes aimed at improving their skills in tool and die machining and maintenance.

Being in Ohio also presents a challenge in terms of logistics, as many of the company's customers are located in the southern United States where there are many local competitors. To offset the additional costs of freight between Ohio Valley Manufacturing and its customers, it seeks ways to reduce costs in other areas, and this is

where the company's capacity pays big dividends. "We don't ever lose any customers once we have them," Steven Fanello says.

Ohio Valley Manufacturing continues to set its sights on expansion, as the company still is growing in markets such as agriculture and heavy trucks. Assuming it remains focused on its core competencies, Fanello believes Ohio Valley Manufacturing should reach \$50 million in annual sales within the next five years. **mt**

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