

The FABRICATOR'S 2010 FAB 40

The FABRICATOR unveils its list of 40 successful U.S. metal fabricating operations

By Dan Davis, Editor-in-Chief

With 2010 being the 40th anniversary of *The FABRICATOR*, we've decided to do something new. Because we can't take everyone skydiving, we've decided instead to create an editorial feature opportunity that highlights the readership. We're calling it the **FAB 40**, a list of some of the most aggressive and successful shops in the magazine's subscriber base.

Before we go any further, please be aware that we know this list isn't definitive. We targeted selected fabricating operations in the publication's readership and those that identified themselves as being part of the fabricated metal product sector, as defined by the North American Industry Classification System. OEMs involved in metal fabricating were not included as part of this information-gathering exercise. We asked company management to fill out questionnaires, which we then used to compile this list. Only companies that replied to the questionnaire are included in the FAB 40. (For more information on how this list was put together, see the "Pulling Together the Information" sidebar.)

To our knowledge, no other magazine has attempted to put together such a list. We also realize that this list will be very fluid as we hope more companies want to be a part of this public effort to highlight the economic impact that metal fabricating has on the U.S. economy.



Let the sparks fly. To celebrate its 40th anniversary, *The FABRICATOR* has decided to share its FAB 40 list of successful U.S. metal fabricating operations. Photo courtesy of Rodney W. Good, Artistic Photography, Harrisonburg, Va.

You can see that the list reflects the varied nature of the metal fabricating industry. For instance, No. 1-ranked Drake-Williams Steel, Omaha, Neb., is a structural steel fabricator that is also involved in installation of its fabrications. In its 300,000-square-foot facility in Omaha, the company has a highly automated shop floor that produces more than 30,000 tons of structural steel per year. At No. 2, Robinson Metal Inc., De Pere, Wis., traditional sheet metal fabricating activities make up the bulk of the company's sales, but even it has a diversified business model that includes a custom enclosure division and an HVAC company. The No. 3 company, LAI International Inc., Scottsdale, Ariz., which has manufacturing locations all over the U.S., is a contract manufacturer of precision-engineered components for advanced-technology industries. Look further down the list and you'll find traditional stampers, ornamental metal fabricators, and job shops.

Despite their differences, all of the companies have two things in common: They fabricate metal products, and they aren't likely to be fabricating the same thing from one job to the next. In a sense, they are all job shops, even if one company's revenue is 10 times that of another.

The FAB 40 not only gives the metal fabricating companies—those on the list and perhaps those wanting to be on it—a chance to see how they compare with other companies, but also provides a glimpse into where the industry is headed. It's not a scientific survey by any means, but we hope it does provide a snapshot of what some of the companies in the metal fabricating field are thinking.

Everyone knows that 2009 was not a great year for metal fabricators, especially when we reflect on the days of 2007. Company leaders of the FAB 40 think 2010 is the beginning of a slow climb back to those gangbuster days.

The FAB 40 reported \$618.8 million in revenues in 2009. They expected that to improve to \$637.4 million this year. Only 15 of the responding companies on the list believed that this year's revenue would be down or flat when compared to 2009.

So what have these companies been up to during the economic slowdown? Like any good business, they didn't sit around waiting for rainbows to appear outside their windows. They went to work by:

- Investing in new and used equipment to bolster current capabilities.
- Strengthening relationships with current customers to see if they could create new business with familiar faces.
- Targeting new sales efforts in new markets to diversify the customer mix.
- Looking for internal opportunities to root out waste to improve bottom-line performance when margins were as tight as ever.

One company even admitted to looking for acquisition targets. In short, most of the FAB 40 have been conducting business in such a way that they hope to exit this downturn in stronger positions than their competitors.

Probably the most telling note from the survey is that none of the companies on the list indicated that they intend to hire people anytime soon. In fact, most boasted that they had taken steps to expand productivity without increasing labor costs.

"I have a mixed outlook for 2010," one fabricator said. "We are seeing an increase in activity both from RFQs and from former and existing customers. My assessment is that low inventories are creating new orders from existing customers. Existing companies are considering changing suppliers to improve cost considerations, quality, and delivery performance. I am also seeing an increase in start-up companies that I believe is a direct result of the unemployment rate."

