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BGM Metalworks

Machine Shop



Owners Tyler Krawaitis and Jason Fleming outside their custom machining and fabricating shop in Kingston, Ontario.

INVESTING FOR THE FUTURE

BGM Metalworks, Kingston, ON

BY LINDSAY LUMINOSO

Serving the Eastern Ontario region for over 20 years, BGM Metalworks offers experience and expertise to its customers and is primed for the future.

The company began in 1993 in Kingston, Ontario, and quickly established itself as a custom machining and fabricating shop

focused on servicing local industries.

In 2012, BGM employees Jason Fleming and Tyler Krawaitis along with two others bought the company, and earlier this year Fleming and Krawaitis took full ownership of the business.

Fleming began as an apprentice at BGM and eventually worked his way up the ranks. Krawaitis worked on and off at the shop since 2004, as well as travelling Ontario gaining valuable experience in the nuclear and petro chemical piping industries. However, when Krawaitis came back full time, "it all came together," he says.

"Tyler and I both got along well and wanted more. The original owners saw that, and they helped push us forward," says Fleming.

Today, along with being co-owners, Fleming is the general manager, while Krawaitis is the fabrication manager.

One of the biggest challenges they face is limited space. The company currently occupies two separate facilities located just blocks from one another. And although they have over 18,000 square feet of space, and use every inch of the facilities as best they can, they hope to expand.

"We plan to get into a 30,000 square foot building as soon as we can," says



Bob Griffin, vice president of sales and marketing.

BGM Metalworks specializes in custom fabrication, precision machining, machine building, welding, construction, and on-site services. The company's diverse portfolio of services gives it an edge and has allowed it to grow. Although some separation is required between the machining and fabrication, having two separate sites does present challenges.

"One obstacle we are trying to overcome is making sure our customers understand the full range of services we offer. We do have some customers that only deal with us for machining, and others for welding and fabrication," says Krawaitis, who explains that because of the two locations, some customers didn't even know they offered other services.

"We have one customer right now that we've worked with for years," adds Fleming. "They have just realized our machine shop capabilities. We've doubled our work with them just in the last little while."

The biggest asset for BGM is their diversity. Griffin believes that it is their experience and knowledge that allows the company to continually grow.

At BGM, they are focused on bringing value to their partnerships. The machine shop and fab shops have their own projects, but a lot of things go hand-in-hand. We may have to weld something, machine it and then bring it back for assembly," explains Krawaitis, who says their machine building is a good example of this challenge.

Despite this obstacle, which the business partners hope to rectify soon with their expansion plans, they are still able to provide a broad range of services. Roughly 60 per cent of their business is fabrication and welding, 30 per cent machining and 10 per cent is construction.

The machine shop is run by veteran machinist Todd Smith. There is a mix of both manual and CNC machines due to the custom nature of the work. Smith stresses how much he likes working with their Haas CNC machines. BGM Metalworks has a large jig mill, conventional turning machines, CNC lathes, CNC mills as well as fifth-axis capability, and high speed machining.

Overall, there are 45 people employed at BGM Metalworks in a variety of different positions. While 10 workers are busy at the machine shop, a few blocks away there are approximately 20 workers at the fabricating and welding shop, which is managed by Krawaitis.

"It's quite different from the machine shop. We are pretty diversified," he explains. "From one day to the next I'll strip everything out of here and build 40-foot tanks to small frames. A little bit of everything."

At the fab shop, they have an Amada CNC punch press for their sheet metal work. They also get into pipe welding as well. Krawaitis explains that they can do anything from fabricating custom pieces to large build-to-print jobs that can take months to complete.

The work they do is highly customized and BGM maintains the highest quality, which is why Griffin believes that they have the customers they do, some of them for over 20 years.



The machine shop features a number of CNC machines, including this Haas VM-6, as well as many manual machines.



"People stay with us," he says. "We have a motto, 'Proven Integrity' I think that says it all. And we try to stay up-to-date on what people in this business need." The company recently invested in SolidWorks 2015 in order to enhance its portfolio of services and meet the growing needs of its customers.

Aside from the wide range of machining and fabricating services, the company also offers mobile services, where workers can be sent out to job sites throughout Eastern Ontario, to repair and fix anything.

It's not just the local area the company services. It often ships out west to Alberta, as well as the U.S. and into Europe.

"We will place trades people into plants for vacation coverages, short-term, or a multiple-year contract," says Fleming. "They go to work at another facility and we touch base with them regularly."

These services make BGM unique and have helped keep its workers working.

Both owners believe their workforce is an important component of their business, speaking highly of their apprenticeship program, a program that got Fleming his start at the company.

"I think we have one of the youngest crews in town," says Fleming. "We have a really strong apprenticeship program. We bring guys right up. We have kids that came here

for high school co-op placement and they are here 10 years later. That's what we like to see. That's how I started."

Krawaitis explains that it's all about respect. "Maybe it's because it wasn't too long ago that we were on the shop floor. I enjoy training the guys and watching them learn and seeing where they go.

"One of their strengths is in the fact that they are able to go out on the shop floor and show the workers how to do a job properly and work side-by-side with them.

"These guys started working here and now they own it, and run it," explains Griffin.

Both Fleming and Krawaitis are actively involved in every aspect of the business and are working together to carve out a niche for themselves.

The next step for BGM is planning out their expansion and moving to a new facility.

"Floor space and cranes will go a long way for the expansion. We have a lot of equipment now, but spreading out with more overhead cranes will help," says Krawaitis. "We are definitely investing for the future." **CM**

BGM Metalworks offers a wide range of fabricating and welding services at its dedicated facility.



Installation of fabricated industrial process tanks.
PHOTO: BGM METALWORKS