



Derby Molds More Than Just Products

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What do Derby Molded Products and Ganther Construction have in common? The two companies share more than just a recent design/build contract to build 22,500-square-foot addition to Derby's current manufacturing facility in Neenah; they share very similar philosophies and corporate cultures built on a tradition of building relationships.

Jim and Cindy Janes, the owners of Derby Molded Plastics, began to build their corporate culture with the purchase of Oshkosh Marine Supply Company in 1986. Founded in 1905 to design and manufacture candlestick and oil lamps for the underground mining industry; the business has today evolved into a diverse machining and powder coating company.

To complement Oshkosh Marine Supply's strong history of quality products and customer focus, Jim and Cindy added their own ideas and beliefs to strengthen the corporate philosophy. In order to provide quality service and build trust with their customers, they knew they needed to focus on building long-term relationships and continue earning the trust and loyalty of all their stakeholders.

They applied this philosophy and saw their company grow. Today, Oshkosh Marine serves 13 different markets in 16 states, as well as Mexico and Canada. By 2004, Jim and Cindy were looking to purchase another business that would complement the Oshkosh Marine Supply customer base. In April 2005, they purchased Derby Molded Products, a custom molder of plastic parts and products.

More family members joined the effort, as Jim and Cindy's son, Philip, came on board as operations manager and their son-in-law, Mark Tushar, became the marketing/sales manager for both companies. "Working with your family has a lot of positives," says Tushar. "For one thing, the decision-making process doesn't take as long. You can have a resolution in a matter of minutes instead of days," he adds.

Tushar explains that working with his family has only created a tighter relationship, which helps build trust and better communication in the long run. "Building long-term relationships is good whether it is business or not," he says. "Ongoing interaction helps build an understanding of doing things that make it easier to approach problems positively and be more efficient when talking about new projects."

Although the Janeses and Ganther had been familiar with each other through various community involvements over the years, the 20,000-square-foot addition to Oshkosh Marine in 1997 was their first construction project. "I was so pleased with the '97 plant addition that when we found it necessary to expand Derby, Ganther was our first choice," Jim Acknowledges.

"Ganther's employees are easy to work with," Jim adds. "We meet often, which leads to very little rework. During a 1997 building project, they were on time, met the cost estimate and had very few engineering changes."

It all goes back to building long-term relationships, according to Tushar. "When people trust you and know you, it's much easier to communicate and have a positive experience," he says.