

# Plastics News

## D&M Plastics adds capacity and expertise

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**D**&M Plastics LLC, a Burlington, Ill.-based injection molder, is expanding its capacity and boosting its capabilities.

The company in recent months has hired four key team members: Martin Tremonti as chief operating officer, Pam Fisher as manufacturing manager, Alex Mounsey as senior quality engineer and Brian Wood as project engineer.

“I couldn’t be happier. All of these folks are helping us to take on the new business that we’ve gotten in the last four or five months, and I know they’re going to help us as we continue to grow the top line,” Chip Owen, D&M president and CEO, said in a telephone interview.

D&M specializes in tight-tolerance, highly engineered precision parts for medical, electronic, defense, aerospace and automotive customers. Owen said the company is experiencing significant growth so far in 2021.

“Interestingly enough, based on the first few months, my expectation is we’re going to be close to 20 percent ahead of last year. So that feels pretty good,” Owen said.

Owen is concerned about supply chain issues, but they have not been a major problem so far.

“We haven’t had a lot of issues in finding supply. You know it hasn’t been easy, but we’ve been successful in finding materials or finding substitutes when we weren’t able to get a specific resin. A couple more customers have allowed us to use those substitutes,” Owen said.

“We saw early in the year, and at the end of last year, that there could be some issues in resin markets, so we started working with our customers right away to make sure that we can get as much as was necessary,” he said.

“One of the things that we’re seeing is that some of our customers are actually



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having issues with other components,” like steel, he said.

Another concern is finding enough employees, especially on the plant floor. To deal with the shortage, D&M is investing in more automation.



Owen

“We’ve been able to eliminate some of the operator labor that would have been necessary previously. What’s driving that, honestly, is just the ability to find labor. We’ve had some struggles finding third-shift labor, at least at this point in time,” he said.

“Some of that is being caused by the fact that people can make as much money — and maybe in some cases more money — sitting at home than they can come into work, because of the extra money that’s being paid out by the federal government. So, we’ve had people tell us point blank, ‘Yeah, I’ll come back into the workforce as soon as the benefits end,’” Owen said.

D&M currently has about 55 total employees, including temporary staff, and runs either 24/5 or 24/6, depending on the workload. *Plastics News* estimates the company’s 2020 sales at \$9.5 million.

Tremonti, a 26-year veteran of automotive manufacturing, joined D&M in late 2020. His experience includes 17 years at Magna International.

“I basically am the finance guy. I have an engineering degree, but I’ve always been in sales,” said Owen, who bought D&M eight years ago. “I spend my time helping support the sales team and focusing on the financial aspects of the business, and [Tremonti] pretty much handles everything else.”

As manufacturing manager, Fisher is managing all aspects of the production floor while mentoring and managing day-to-day operations for each shift. Fisher has extensive lean manufacturing and robotics training and specializes in optimization and efficient production practices, Owen said.

As senior quality engineer, Mounsey is focused on continuous improvement, policy and procedures, Owen said.

“I really do feel like we’re finally hitting our stride and we’re going to see some revenue increases over the next couple of years,” Owen said. “I feel pretty good about the next couple of years. I think they’re going to be good years, in general, for injection molding.”