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TRUMPF Express
Magazine for Sheet Metal Processing in North America
Volume 4, 2007

The machinery pacemaker

New TRUMPF software makes work more productive than ever before.

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Building Long-Term Customer Partnerships

Creating and nurturing close relationships is the cornerstone of Counterpart's success.

Creating a Smooth Ride

MOR/ryde is responsible for making the suspensions that go into many of today's brand-name RV's.

An Indiana manufacturer shares how the right attitude, commitment to quality, speed and service pave the way to success.

About 100 miles east of Chicago is Elkhart, Indiana, the RV Capital of the World. Here you'll find more than forty manufacturers of recreational vehicles and manufactured homes. Elkhart is home to MOR/ryde International, a company whose suspension systems and ride enhancement products for RVs, buses and towing vehicles have attracted quite a number of "raving fans," as MOR/ryde likes to call its customers.

A look through the eyes of a MOR/ryde fan reveals the quality of its products. One customer shares his experience during a 5th wheel trailer trip from Tennessee to Florida. Before setting off on a six-hour leg of the journey, the couple left an almost-full can of soda on the edge of the trailer's bathroom sink. Daryl Lucas explains what happened when he and his wife stopped at a rest area and made the discovery. "To our complete amazement, the can was exactly where it was left. What a testimony for MOR/ryde Suspension, because some of the highway was very rough and bumpy!"

The MOR/ryde story started with a chance meeting in the 1960s, when Robert Moore Sr. recognized the commercial value of a unique high performance suspension system that would isolate and absorb road shock. While working in the family business, a profitable dry cleaning company and manufacturer of rug cleaning equipment, Moore Sr. met a gentleman looking to sell a rubber shear spring design for suspension systems. Moore Sr. was not an engineer by training, but he was creative, had a knack for engineering, and most importantly, was able to recognize a good idea when he saw one. In 1966, he acquired the design, left the family business, and founded MOR/ryde.

For 28 years, MOR/ryde focused on designing and manufacturing its patented suspension systems, building a reputation for outstanding quality and customer >

Co-owners Rodney and Bobby Moore.

"Laser technology allows us to respond quickly to short lead-time emergencies and make quick design revisions to meet ever-changing demands."

service. In 1994, the small company began to aggressively expand its business and has since grown into a three-plant company with more than 300,000 sq. ft. of space and 375 employees: The fabricating shop where Mor/Ryde's TRUMPF equipment is housed contains 130,000 sq. feet. Today, two of Robert Moore Sr.'s children are at the helm – Bob Moore Jr. and his brother Rodney. Like their father, neither has an engineering degree, but both are business-minded. Bob holds a business management degree and Rodney is a certified public accountant. Moore Sr. handed down his golden rule philosophy of doing business with integrity. "We treat people the way we want to be treated," explains MOR/ryde President and Co-owner Bob Moore Jr. "Our commitment to customer service means we deliver on our promises."

When Bob Moore Jr. took over the reins of MOR/ryde in the late 1980s, he made a candid assessment of the employee and equipment resources the company would need to compete and win in the marketplace. At a point of low morale, Moore gathered his team in a conference room and told them flatly, "we spend a lot of time at work and if we can't have fun doing this, then we've got to get out."

MOR/ryde began to focus more on attitude than experience in the hiring process. To maintain an upbeat work environment, MOR/ryde seeks out the best talent, invests a lot of effort into the interview process, and hires for the long term. Sometimes this means giving a chance to someone without an extensive resume. "An employee with a good attitude (but without a lot of experience) gets better every day," explains Moore. "You can eventually get experience. But when you have an experienced employee with a bad attitude, their first day is their best day."

The positive workplace gives MOR/ryde

an edge in attracting good employees. "We have a great group of people. Once you have a critical mass of good people, it is easier to bring new good people to the team," he adds. Today, the company is filled with a welcoming atmosphere of respect, professionalism and a palpable sense of joy. A customer from Michigan – one of the many to send in a personal thank you note – praises the "attitude, friendliness and courtesy of everyone we spoke with, or dealt with, at MOR/ryde - even the people who were not working on our trailer."

