

Precision Sheet Metal Fabrication

Employing a marketing strategy that combines magazine advertising with tradeshow exhibiting, a Fullerton, California job shop promotes its sheet metal fabrication services to the right industrial markets and job titles—enabling it to win new business and keep existing customers.

Background:

Will-Mann, Inc. (www.will-mann.com) has been supplying precision sheet metal fabrications to OEMs in Southern California since 1969. Over the years, the Fullerton, Calif.-based company has developed a 24/7, state-of-the-art manufacturing operation that offers high-precision laser cutting, as well as CNC machining, deburring, welding, and assembly. Will-Mann provides these and other services to an expanding customer base in the commercial, industrial, electronics, telecommunications, aerospace, medical, and military markets.

One of the keys to Will-Mann's success has been its ability to train employees in the art of high-quality, precision sheet metal work, and then retain these people over the long term. "On the average, most of our employees have been with us for over 10 years," says Will-Mann Vice President Sabine Andrassy. "With the retention and training of employees, we are able to reproduce orders consistently with little or no defects."

But these strengths aren't the whole story of Will-Mann's growth—they're more like essential building blocks for the company's ultimate goals of winning new business and retaining customers. To win new customers and keep them coming back, Will-Mann needed a winning marketing strategy.

"Our main concern in deciding where to put our marketing dollars is finding the cor-

rect arena in which to exhibit and advertise," says Ms. Andrassy. "We needed to find the correct buyers, managers, and engineers that can get access to our company information and capabilities."

Service and cost, she said, were also two items that mattered a great deal to Will-Mann. "In the past, we used to advertise with a national publication, and it became cost prohibitive," she said. "This national publication was not targeting the right markets for us. We received a variety of phone calls and leads, but not from OEM engineering or purchasing personnel. The calls we received didn't have anything to do with wanting sheet metal fabrication, which is our specialty. We wanted—and needed—to advertise to markets that could give us business."

The Challenge:

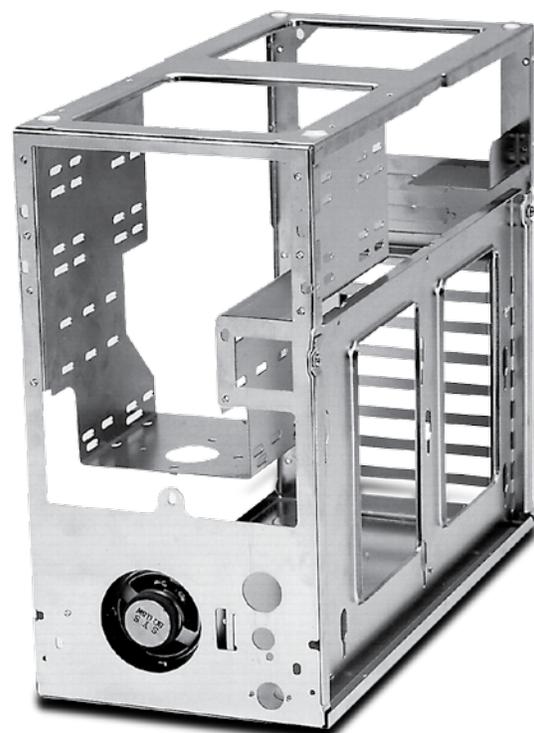
Will-Mann's biggest sales and marketing challenges, according to Andrassy, are in trying to achieve name recognition, as well as access to the proper audience of OEM engineering and purchasing personnel within the right industries. "What mattered most to us when choosing where to advertise was targeting the correct market of OEM engineers, buyers, and management personnel," she explains. "The OEMs are our current and potential customers, so we needed to be in a tradeshow and magazine that targeted this specific group of people.

"Prior to advertising in *Design-2-Part*, we had a lot of experience utilizing a variety of marketing services; however, the performance with them was not very good," she continues. "Over 80% of the calls that we received as a result of our marketing efforts were from the wrong industry. We weren't getting calls from the industries that we target. We even tried worldwide search engines, with once again very little response from the OEM market."

The Solution:

Andrassy says that Will-Mann wanted—and needed—to advertise to markets that were potential sources of new business.

"We felt that Design-2-Part was the best



fit for our business, the best fit for reaching our OEM target market, and decided to allocate more marketing dollars to utilize their services," she revealed. "We need to reach new OEMs to obtain new customers, and *Design-2-Part Magazine* helps us to do that. We've exhibited in other shows and advertised in other magazines that said they served our market, only to find ourselves in a "ghost town" with no way to recover our costs. The Design-2-Part Shows and *Design-2-Part Magazine* have given us access to the exact market we need to be in—the OEM market."

Another important factor that Will-Mann considered, according to Andrassy, was whether the tradeshow and magazine were reaching its existing OEM customer base. "Were our OEM customers actually attending the Design-2-Part Shows and reading *Design-2-Part Magazine*? We found that they were," she said.

The Results:

By exhibiting in the Design-2-Part Shows and advertising in *Design-2-Part Magazine*, Will-Mann has positioned itself exactly where it wants to be to gain new business. "*Design-2-Part* helps us promote our sheet metal fabrication services to the right industrial markets and the right job titles, so that we have the best possible chance of landing business," says Andrassy. "We've also been able to accomplish name recognition. OEMs see our name now and recognize us; they know who we are and what we can do. I couldn't say that three or four years ago, but I can confidently say that now, and we still want to continue to exhibit and advertise because there are more OEMs that we want to recognize us.

"The most important factor is that I know—based on reports and results—that our existing OEM customers read *Design-2-Part Magazine*," she continues. "We want our current customers to know that we are still going strong, and that we plan to continue to service them to the best of our ability and not lose them as customers. Exhibiting in the Design-2-Part Shows and advertising in *Design-2-Part Magazine* have been huge in helping us communicate this message to our current customer base, so that they don't take their business to our competitors.

"I also know that my prospective OEM customers read the magazine as well, because when these OEMs stop by our booth at the Design-2-Part Show, they do so because they have seen our ad in *Design-2-Part*

Magazine. The show and the magazine work so well together."

Andrassy concludes by saying that Design-2-Part has helped Will-Mann in many ways. "By exhibiting in the tradeshow and advertising in the magazine, we continue to grow our business," she says. "But the magazine has not only helped us grow our sales, it has helped us maintain our revenues as well. This is important because if you don't maintain your sales and you lose customers, you can't reach your goals of growing the business at the pace you desire. Design-2-Part Shows and *Design-2-Part Magazine* are essentially a "sales insurance policy" because they prevent us from losing our customers and, better—they help us gain new customers."

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—Sabine Andrassy, Vice President, Will-Mann Inc.



To request info on a marketing program from Design-2-Part, visit www.D2Pcompany.com or contact Dennis Insogna at dennis@d2p.com