So 2010 may not be the year for a full-blown economic comeback, but maybe it'll be the birth year for hundreds of exciting new businesses. If the FAB 40 proves anything, it's that a little entrepreneurial spirit goes a long way in increasing one's odds of survival. **FAB**

Editor-in-Chief Dan Davis can be reached at dand@thefabricator.com.

Pulling Together the Information

To create the inaugural **FAB 40** list, *The FABRICATOR* sent a direct-mail piece in February to 1,000 readers who identified themselves as being a part of the miscellaneous metal fabricating sector. The letter asked recipients to fill out the form and fax it back to *The FABRICATOR* or use an online form to fill in the same information. Two follow-up e-mail blasts, one in March and one in April, reminded participants of the editorial opportunity.

Companies are ranked according to 2009 self-reported revenues. Because all of the companies are privately held, independent verification of reported figures was not possible.

The FABRICATOR recognizes that this is not a complete list of the largest metal fabricating operations by revenue in the U.S. If you wish to be notified about future **FAB 40** listings, please contact Dan Davis at dand@thefabricator.com to be added to the contact list.

No. 1
Drake-Williams Steel Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$97 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$80 million
Headquarters: Omaha, Neb.
Company locations: 4
Employees: 200
Services: Plate fabricating, miscellaneous steel fabricating, coatings application, rebar manufacturing, structural engineering services, installation/erection services
Markets served: Commercial construction

No. 2
Robinson Metal Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$58 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$50 million
Headquarters: De Pere, Wis.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 320
Services: Carbon and stainless steel and aluminum sheet and plate fabricating, machining, custom enclosures manufacturing
Markets served: General

No. 3
LAI International Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$45 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$47 million
Headquarters: Scottsdale, Ariz.
Company locations: 5
Employees: 225
Services: Drilling, EDM, heat treating, laser cutting, machining, precision grinding, waterjet cutting, welding
Markets served: Aerospace, power generation

No. 4
A.J. Rose Manufacturing Co.
2009 Revenue: \$35 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$50 million
Headquarters: Avon, Ohio
Company locations: 4
Employees: 250
Services: Stamping and metal flow forming, secondary operations including broaching, drilling, grinding, machining, tapping, spinning, washing, welding
Markets served: Aerospace, automotive, defense, industrial

No. 5
Cupples' J&J Co. Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$24 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$24 million
Headquarters: Jackson, Tenn.
Company locations: 2
Employees: 160
Services: Bending, laser cutting, machining, punching, roll bending, turning, welding
Markets served: Construction, food service, lawn and garden

No. 6
EVS Metal
2009 Revenue: \$22.7 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$25 million
Headquarters: Riverdale, N.J.
Company locations: 3
Employees: 230
Services: Assembly, laser cutting, machining, painting, powder coating, punching, stamping, welding
Markets served: Aerospace, automotive, defense, electronics, energy, food and beverage, gaming, industrial, medical, telecommunications

No. 7
Grand Haven Technical Sales Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$22 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$18.5 million
Headquarters: Destin, Fla.
Company locations: 3
Employees: 280
Services: Punching, painting, plating, molding, stamping, welding
Markets served: Appliance, automotive

No. 8
Florida Stainless Fabricators Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$20 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$17 million
Headquarters: Oviedo, Fla.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 158
Services: Bending, laser cutting, polishing, welding
Markets served: Food and beverage

No. 9 (tie)
DeWys Manufacturing Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$16 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$18 million
Headquarters: Marne, Mich.
Company locations: 2
Employees: 120
Services: Assembly, laser cutting, machining, powder coating, punching, stamping, welding
Markets served: Electronic, industrial, medical, office furniture, retail

No. 9 (tie)
HitchDoc
2009 Revenue: \$16 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$16 million
Headquarters: Jackson, Minn.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 65
Services: Assembly, finishing, forming, laser cutting, machining, plasma cutting, robotic welding
Markets served: Agriculture, industrial, transportation

