

Company Leader Q&A

FOCUSING ON EMPLOYEES, QUALITY MAKES A DIFFERENCE

By Charlee Beasor

Why is Indiana a great place to do business for your company?

What is one thing you try to do every day to benefit your business?

What is the key to future growth for your organization?

Though the answers varied a bit, there were similarities across the board when *BizVoice*[®] asked the above questions of four company leaders in the 2014 Indiana Companies to Watch class.

These second-stage growth companies from around the state all have different products and services – from radio frequency welding for the medical and military industries to real estate and development, trailer manufacturing and sales process automation.

But there were definite themes: Keeping a team-oriented culture for employees, focusing on customer satisfaction and quality, taking steps to ensure a controlled growth strategy and utilizing the famous Hoosier work ethic were all top responses from the company leaders. Read on to discover more about what they had to say about doing business in Indiana and looking to the future.

Genesis Plastics Welding, Inc.

Tom Ryder, president/CEO; Founded: 1987 (Ryder assumed leadership in 2010); Employees: 144
Fortville-based Genesis Plastics Welding utilizes radio frequency (RF) welding and heat sealing applications for plastic products for the military, medical and other industries. RF welding is used in products ranging from three-ring binders and checkbook covers to vehicle airbags, air mattresses and blood pressure cuffs.

Salesvue

Bill Johnson, president/CEO; Founded 2006; Employees: 21.5
Indy-based Salesvue automates the outbound sales process from prospecting to pipeline so sales representatives can sell faster and smarter.

inTech Trailers

Adam Maxwell, CEO; Rich Schnippel, director of sales and marketing; Founded 2010; Employees: 47
inTech Trailers manufactures all-aluminum, custom-built trailers for the recreational and motorsports markets, as well as industrial markets, that include the fiber optic splicing trailer, oil rig trailers and geology site trailers out of its Nappanee-based facility.

Milhaus

Tadd Miller, CEO; Founded: 2009; Employees: 28.5
The Milhaus mission is to develop mixed-use and multi-family real estate and deliver solutions for urban neighborhoods, cities and partners through real estate investment, development and management. The Indianapolis-based company has projects in cities around the country.



Military helmet pad systems, blood pressure cuffs, and hot and cold therapy devices are just a few of the military and medical products that Genesis Plastics Welding produces with radio frequency welding.

Q. Why is Indiana a great place to do business for your company?

“Geography is an advantage for us and it is very unique in that we can service customers from the East Coast to the West Coast, as well as internationally. There is a lot of distribution and transportation going on here in the Midwest. Tie that in with a lot of manufacturing in the Midwest, and in Indiana we’re known for that.”

“Back in 2010 I really began a search on how we were going to expand our facilities to a 27,000-square-foot facility, which almost tripled our size. In that process, both with Hancock County and with the state, between tax abatements and industrial revenue bonds that allowed us to finance the addition, the state and the county really worked with us to keep our business here and help us succeed and grow.”

- Tom Ryder, Genesis Plastics Welding

“The fun thing about living and working here is it’s a great place to raise a family; the work ethic is great. I’ve never missed a kid’s soccer game or lacrosse game and the people you get to associate with are real. That whole idea of the work ethic for Midwestern people, the cultural fit, it’s a good environment.”

“I think that under Mitch Daniels’ tutelage, (we had) a number of angel investors in the state of Indiana and having the venture capital tax credit, it was a huge help and allowed us to raise investment capital. Friends in California, Missouri and New York were amazed the state of Indiana was that progressive to help fellow Hoosiers start their business up.”

- Bill Johnson, Salesvue

“For our company, it’s really about a lot of things. Forget the fact it’s a business-friendly state. The raw materials are in this county and delivered for free. In Nappanee, we have a strong Amish community and we are able to be fortunate enough to work with them. They are the big difference. It’s easy to sell something when it’s built as well as our product. It’s the hard work up front that helps.”

- Rich Schnippel, inTech Trailers

“We travel all the time because we’re now in six or seven markets and Indianapolis has been able to ‘do downtown’ with the synergy or the joint state, working with the city, working with the local philanthropy. There are no other secondary cities that we are in that have a cultural trail, canal and downtown urban mall. Everybody works together here more than in any other market. You really have an ‘everybody roll up their sleeves’ personality that you don’t find very often.”

