

Ohio Fabricators Company





SOLVING CUSTOMER PROBLEMS,

on Time & to the Highest Quality



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With a dedicated and highly knowledgeable staff of 70, the Ohio Fabricators Company (OFCO) continues to serve a base of long-time and new customers in the United States, Canada, Mexico, and as far afield as Europe and Asia. As one of America's leading experts in the field of custom filtration, Ohio Fabricators provides high quality products for Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) and private-label customers, as well as stocking products based on customer needs.

Written by Robert Hoshowsky

Manufacturing filters ranging from the size of a penny such as thimble strainers all the way to items 20 inches in diameter and 40 inches tall, Ohio Fabricators specializes in custom filtration products made from wire mesh, perforated metal, and other materials. Serving OEM, construction, automotive, industrial automation, off-road and pleasure craft such as all-terrain vehicles and Jet Ski makers, fuel dispensing for gas station equipment, aerospace, locomotive and others, the company has a long-time reputation for quality, timely delivery, and customer service. ►



No Volume Too Small

► A manufacturing legacy

Founded by Lemuel J. Forman, Joseph P. Rokovan, and Ivan E. MacKeiler at the end of 1944, the Ohio Fabricators Company began production in 1945, making filters for airplane motors used during World War II. Still based in its home of Coshocton, Ohio, the company's current owners acquired the business in December of 1964, and have been investing in technology to serve its many clients ever since.

"We started out in 1945 servicing the military, and we are still lucky to be working with our Armed Forces and producing parts for tanks, keeping our guys safe in the desert," says Chief Executive Officer Mike Shaw.

With its single location totaling about 45,000 square feet, Ohio Fabricators continues to manufacture products "that literally capture everything from gravel to microwave energy," along with a standard line of strainers for the hydraulics industry. Located in the center of the manufacturing base for OEMs, the company is ideally situated within 500 miles of about 49 percent of the U.S. population, making it highly accessible.

With an estimated 10,000 stock keeping units (SKUs), the company manufactures custom filtration products from one piece all the way up to 100,000, depending on what the customer requires. "We get excited about solving customer problems," says Shaw. "Typically, they bring us a manufacturing issue, and we get excited about helping them solve that problem at a competitive price, in the time they need, and with excellent quality."



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From flexibility and quality products to superior customer service, lean manufacturing processes and more, Ohio Fabricators has earned the trust of countless OEMs over the past 73 years. Working with the company as a consultant for two years, Mike Smith became Sales Executive for the eastern half of the country about four months ago. With a background in industrial manufacturing going back over 30 years, his experience includes sales, management, and running a company. Responsible for presenting OFCO's strategic competencies to the customer, Smith says when he was initially with Ohio Fabricators as a consultant, he sought to figure out the company's DNA and its true value to clients.

"Ohio Fabricators has earned the trust of countless OEMs over the past 73 years."



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"We determined that we are a fabricating company, essentially, that makes filter products and supplies the highest quality products with a 50 percent faster delivery time than our nearest competitors," he says. In discussions with customers, the company soon realized that quality and pricing remained important, but on-time delivery was its number one priority. "So we wrap all of our goods and services around that, and try to satisfy that objective for our customers."

As a lean manufacturer, Ohio Fabricators is able to achieve significantly faster deliveries owing to its superior customer service and being responsive at all stages, from the ordering desk to the shop floor. The team is transparent and accountable at every stage of the manufacturing process.