No. 11
Nupar Manufacturing Co.
2009 Revenue: \$15.2 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$16.8 million
Headquarters: Claremore, Okla.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 101
Services: Stamping
Markets served: Agriculture, defense, electric motor, HVAC, medical, recreation

No. 12
Myers & Co. Architectural Metals
2009 Revenue: \$14 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$10 million
Headquarters: Basalt, Colo.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 60
Services: Structural and ornamental steel fabricating
Markets served: Construction

No. 13
Mound Technologies Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$13.5 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$14 million
Headquarters: Springboro, Ohio
Company locations: 1
Employees: 40
Services: Structural steel design, detailing, installation, punching, sawing, welding
Markets served: Construction

No. 14
Able Steel Fabricators Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$13.1 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$18 million
Headquarters: Mesa, Ariz.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 102
Services: Structural steel bending, cutting, drilling, painting, welding
Markets served: Structural steel fabricating

No. 15
Phoenix Specialty Mfg. Co.
2009 Revenue: \$13 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$14.4 million
Headquarters: Bamberg, S.C.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 84
Services: Stamping, finishing
Markets served: General

No. 16
P&A Metal Fab Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$12.5 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$14.4 million
Headquarters: Clackamas, Ore.
Company locations: 2
Employees: 70
Services: Bending, laser cutting, forming, punching, tube bending and cutting, powder coating, robotic welding
Markets served: General

No. 17
Clark Metal Products
2009 Revenue: \$12.4 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$12.9 million
Headquarters: Blairsville, Pa.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 137
Services: Laser cutting, punching, forming, GMAW, GTAW, powder coating, painting, graphic printing, machining, assembly
Markets served: Communications, electronics, industrial, health care, medical, transportation

No. 18 (tie)
ABC Sheet Metal
2009 Revenue: \$12 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$10 million
Headquarters: Anaheim, Calif.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 50
Services: Laser cutting, waterjet cutting, punching, roll bending, welding, engineering
Markets served: Building materials, commercial display, construction, defense, electronics, HVAC, medical, oil and gas, packaging, transportation

No. 18 (tie)
MCM Industries Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$12 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$15 million
Headquarters: Beachwood, Ohio
Company locations: 3
Employees: 42
Services: Stamping, forging, machining
Markets served: General

No. 18 (tie)
Vidimos Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$12 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$15 million
Headquarters: East Chicago, Ind.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 60
Services: Laser cutting, plasma cutting, bending, welding
Markets served: General

No. 21
J&D Tube Benders Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$11 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$11.5 million
Headquarters: Schofield, Wis.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 85
Services: Bending, brazing, cutting, machining, welding
Markets served: Automotive, heavy construction equipment, logging, lawn and garden, furniture, health, exercise, sporting goods, appliance, defense, agriculture, marine

No. 22 (tie)
Hamlin Newco LLC
2009 Revenue: \$10 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$11 million
Headquarters: Akron, Ohio
Company locations: 1
Employees: 65
Services: Stamping, welding
Markets served: Automotive, industrial

No. 22 (tie)
Shickel Corp.
2009 Revenue: \$10 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$11 million
Headquarters: Bridgewater, Va.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 78
Services: Plasma cutting, waterjet cutting, GMAW, GTAW, bending, machining, painting, polishing, powder coating, roll bending
Markets served: Architectural, ornamental, industrial, pharmaceutical

No. 24
WestPort Precision LLC
2009 Revenue: \$9.5 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$11.5 million
Headquarters: Stratford, Conn.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 49
Services: Assembly, bending, deburring, grinding, laser cutting, milling, painting, plating, punching, shearing, spot welding, tapping, welding
Markets served: General

No. 25
E.P.M.P. Ltd.
2009 Revenue: \$9.3 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$11.3 million
Headquarters: Seguin, Texas
Company locations: 1
Employees: 60
Services: Assembly, fabricating, welding, inventory management
Markets served: Electrical, HVAC, lighting, retail

No. 26
Precision Metal Mfg. Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$9 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$13.5 million
Headquarters: Northglenn, Colo.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 63
Services: Assembly, fabricating, machining, painting, powder coating
Markets served: Aerospace, agriculture, computer, medical, telecommunications

