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The TPR is pleased to feature Industrial Molds Group, a full-service injection mold manufacturing company based in Rockford, Illinois. Industrial Mold's Tim Peterson, who is Vice President, offered some insights into the company's history and business philosophy, including how it is finding ways to offer exceptional value and competitive solutions to customers in the global marketplace.

What is your company niche, and what does your company do that is notable, unique or different?

We specialize in complex mechanical actions including mid-process actuation of features using both time and/or a variety of in-mold monitoring devices

When and how did you get into the industry, what attracted you to it?

My father owned the company; I swept floors at a young age. I enjoyed the creativity of the trade and still do although the challenges have changed over the years. I don't know that I ever made a conscious decision to get into the trade as a kid. It just kind of evolved because not only did I enjoy it but I was good at it. I enjoy the challenge of sales, especially when customers have an issue with a mold or its design that seems impossible to resolve. I love figuring out the solution. I think most toolmakers that are out there and active in sales operate under the same mindset because it's the challenges that keep you excited and motivated.



Industrial Molds, Inc.

Relate a notable "best time" for your company (can be more than one).

Today, I enjoy the teamwork and the attitudes of my co-workers. In 1986 the company burned to the ground and, although I wasn't employed here at the time, the employees joined together and rebuilt this company from the ashes. That spirit is still alive today. Many things have changed but the spirit of 'team' is still here. All the men and women that were a part of that (even if they aren't here today) can be very proud of that!



Tim Peterson

Similarly, relate notable challenges that your company has overcome.

We had one customer who was molding an electrical case and had a problem with product "fallout" due to the case not being sealed from the outside elements and they felt it was a mold issue. In fact, it was a process issue. They were trying to push the material under a core pin that had a wall stock of .01 to .02 opening back up to .08 and it would fill and have short shots or holes. To make matters worse, they had five of these pins and on four different surfaces or sides of the box, including the top. The plan was to have the pins back and "flow" across the pin while it was in the back position, then move it forward and make a seal. They told me they were experiencing 20%-30% product fallout due to poor quality.



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We built them a new, better designed tool and with it they were able to eliminate the filling issues. These kinds of challenges are what IMG is best at! Ultimately it achieved what the customer wanted to achieve.

When you are working on projects with your customers, what aspects would you like them to better recognize?

They should recognize the experience we have that helps us make good decisions, even if they are not always perfect. In addition, customers should recognize the cost of keeping American toolmakers viable in this country as opposed to only comparing us to “global pricing”. [Mold buyers] say it’s all the same, but it’s not. Unfortunately this is what we are up against today. I believe IMG operates with the utmost integrity. We put our best foot forwards always. We take a problem and try to dissect it and provide our solution. Are we always right? No, not always. But most of the time we offer solid solutions and will always stay with a project to ensure a good outcome.



List newly acquired technology, machinery or key personnel (in last year).

We recently invested in automation to keep costs low and make up for a lack of personnel. The investment was both in hardware and machinery. We’ve used Makino and Erowa software and Charmilles and Erowa, and then Erowa’s software.



Are you involved in any industry organizations or educational programs related to the trade?

We are members of the American Mold Builders Association (AMBA) and the Tooling & Manufacturing Association (TMA). We also have two to three apprentices in a formal program and have had apprentices for a number of years.



What do you think about changes occurring in the industry due to globalization? How has it affected the way you do business?

Every day, in every way, it has forced us to think more competitively. On the whole it has been good for our customers and in the long run good for us, but the cheating that goes on by off-shore competitors is not fair and the lack of help that our own government gives is just maddening!



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What will the industry look like in 3 to 5 years?

I think it will be exciting and more and more demanding. The ideas and visions that customers will come up with, or even requirements, are endless. It will be different but exciting and I look forward to being a part of it! One thing I know is if you're not on that technology train, you're washed up. By the same token, you can have all the latest, greatest equipment, but if you don't have good people to run it, forget it.

ADDITIONAL BACKGROUND INFORMATION:

Number of years in business: 43

Current number of employees: 55

Current square footage: 42,000 and 45,000

Additional locations: One additional location that is Pyramid Plastics. It is located in Rockford, Illinois

Website: www.industrialmolds.com and www.pyramid-plastics.com

Types of tools built and/or run: Plastic injection, compression and die cast tools

Industries served: automotive, industrial, medical, consumer, transportation and packaging

Contact Information

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