

# Industrial repair shop on track with GE deal

BY JOE IANNARELLI  
BUSINESS FIRST

Metal Locking Service has secured a two-year repair contract with General Electric's locomotive power-train division.

The Buffalo company handles specialized repairs for all of GE's locomotive engines in North and South America. Terms of the deal were not disclosed.

"We see about 250 engines a year due to crashes, casting flaws and typical wear and tear,"

said Matt Gehman, general manager at Metal Locking Service. "Locomotive engines run in excess of one million miles over the course of 20 to 30 years. The new contract has forced us to hire more people, including an engineer in the front office and two more repairmen."

Revenues in 2000 were

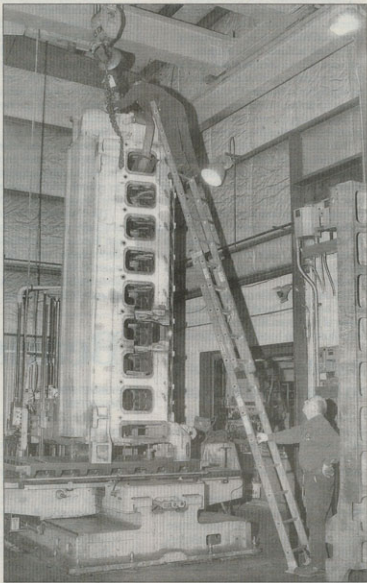
\$750,000 and have increased steadily over the last two years combined, Gehman said. The target for 2003 is \$1.5 million.

Metal Locking Service, West Metal Works and Goergen-Mackwirth Co. Inc. are related companies doing business as Metal Works Group.

Goergen-Mackwirth specializes in sheet metal fabrication, while West Metals is a heavy equipment fabricator. Metal Locking Service does industrial repair for cast iron equipment and machinery, operating as a division of West Metals.

Goergen-Mackwirth is currently working on city school projects and correctional facilities. West Metal Works has obtained several government contracts to construct components for nuclear submarines.

"There's not many established shops like ours in this industry," Gehman said. "Our success is cold mechanical repair for cast iron. There's no welding or heat. Most people think that you can weld a cast iron com-



Metal Locking Service employee Phil Meiler steadies a ladder for machinist Scott Lavery as he inspects a locomotive engine for repair. Metal Locking Service specializes in cast iron repairs.

## Metal Locking Service

- Address: 68 Hayes Place  
Buffalo
- Employees: 14
- Founded: 1942
- Founder: George Jackman Sr.
- General manager: Matt  
Gehman
- Revenues: \$1.35 million (2002)

Peter Stasiuk, a senior buyer with Cooper Turbocompressor, a manufacturer of centrifugal air compressors in Buffalo. "You

ple think that you can weld a cast iron component and if you can't, you have to scrap it. That's not the case. We repair it without welding."

Repairmen use metal stitches to seal breaks and cracks. The process is good for everything from automotive engines, hydraulic cylinders and industrial machinery.

"We save our customers enormous amounts of money in terms of cost and lead time," Gehman said. "We can fix something in a matter of days. That's the benefit and how word of mouth spreads."

This year 32 percent of Metal Locking Service's customers are new customers.

"The repair is a fraction of the cost of remachining another new casting," said

trifugal air compressors in Buffalo. "You have time constraints with what may be available. It might take six to eight weeks to get a replacement casting and that machine is not producing another part."

Stasiuk said turnaround time is key, especially when it comes time to make repairs.

"Anytime you are able to salvage a part and not start from scratch you are adding value to the process," he said. "It's very important to have that service available. Time is an integral part of the process for those working with cast iron. That's why you want to repair a casting instead of scraping it."

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