



## SUCCESS STORY

# J&R MACHINE

## A METAL FABRICATION COMPANY REINVENTS ITSELF IN WISCONSIN®

### With overseas competition catching up, J&R Machine changes course

Established in 1992, J&R Machine Inc. in Shawano spent its first decade in business as a small but successful metal fabricator of pins and bushings. In the early 2000s, increasing competition from overseas manufacturers who could produce these commodity items at a much cheaper cost put the company under intense pressure. By 2004, J&R was on the brink of closure and needed to make drastic changes in order to survive.

### Productivity improvement prompts a bigger transformation

J&R's leadership reached out to the Wisconsin Manufacturing Extension Partnership (WMEP) for help improving their manufacturing process. The nonprofit WMEP exists to help Wisconsin manufacturers innovate, evolve and achieve operational success. The Wisconsin Economic Development Corporation (WEDC) provides funding for WMEP as part of its commitment to keeping the state's manufacturing industry competitive.



*“We work with all of our partners to ensure that we're globally competitive. We're one of the only states that is looking at how to ensure that our manufacturers and industry as a whole is focused on productivity.”*

**Jela Trask, Key Business Liaison, Investment and Attraction Director, WEDC**

WMEP found significant room for improvement in equipment utilization on J&R's shop floor. The partnership helped the company implement lean manufacturing principles, which allowed J&R to consolidate equipment and make room for newer technology.

### GROWING IN WISCONSIN



**2019 WISCONSIN  
MANUFACTURER  
OF THE YEAR**



**55% COMPANY GROWTH  
IN FOUR YEARS**



**\$1.7 MILLION  
FACILITY EXPANSION**

To discover how you can increase your competitiveness through the Transformational Productivity Initiative, visit [WEDC.org](http://WEDC.org) or call 855.INWIBIZ (855.469.4249).

### J&R seeks continuous improvement, sees continuous growth

With WMEP's assistance, J&R Machine was able to do much more than just improve efficiency. The company has shifted focus from commodity-type items to more complex parts and value-added services such as assembly operations. According to company president Tim Tumanic, J&R is now "a service company that just happens to be a machine shop."

Automation and smart manufacturing tools have helped J&R do more with its existing resources, reducing waste and downtime. The company now makes extensive use of machine productivity data to shape their business decisions. It regularly shares that data with its most important resource, its employees, to encourage them to find ways to boost throughput, and rewards their efforts through quarterly gainshare bonuses.



*"The state's been a big help. We're stepping into increased automation. Machines are actually communicating data real-time to our server so that we can measure our productivity."*

**Tim Tumanic, President, J&R Machine**

The results have been impressive: in four years the company grew by 55%, going from near closure to nearly \$12 million in sales by 2012. And things haven't slowed down since.



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