

## Profile

By Sherry L. Baranek

# JMMS: A Family's Legacy

**O**ver the past 23 years, JM Mold South (Easley, SC) has reinvented itself a number of times—beginning with a focus on consumer molds, a diversification into automotive molds, and a name change to JMMS as the torch passes from one generation to the next.

According to JMMS CEO David Bowers II, the company “combines the traditional strengths of full-service metalworking and conservative business management with continuous improvement in processes, cutting-edge technologies and established relations with Asian manufacturing partners.”

JMMS offers the following services: mold and die design, manufacturing and full-service tooling capabilities in plastics and metal forming to OEMs and suppliers in industries such as aerospace, appliances, automotive, consumer products, electronics, lawn and garden, medical technologies, power generation, power tools and returnable packaging. Bowers and his sister, Michelle Powell, are currently in the process of purchasing the business from their father.

### From Consumer to Automotive

In its early days, JMMS primarily built molds for the power tool industry, for its two main customers—Imperial Die Casting and Piedmont Die Casting. Then, in 1995 the shop foreman decided to strike out on his own, and as a result, JMMS experienced its first reinvention. “We narrowed our scope and became more focused on



Photos courtesy of JMMS.

Technician is evaluating a hot runner system for service and performance improvements.

the die cast market,” Bowers recalls. “The lawn and garden business is still quite a large market area in die cast for us, with customers like Electrolux, Briggs & Stratton, Kohler and John Deere.

After serving the die cast market for approximately 10 years, some of that market segment started to move offshore, Bowers continues. Once again, the company had to diversify. “Tier 1 and Tier 2 automotive suppliers began to move down here, and automotive started to become a strong market segment for us,” Bowers notes.



CNC machinist is completing an “on the machine” measurement verification procedure with touch probe and controller software.



CNC machinist is loading a mold plate onto a new OKK HM1250S for “rough out” operation.

## More Transitions

Starting out, Bowers notes that the company held a traditional “form, fit and function” approach to mold and die manufacturing. This philosophy still holds true, but the company also sees the bigger picture—and its place in the world. “We also see ourselves as part of a global economy, drawing on all of its resources and best practices,” Bowers emphasizes. “Together, we offer proven development and manufacturing processes, with the capital resources and financial strength to meet the strictest due diligence requirements.”

Part of this evolution involves putting the finishing touches on the company’s new ownership. “Myself, my sister and father will become sole owners of the facility,” Bowers explains. “My sister and I are working through a succession plan with my father to take over the next generation of ownership and manage the business.”

Bowers and his sister hired the marketing firm Radii, LLC to help them rebrand the business and coin the name JMMS as next generation tooling. JMMS has opened an office in south China that has a business director and project manager/designer on staff to service its overseas customers and sourcing activities. “Before, I would have referred to our business as a mom and pop shop,” Bowers notes. “We’d build a mold for anyone who needed an injection mold built. Today, we have transitioned ourselves into a mold manufacturer who is primarily focused on building partnerships with key customer accounts. There are a lot less players out there, and we are trying to do more with less. We have been able to increase our sales in the last two years. This is because we have changed what we see as our position in the market—competing with companies we have never competed with before and quoting on multiple tool package programs rather than just a couple stragglers. That is really where we are trying to move with the business.”

## Planning Ahead

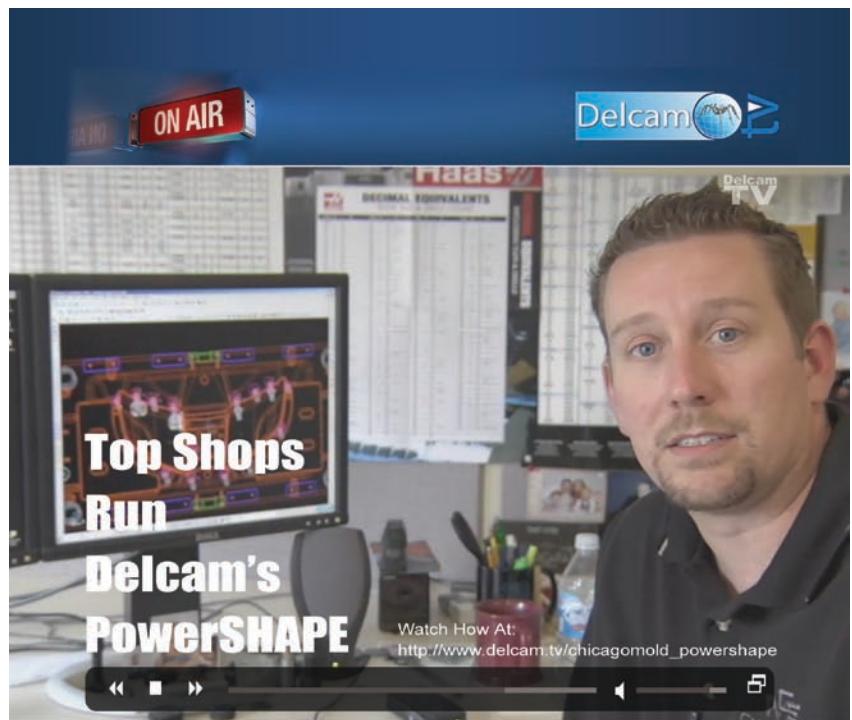
Bowers is focused on the company’s rebranding in the short-term. “We have been trying to work ourselves up in size capacity,” he says. “Not that we are trying to build more molds, we are trying to be prepared to build larger size molds. We put in a new OKK HM1250S horizontal machining center and are looking to add some square footage.”

Down the road, Bowers would like to implement a four-year plan that includes

projected sales revenue and continual growth. “We hope to be a \$12 million company by 2012,” he states. “We would also like to be recognized by our peers in the industry. My sister and I are pleased about where we stand today—how we have been able to weather the economic downturn and are quite optimistic about moving forward. We have a passion for this business and intend to carry on our father’s tradition of running the business. It’s a real good time for us.”

MMT

For more information from JMMS call (864) 855-0450, e-mail david.bowers2@jmmoldsouth.com, visit [jmmoldsouth.com](http://jmmoldsouth.com) or visit [moldmakingtechnology.com](http://moldmakingtechnology.com).



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