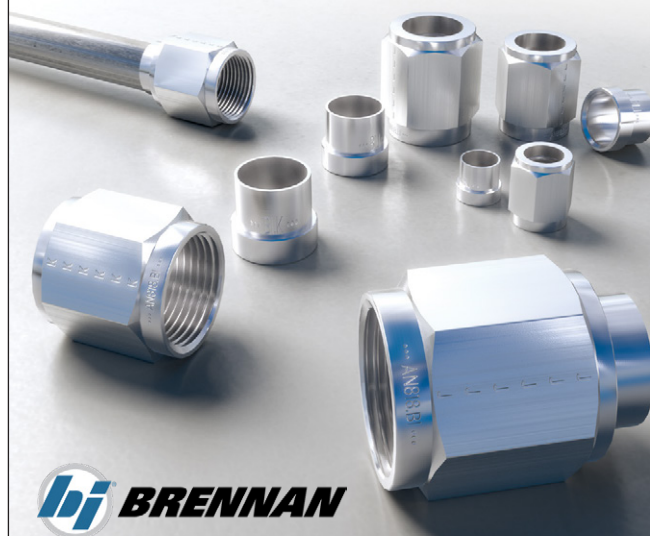
With the goal of delivering the highest quality products with zero defects at a competitive price, Ohio Fabricators – as a U.S.-based company – boasts many advantages over offshore entities, particularly when it comes to delivery. Items shipped from the Far East need a lead time of at least 16 weeks; products from Ohio Fabricators are usually expedited and delivered in just four weeks or less. It is not unusual for OFCO to be approached by clients under pressure who did not receive offshore deliveries in time, who still need to deliver to *their* clients as soon as possible to meet their deadlines. "We fill a void for them to take care of that lead time issue," states Shaw. "Now, they still might buy from the offshore source in the long term, but if you need it in two weeks, typically you're not going to get that from Asia or India."

Along with speedy, professional service and a range of superior filtration products, customers keep coming back to Ohio Fabricators for the company's extremely broad capabilities in its offerings: when clients are looking for solutions to manufacturing problems, they know OFCO can service their needs. From highly capable staff to decades of manufacturing and design

experience, in-house technology, top-notch sales and service, and fast shipping, the company is founded on trust and respect.

"The customer trusts us to give them a good product, and they respect the job that we do," says Shaw. "Our advantage is with our broad range of capabilities; we are able to service many different areas with many different technologies. So by talking to existing customers about what their requirements are today, we are taking that opportunity to talk to new customers, and [understand] how we can help them." ►►

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Self-performing almost all manufacturing and assembly operations from its large central Ohio facility, Ohio Fabricators holds ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System certification for the manufacture of custom filters, strainers, screen assemblies, and formed metal products, a further demonstration of OFCO's commitment to its clients, many of them Fortune 500 companies.

With state-of-the-art equipment and manufacturing techniques, Ohio Fabricators' wide-ranging production capabilities include an automated tube fabrication cell, mechanical and hydraulic presses (capacities up to 100 tons), in-house production of dies and fixtures in its tool room, robotically operated epoxy application, automated printing and marking capabilities, an entire facility for cleaning, deoxidizing, degreasing and etching, and more. With all production operations governed by a fully documented Quality Management System – third-party certified to meet ISO 9001:2015 requirements and audited semi-annually by BSI auditors – all aspects of manufacturing are thoroughly inspected, including both raw materials and purchased components. Along with inspection, documentation, process analysis, testing, prototyping and approval, safety remains a top priority for the company.

"We can solve your problems," says Bill Wheeler, one of company's owners. "We are a custom fabrication and manufacturing business. We certainly meet customer demands and hopefully exceed them all. We add value. We will put your name on it, part number on it, or put it in a box you can send straight to your customer so you don't have to take a million pieces and recount them and package them yourselves."



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With the present business climate expected to remain strong for years to come, more money is flowing back into the U.S., which is encouraging manufacturers to reinvest. This in turn results in improvements and more jobs to keep up with customer demand. Expanding its sales team from an organic standpoint and growing the business through sales efforts, Ohio Fabricators will be looking to retain more salespeople in the near future. Financially sound, OFCO is also eyeing acquiring companies in the coming years.

"There's going to be a blend of organic growth as well as acquisition that gets us to double in size over the next five years," says Shaw.

Mike Smith says part of the company's success is the result of its deep Midwestern interest in doing the right thing at the right time for its customers. "They are very ethical, and very financially sound," he says. "You put all those things together, and you're going to find some good stuff. The most important thing for people to understand is we are a company that manufactures the highest quality products, and delivers 50 percent faster than our nearest competitor. Quote to quote, that is the most important singular message that we can give our customers." ■



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