



Matrix Navigates Through a Perfect Storm

With the grip of the COVID-19 Pandemic loosening up, a new and unexpected problem has hit businesses both large and small: unprecedented consumer demand coupled with both labor and material shortages. Matrix Tool has not been immune to these conflicting business dynamics as their order backlog has consistently grown since the end of 2020.

Sensing that this was not a statistical blip—Matrix took several proactive steps to ensure continuity of supply for all their customers. Starting in January, Matrix implemented plans to complete a short-term transition from a 24/5 operation to a 24/7 manufacturing facility. Matrix Tool's employees stepped up to the challenge in a remarkable way, which gave an immediate boost of productivity and throughput. Yet this was only one piece of a complicated puzzle to solve.

At the same time, Matrix recognized the need to increase capacity through additional equipment and automation. The company purchased two ultra-high precision Sodick Micro injection molding machines, along with (6)-Yushin automation work cells and related ancillary equipment.

"Fortunately, Matrix has been on a two-year capital equipment campaign to improve efficiencies and capacity in both our tool shop and molding division, so our timing couldn't have been better," said Tim Lewis, Matrix Tool President. "These new equipment purchases will have an immediate positive impact to our overall throughput, while relieving some of our labor demand," he added.

While the productivity gains have helped, all the added equipment and work schedule increases are only effective if you have sufficient raw materials on hand to run the injection molding machines. And with (40) IMM's, they need a lot of resin to keep running. This is where Matrix's long-term material planning program has paid huge dividends.

"Since the beginning of the Pandemic, Matrix recognized there might be some uneven supply and distribution problems facing resin suppliers, so we significantly increased our raw material inventory levels on most resins," said Dave Moyak, Matrix Molding Division General Manager.

"And where permitted, we created a stocking program on certain mission critical finished goods," he added.

"Despite these proactive steps, nobody has a crystal ball to know what the future holds," said Tom Moyak, Director of Business and Engineering Development. He commented, "However, it's great to know that we've tackled these issues early and from every angle within our control. Our employees and our planning are making a significant difference."

Tim Lewis concluded, "These proactive measures are what our customers have come to expect throughout our long-term partnerships. We have, and will continue to do whatever is necessary to ensure we can meet market demand, even in the most challenging of times."

For a quotation or additional information, contact Matrix Tool Inc.