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## FULL SPECTRUM

Automate sets up shop in Chicago in March. **PAGE 18**

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Acieta's robotic systems make facilities more efficient and successful. **PAGE 20**



# AT THE TOP

EVS METAL ENHANCES ITS SERVICES BY ADDING MORE SPACE AND EQUIPMENT.

BY ALAN DORICH

After more than two decades, EVS Metal has established itself as a leader in precision sheet metal fabrication, Vice President and Director of Manufacturing and Sales Joseph Amico says. "We've been in the top 15 of the top-40 fabricating companies, as per *The FABRICATOR's* FAB 40, over the past few years," he says.

Riverdale, N.J.-based EVS fabricates precision sheet metal for multiple markets, including the electronics, medical, military semiconductor and gas/oil extraction industries. Amico founded the company in 1994 with partner Scott Berkowitz, who previously operated a business that sold an industrial rack mount computer chassis.

Amico worked for another firm that manufactured enclosures for Berkowitz. But when Berkowitz's needs for more capacity grew, "He asked me if I would be interested in going into business with him," Amico recalls, noting that the two purchased a local shop with the intention of serving the PC market.

"We were able to get some very old equipment and get started," he recalls, noting that the market was fairly new. "It was at the point where PCs were making their way into the manufacturing environment."

Over time, EVS moved beyond



EVS HAS ALWAYS BEEN FAIRLY LEAN, BUT IT IS RAMPING UP ITS USE OF LEAN PRACTICES WITH A LOW INVENTORY VOLUME.

PCs and today serves clients such as 3M, Pepsico Inc., Siemens Corp. and Hitachi Ltd. In addition, the company has locations in Riverdale; Pflugerville, Texas; Keene, N.H.; and East Stroudsburg, Pa.

"We're usually the leader in the areas where we have facilities," Amico says. "We've been very aggressive in our marketplaces."

## BRANCHING OUT

EVS's diversification into other markets has been essential to its success,

Amico says. "We look to get into new business segments so we can insulate ourselves from any downturns in the market," he says. "We model it like a mutual fund where we search out new industries."

This prevents the company from putting all its eggs in one basket, which was a lesson it learned from the telecom industry. "In the 2000/2001 time frame, the telecom boom basically stopped," Amico recalls. "We were left with a fairly large downturn in sales overnight."

More recently, EVS branched out into the interactive kiosk marketplace with its purchase of a kiosk manufacturer. With its resources, “We’ll design the enclosures, the peripherals and everything they need to make one of these kiosks,” Amico says. “We’ll do the software integration as well.”

### READY TO RESPOND

EVS’s clients have become more demanding in their schedules, which require shorter lead-times, Amico says. “Customers are less willing to commit to long-term contracts,” he says. “They’re looking for things much quicker every day.”

The company has coped by being “aggressive” in its recent growth, Amico says. This included the acquisition of its East Stroudsburg location, which features more than 125,000 square feet of manufacturing space and specializes in low- to high-quantity production. “When we have a larger project, we can move it there,” he says.

It also added more equipment, including a fully automated turret punch with a 300-tool magazine. “We’ve also purchased a 4,500-watt laser,” Amico continues. “That will give us a lot of extra capacity in our laser department.”

EVS also implemented a robotic, fully automated CNC press brake that utilizes software Amada. With the software, “We can do our press braking automating offline where

it’s much quicker and you’re not tying up an expensive piece of equipment,” he says.

The additions have been worth it, Amico explains. “Having the extra

capacity and having things more automated has helped us,” he says.

EVS is ramping up its use of lean practices, but “in general, our company has always been fairly lean,” »

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Joe Amico, Vice President of EVS Metal



EVS TAKES PRIDE IN ITS LOYAL EMPLOYEES AND THE FACT THAT 80 PERCENT OF ITS WORK COMES FROM REPEAT CLIENTS.

» Amico asserts. “We try to run a fairly low inventory volume. We’ve [also] used a lot of lean principles by running kanban systems for our customers.”

However, the company did not start implementing traditional, formalized principles until recently. “This year, we expect to have a fairly large push to do more and more of that as a company in general,” Amico explains.

By utilizing more lean principles, EVS will minimize its work in progress, Amico says.

“If we’re going to start a product, we’ll pull it right through all of the

process,” he says, noting that the company has already seen benefits.

For instance, although EVS is used to operating in close quarters, “It’s actually given us more room to do the work that we do,” he says. “That’s been something new [for us].”

#### **STRONG RELATIONSHIPS**

EVS has many long-term relationships with its clients. “We have quite a few customers from the day we started this business that we continue to do business with,” Amico states.

“They look to us for their difficult metal needs.”

Eighty percent of EVS’s work, he notes, consists of repeat clients. “Almost all of the customers that we seek out and attempt to do business with are people who we’re going to continue to do business with,” he says.

The company also enjoys loyalty from its employees. “We have plenty of people who have been here since we started,” Amico says. “Both of those things speak to the way we run our company and the way we treat our employees.”

Amico sees more changes ahead in EVS’s future. “We have automated punching, bending and welding, [but] we have to drive our lot sizes down,” he says. “It’s more about being able to deliver smaller quantities in faster time-frames. That’s where we’re going to continue to get our growth from.” **mt**

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