Good attitudes also brought more business. MOR/ryde's courteous employees and reputation for quality helped them win their first contract customer. A customer touring MOR/ryde's facilities in 1993 noticed a robotic welder used in manufacturing. Even though MOR/ryde did not have experience with custom fabrication for other manufacturers, the customer liked MOR/ryde's positive attitude and asked if the company would be interested in doing some contract work using that equipment. Looking to diversify, MOR/ryde quoted – and won – the job. MOR/ryde's contract fabrication work has since expanded dramatically.

MOR/ryde came to understand another critical aspect of manufacturing success: speed. Unfortunately, speed was not a key feature of the equipment MOR/ryde historically used. In the beginning, everything was cut with shears and "rectangles ruled." Moore was committed to reinvesting profits from the fabricating work into new equipment, but he wasn't sure how applicable laser technology was to his business.

Moore had been investigating lasers for some time and had seen laser cutters in action at fabricating machinery trade shows. Although the machines were fast, they were cutting material much thinner than MOR/ryde needed to cut. Moore's good friend for more than twenty years, Rob Anderson, persuaded him look at lasers more closely. It was Anderson, a TRUMPF sales representative with PrimeLine Fabricating Machinery, who introduced Moore to TRUMPF and finally convinced him to invest in laser technology. In 1998, MOR/ryde purchased its first laser cutting machine, a TC L 3030 (now called the TruLaser 3030), and soon gained a reputation for turning jobs around quickly.

"The evolution of business is interesting," explains Moore. "Sometimes you see a piece of equipment and you can't imagine it fitting into your shop, but then you start to be able to picture owning the equipment. Gradually it starts making sense and then you can't imagine not having it. Machines you hadn't heard of 15 years ago suddenly become an integral part of your business. It's terrifying to make the initial leap and take on debt, but you have to bet on yourself."

With 300 percent growth in the last four years, the bet has paid off. Ten high-powered, precision TRUMPF laser cutting machines are at the core of MOR/ryde's multi-shift, 130,000 sq. ft. fabricating operations, which include a complete line of services from material procurement to cutting, forming, welding, assembly and painting.

The company credits the laser cutting technology as a key component in its ability to quickly turn around quotes, prototypes and production runs of all sizes. The machines' speed, flexibility and easy setup are essential. MOR/ryde processes a variety of materials (including hot-rolled steel, stainless steel and aluminum) with range of job sizes for various industries.

"We can laser cut complex part designs efficiently and accurately," says Moore. "(TRUMPF) laser technology allows us to respond quickly to short lead-time emergencies and make quick design revisions to meet ever-changing demands."

MOR/ryde also uses TRUMPF laser, punching and bending technology to manufacture its own products. "Just about everything [except the rubber] in the suspension system comes off a TRUMPF >

"Our engineering experts aid customers in their product design to create the best finished product possible."

A detailed look at one of the parts MOR/ryde produces.

A MOR/ryde press brake operator bending a suspension part.

machine," says Moore. The laser's high cut quality and accuracy help maintain the tight tolerances needed for the suspension's "no welding necessary" installation. Aftermarket installation is bolt-on and the company prides itself on suspension systems that are less expensive and easier to install than other systems.

As a result of cutting-edge fabricating machinery and creative employees, MOR/ryde is handling more design work. Company engineers regularly design parts that match the capability of the latest technology with the customer's needs and exacting specifications. "We are proud to be able to offer engineering services to our customers," says Moore, who has invested in building up a team of engineers. "Our engineering experts aid customers in their product design to create the best finished product possible."

Customer service remains a cornerstone of MOR/ryde's success. "Listen to your customers," Moore explains. "My strategy has been to find really smart people who agree with the company philosophy and then let them loose to go out and ask our customers 'what else can we do for you?'"

So what does the future hold for MOR/ryde? With the right attitude, a commitment to quality, speed, and customer service, the possibilities are endless. □

> MOR/ryde International

Company name: MOR/ryde
Founded: 1966
Staff: 375
Product line: Sheet metal fabricator serving customers in the recreational and commercial vehicles, trucking, industrial, agricultural and orthopedic industries and manufacturer of chassis and suspension systems.
TRUMPF machinery: TruLaser 3030, TruPunch 2020, TC L 2530, TrumaBend V200 and V85
Internet: www.morryde.com

Did you know? MOR/ryde was one of the first companies in North America to use a TruLaser 5030 cutting machine in production.