No. 27
NEX Solutions
2009 Revenue: \$7.9 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$10.8 million
Headquarters: Litchfield, Mich.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 76
Services: Engineering and design, drilling, forming, plasma cutting, punching, machining, welding, assembly, powder coating
Markets served: Defense, pools and spas, commercial construction, industrial, transportation

No. 28
Tennille Inc.
2009 Revenue: \$7 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$7 million
Headquarters: Texas City, Texas
Company locations: 3
Employees: 45
Services: Punching, roll bending, shearing, welding
Markets served: General

No. 29
Laystrom Mfg. Co.
2009 Revenue: \$6.7 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$7 million
Headquarters: Chicago
Company locations: 1
Employees: 50
Services: Assembly, bending, laser cutting, punching, stamping, tool and die, welding
Markets served: Aerospace, agriculture, construction, food processing, industrial controls, medical, musical instruments, security, telecommunications

No. 30

Harco Metal Products Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$6.3 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$5.5 million
Headquarters: Tempe, Ariz.
Company locations: 2
Employees: 40

Services: Tube bending, tube forming, machining, GMAW, GTAW, robotic welding
Markets served: General

No. 31

Puritan Mfg. Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$6.1 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$6 million
Headquarters: Omaha, Neb.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 30

Services: Plasma cutting, drilling, punching, forming, roll bending, welding
Markets served: Food processing, industrial, storage tanks, structural steel, ornamental

No. 32 (tie)

AmeriStar Mfg. Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$5 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$5 million
Headquarters: Mankato, Minn.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 35

Services: Assembly, laser cutting, waterjet cutting, machining, stamping, welding
Markets served: Aerospace, industrial, military, consumer goods

No. 32 (tie)

Tarpenning-LaFollette Co.

2009 Revenue: \$5 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$5.5 million
Headquarters: Indianapolis
Company locations: 1
Employees: 35

Services: Laser cutting, bending, punching, notching, roll bending, welding
Markets served: Industrial, ornamental

No. 32 (tie)

Shawnee Steel & Welding Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$5 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$8 million
Headquarters: Merriam, Kan.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 28

Services: Bending, drilling, plasma cutting, welding
Markets served: Architectural, industrial, ornamental

No. 35

J&A Mfg. Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$4.8 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$5.5 million
Headquarters: Garland, Texas
Company locations: 1
Employees: 55

Services: Assembly, bending, laser cutting, punching, machining, robotic welding, powder coating, silk screening
Markets served: Defense, medical, security, telecommunications

No. 36

Tri-State Fabricators Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$4.5 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$5 million
Headquarters: Amelia, Ohio
Company locations: 1
Employees: 50

Services: Bending, shearing, laser cutting, punching, forming, stamping, roll bending, tube bending, machining, turning, welding, painting, powder coating, silk screening
Markets served: Industrial, furniture

No. 37

CL Tech Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$4 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$4 million
Headquarters: Edinburg, Ind.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 20

Services: Assembly, plasma cutting, bending, tube bending, machining, tool and die, welding
Markets served: General

No. 38

Sousa & DeMayo Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$3.7 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$2.6 million
Headquarters: Attleboro Falls, Mass.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 21

Services: Assembly, forming, plasma cutting, punching, painting, welding
Markets served: General

No. 39

Martinek Mfg.

2009 Revenue: \$3.3 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$3.5 million
Headquarters: Fremont, Calif.
Company locations: 1
Employees: 26

Services: Bending, laser cutting, machining, punching, welding, silk screening
Markets served: General

No. 40 (tie)

D&R Specialties Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$2.6 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$2.6 million
Headquarters: Navasota, Texas
Company locations: 1
Employees: 51

Services: Assembly, bending, grinding, machining, punching, sanding, stamping, welding
Markets served: Electronics, general

No. 40 (tie)

Metal Services of Blooming Prairie Inc.

