

PMPA Member North Easton Machine Company Finds Success in Providing Niche Solutions Across a Variety of Markets

In 1964, Donald Holbrook took two Brown & Sharpe cam screw machines he purchased from a dissolved machine shop and set them up in a bay of his family home in North Easton, Massachusetts, to create what would become North Easton Machine Company (NEM). While working as a machinist for a shop in Whitman, Massachusetts, Mr. Holbrook worked tirelessly, often until midnight on most nights, to build up his own company while his wife received the raw materials and tooling during the day. This continued for years until he could support his family on the income from the business. Eventually the business outgrew Mr. Holbrook's garage headquarters and he built the first phase of what is now a 15,000-square-foot facility that, to this day, remains on the property near the family home. Today, the company is run by Mr. Holbrook's son, Jon, and proudly serves a wide variety of markets from biomedical and surgical, to housing and construction, with its state-of-the-art CNC machines.

"From its humble beginnings, the company has remained a very hands-on, family owned and operated company," Paula Martel, human resources manager at North Easton Machine Company, says. "And we're a company that's always looking at what will be the next emerging market."

NEM works with clients to create products such as laser and optical equipment, varied military accessories and hydraulic/pneumatic components. NEM creates an original product, a tire deflator used for off-roading, which was designed by Jon Holbrook and is marketed by his son Tyler. Due to its size, rather than working with clients looking to simply turn out products in the hundreds of thousands, NEM chooses to provide solutions for companies wishing to take a product to market or manage their annual inventory quantities through supply chain management. Much of NEM's competitive edge is derived from its ability to provide solutions for companies whose parts must yield to particular regulatory standards, such as the FDA or ITAR, to meet the needs of a vendor base. According to Mrs. Martel, NEM excels at providing quick turnaround and traceability to support customers' external pressures from regulatory demands.

"Our motto, 'Your Parts...Made to Your Specifications... Guaranteed...' revolves around not only meeting a customer's specifications, but getting it right the first time," Mrs. Martel says. "We find custom solutions."

A member for more than 25 years, NEM's relationship with PMPA has proved advantageous when it comes to the company's participation in the annual National Manufacturing Day, an event which takes place at local schools and manu-



facturing facilities that is meant to spark interest among students to consider a career in manufacturing. Now in its third year of participation, NEM has received annual assistance from PMPA in the form of giveaways, guidance in organizing tours and local media exposure.

PMPA has been an invaluable resource for NEM's growth in a number of ways. PMPA's evolving mini-technical programs on subjects such as cost setup and metrology have been a tremendous learning experience for NEM's staff. PMPA's efforts in providing guidance on legislative and legal matters have helped companies like NEM engage local and national politicians in addressing industry concerns such as workforce pipeline, R and D tax credits and regulation. Mrs. Martel adds that the organization's listserves and forums are an excellent resource for fast, helpful feedback from colleagues around the country when it comes to answering questions regarding new trends and programs, such as E-Verify and ERP software.

"We have received great feedback from our employees regarding how much these PMPA courses have been applicable to their daily work lives," Mrs. Martel says. "Through PMPA, we have seen better communication throughout our facilities and better results for the industry, overall."

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