- Tadd Miller, Milhaus

Located at 451 E. Market Street in downtown Indianapolis, Artistry is a \$30 million mixed-used development by Milhaus. It’s one of the company’s first projects.



Q. What is one thing you try to do every day to benefit your business?

“We really like to live by our work-life values. This is a family-owned company; we like to treat our employees like family. We encourage and facilitate team building and open communication. We try to be another advocate (for) the Midwest, and (live) by Midwestern values with honesty and integrity and serving as stewards of goodwill toward the community and environment.”

“We try to help our employees with encouraging continuous learning and support for academic goals and develop and refine our quality processes. In that quality process, we hold a lot of different certifications. We are committed to our quality from the prototyping to the production goods we manufacture. Employees, all the way from machine operators to me, are responsible for contributing to the improvement of our quality, and we really try to empower our personnel to be front-line inspectors.”

- Ryder, Genesis Plastics Welding

“Two things: one, make sure we’re paying attention to what our customers need and want, and paying attention to what our employees need to make them successful.”

- Johnson, Salesvue



A predominantly Amish workforce for inTech Trailers creates all-aluminum, custom-built trailers for the recreational/motorsports and industrial markets.

“It’s giving thanks. We’re pretty spiritual; we give thanks for what we’ve already got and hope to achieve. What’s going to benefit this company the best is making the people here know they’re valued on a very regular basis. I’m always on the floor walking the line, talking to the guys. It’s not pointing out anything wrong. But it’s telling them how much I appreciate what they do.”

- Schnippel, inTech Trailers

“I deal with all the problems that come up every day. We’re not building widgets. These are custom-created, figure-it-out deals. What I try to do is just keep a humble culture and then try to remember how quickly the light switch can get switched off. I try not to get too ahead of myself. But I can’t tell you there’s a single task that shows up on my task list every day.”

- Miller, Milhaus



What is the key to future growth for your organization?

“The commitment to that continuous improvement and always looking for ways to improve on our service and how we deliver that service. Continued investment in medical device manufacturing, which we’ve been doing almost three decades. We’ve consistently invested in our people and our technology and equipment and facilities. The big thing we are focusing in on, within that medical device sector, is investing more in the EcoGenesis technology that we have, as well as the facilities or systems that we’re going to add to the company this year to reduce the material scrap and provide better yields to our customers.”

“We look at customers and visitors as partners and if they succeed, we succeed. A lot is built on trust; we wouldn’t be where we are today without the customers we do business with.”

- Ryder, Genesis Plastics Welding

“The key to future growth is going to be controlled growth. It would be very easy for this company to double in size, triple in size in 18 months. But today, I turned down two dealers, and that’s tough to do. But what we’ve done is establish a network of dealers we trust and want to partner with – we are able to pick the best of the best in the country.”

“If we don’t try to grow this company as big as we possibly can ... I can facilitate additional needed growth quickly. One or two dealers give us more orders and representation. Building a brand and keeping demand on our product – more people to want your trailer than you can build.”

“It’s controlled growth. The right people, right process and right product.”

- Schnippel, inTech Trailers

“We’re going to need additional growth capital – hire more sales and marketing talent. We basically have raised a little bit of cash to get us through some major milestones we’re approaching; now we’re at a state where we’ve got significant opportunity.”

“What Salesvue does is it provides management the opportunity around various sales stages, contract renewal, cross-sell, up-sell. It’s been a black hole for 30-plus years, and now with the advent of products like Salesvue, if we can actually apply a process to our sales methodology, we can sell more. The big goal here is to take advantage of the opportunity being presented to us and to get the capital to allow us to afford the growth we want to have happen.”

- Johnson, Salesvue

“Being able to attract the top-level talent. And it’s less than attraction (as) we’ve got, in my mind, one of the best teams in our industry right now. How do we maintain a culture and a production level and the interaction between a pretty diverse set of people? We have very experienced, skilled people and very young Millennials; there’s a real cultural difference between the two. Not a lot of people realize how big of a management and HR issue that is yet.”

“I can tell you that our HR capacity and ability is going to be exactly whether we make this bigger or not. More pipeline, more financial capacity, raised almost half a billion of equity – human resources to execute that’s going to prove us successful or not.”

- Miller, Milhaus



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