2009 Revenue: \$2.6 million
Projected 2010 Revenue: \$3.6 million
Headquarters: Blooming Prairie, Minn.
Company locations: 2
Employees: 21

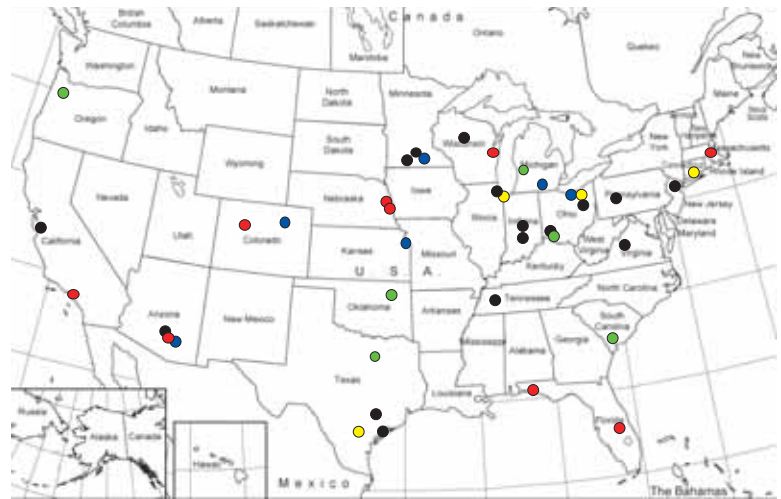
Services: Assembly, bending, plasma cutting, punching, sawing, shearing, tube bending, welding
Markets served: General

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FAB 40 2010 Revenue Trends

- Predict Less Revenue in 2010**
 - ABC Sheet Metal, Anaheim, Calif.
 - Drake-Williams Steel, Omaha, Neb.
 - Florida Stainless Fabricators, Oviedo, Fla.
 - Grand Haven Technical Sales, Destin, Fla.
 - Harco Metal Products, Tempe, Ariz.
 - Myers & Co. Architectural Metal, Basalt, Colo.
 - Puritan Mfg., Omaha, Neb.
 - Robinson Metal Inc., De Pere, Wis.
 - Sousa & DeMayo Inc., Attleboro Falls, Mass.
 - Hamlin Newco LLC, Akron, Ohio
 - HitchDoc, Jackson, Minn.
 - J&D Tube Benders Inc., Schofield, Wis.
 - LAI International, Scottsdale, Ariz.
 - Laystrom Mfg. Co., Chicago
 - Martinek Mfg., Fremont, Calif.
 - Mound Technologies, Springboro, Ohio
 - Shickel Corp., Bridgewater, Va.
 - Tarpenning-LaFollette Co., Indianapolis
 - Tennille Inc., Texas City, Texas
- Predict 0 to 10% Growth**
 - AmeriStar Mfg. Inc., Mankato, Minn.
 - CL Tech Inc., Edinburg, Ind.
 - Clark Metal Products, Blairsville, Pa.
 - Cupples' J&J Co. Inc., Jackson, Tenn.
 - D&R Specialties Inc., Navasota, Texas
 - EV5 Metal, Riverdale, N.J.
 - J&A Manufacturing, Garland, Texas
 - Nupar Manufacturing Co., Claremore, Okla.
 - P&A Metal Fab Inc., Clackamas, Ore.
 - Phoenix Specialty Mfg., Bamberg, S.C.
 - Tri-State Fabricators, Amelia, Ohio
- Predict 11 to 20% Growth**
 - DeWys Mfg. Inc., Marne, Mich.
- Predict 21 to 30% Growth**
 - E.P.M.P. Ltd., Seguin, Texas
 - MCM Industries, Beachwood, Ohio
 - Vidimos Inc., East Chicago, Ind.
 - WestPort Precision LLC, Stratford, Conn.
- Predict 31% Growth or More**
 - Able Steel Fabricators Inc., Mesa, Ariz.
 - A.J. Rose Manufacturing Co., Avon, Ohio
 - Metal Services of BP Inc., Blooming Prairie, Minn.
 - NEX Solutions, Litchfield, Mich.
 - Precision Metal Mfg. Inc., Northglenn, Colo.
 - Shawnee Steel & Welding, Merriam, Kan.

The above is based on revenue numbers submitted by participating companies. Revenue projections alone do not reflect overall business health, as many companies likely have cut costs and increased production efficiencies to face the decline in expected revenue.



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