

STECKER MACHINE

Case Study

SMC

Advanced CNC
machining solved all
customer challenges:

- Immediate solutions
- Sizable savings
- No downtime

A Fortune 500 OEM manufacturer was in a jam: Their supplier couldn't make a family of critical parts to meet all requirements. It was a failure in both quality and quantity, and critical deadlines were looming. The manufacturer reached out to Stecker Machine who worked around the clock, provided precise CNC machining, and came through with the job-specific parts. Stecker Machine became a reliable CNC machining partner that keeps processes up and running with no costly downtime and no interruptions to the customer line.



SITUATION

The original supplier was struggling to properly make the critical components.



The original supplier was struggling to properly make a family of critical components. These parts are vital to the customer's products used in medium-size vehicles like fire trucks and dump trucks. Specifically, they could not make the parts flat to the drawing specification.

Expectations were not being met, so the customer had an immediate need for a reliable supplier. They chose Stecker Machine over other vendors because of Stecker's overall capabilities and ability to make parts to specification. The only question was capacity: the project scale was very large with an aggressive time line.



CHALLENGES

- Solve the flatness issue; parts had to meet the print.
- Ramping up production without interrupting part supply was a huge challenge. Engineering designs had to be built, implemented and tuned. Equipment had to be purchased, installed, setup. Production needed to hit the ground running at full speed. Quality control, material handling, and other support departments had to keep up with the fast ramp.
- One challenge was keeping cost competitive. This spurred a project to switch casting method and supplier. Stecker had to transition a large contract from one casting supplier to another.
- Stecker knew, planned for, and mitigated issues with switching castings. Stecker had to make running changes with tooling and automation. New issues occurred with porosity/leaking.

SOLUTIONS

- Initially, Stecker made the parts to print with no design changes. The flatness issue was solved through Stecker's engineering design process utilizing the customer's lesson learned. Stecker's fixture, tooling, and machining process design hit the spec out of the gate.
- Stecker went "all hands-on deck," working nonstop to prevent the OEM customer's line from shutting down. Success relied on 100% commitment. Engineering built, implemented and improved fixturing, tooling and processes. Equipment was purchased, installed, and commissioned rapidly. Production quickly ramped up and ran three shifts seven days a week.
- Stecker reduced piece price by transitioning casting supplier and method. Stecker made a thorough proposal to change from permanent mold to lost foam in a complete package. The customer was able to review and approve the design changes.
- Stecker transitioned the large contract from one casting supplier to another. Graceful management resulted in no bridges being burned as well as a smooth ramp-up.
- Engineering, production, quality, and management all were re-engaged to make the running casting change in production. Tooling was improved to hit targets. Automation was changed as needed. Stecker and castings supplier worked together to reduce porosity issues.
- The cost-savings project was worked as a partnership between the foundry, Stecker, and customer; all came out ahead by working together.



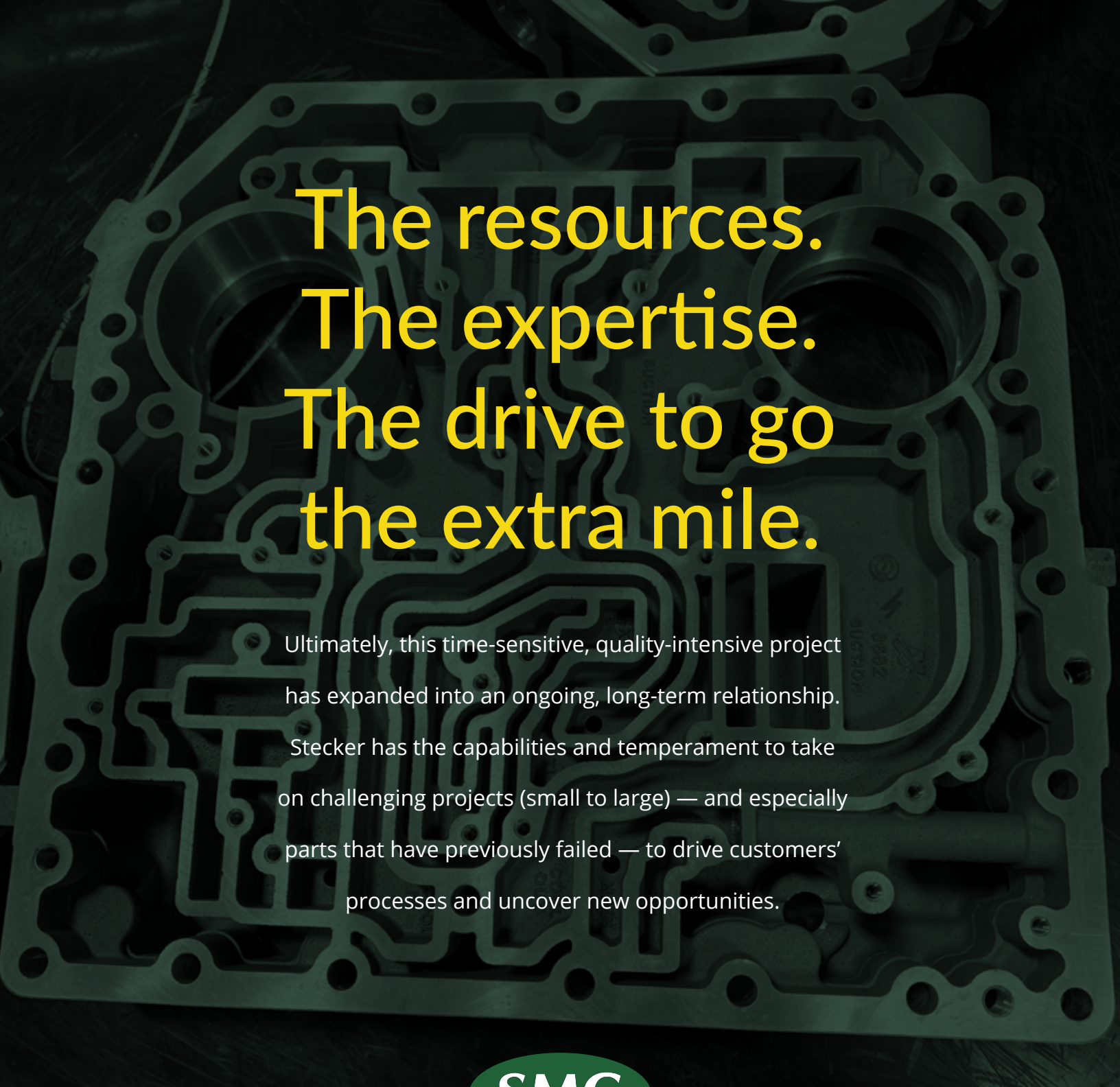
RESULTS

Initial Launch — Stecker's first success was providing the parts to meet specs and prevent line down. By working with a top-performing supplier, the customer received reliable parts and a lower total cost of ownership.

Cost Reduction — The second success was transitioning to lost foam castings, which now saves the global OEM manufacturer roughly \$4 million per year. Taking this initiative positioned Stecker as a true machining solutions partner, not just a supplier, and has resulted in several more projects for Stecker.



*Customer's
annual project
savings:
approximately
\$4 million*



The resources. The expertise. The drive to go the extra mile.

Ultimately, this time-sensitive, quality-intensive project has expanded into an ongoing, long-term relationship. Stecker has the capabilities and temperament to take on challenging projects (small to large) — and especially parts that have previously failed — to drive customers' processes and uncover new opportunities.



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Visit SteckerMachine.com to learn more
or call 920-726-4526.