



## **Streamlined, Simplified Sourcing Lets Electromechanica Focus On What It Does Best – Design**

Electromechanica is an engineering services provider that buys in small quantities.– says company founder and President Karl Edminster. But the company custom-designs and prototypes for a big variety of industrial systems, so it bids on a lot of different types of parts. The problem is that they don't have the time to look outside their local area for suppliers who can do the work they need in a timely, cost-effective way.

Edminster's shop creates everything from functional test equipment for the electronics industry to robots to custom fixtures that simplify manufacturing processes. They work with , G-10 drilled templates, plastics and stainless steel, among other materials, but the bulk of their work involves milled aluminum parts. Electromechanica has a large and multi-faceted skill set, but their key differentiator is their ability to produce integrated hardware systems and the software to ensure their effective performance.

Even though it has a small staff and handles a large palette of engineering solutions, Electromechanica stresses fast turnaround times on its project work for clients. But where things have slowed down in the past was in the sourcing process, through no fault of its own.

### **From local to global: a bigger, better customer base**

Electromechanica had to find a sourcing solution to help them overcome some distinct disadvantages.

First, the company operates in southeastern Massachusetts, which has extremely high labor costs. "We're in about the most expensive place you could possibly run your business," says Edminster. Second, Electromechanica was operating in a seller's market: with its selection limited to the shops in its jurisdiction, the company had little leverage on companies that didn't meet deadlines and gave different answers about when it could deliver parts. And third, when it found itself in an unexpected time crunch, Electromechanica had trouble finding a supplier on short notice who could meet its needs.

Edminster and his staff didn't necessarily need an endless list of suppliers for their parts. What they needed was easy access to a greatly expanded marketplace where they could choose dependable suppliers who had product-and-service versatility. That was MFG.com, a one-of-a-kind Web-based marketplace that matches a buyer's requirements with qualified suppliers in real time. This unique community saves buyers the time, trouble and expense of searching for that elusive vendor who fits their exacting criteria. MFG.com presents a comprehensive database of suppliers that's available at no cost to buyers. It also has the deep understanding of supplier markets to help buyers develop well-targeted RFQs that elicit the kind of responses they're seeking.

Timing is everything in Edminster's business. That's why MFG.com has a lot of appeal to him. "We definitely like the fact that we're able to get quick responses to RFQs," he volunteers. "Typically, we'll put something up, usually with a request for a response in three to four days, and we'll get it. We're not having to call and nag people by saying 'I sent you this package. Are you going to bid on it?'"

That responsiveness is all the more vital when a rush job beckons. "This has helped us solve the problem of finding



people who can do a quick turnarounds in a crunch, where we can put something up and say, 'hey, we need a one-week turn on this part,' Edminster points out. "That's been very helpful."

To date, Electromechanica has used MFG.com exclusively for sourcing custom machine components, but there may be additional ways to use the resource. "There's a potential we could use it for assembly services, if we had something where we needed a bunch of wiring harnesses," observes Edminster. "That would be something that interests me."

### **The price is right**

Edminster reports that Electromechanica has been able to cut its machine parts cost by one third, partly because it can cast a wide net for especially hard-to-get material like wire EDM for specialty copper parts. When Edminster needed that item he found it in Wisconsin "and we got a phenomenal price on these potentially very expensive parts."

By making the world its sourcing neighborhood through MFG.com, Electromechanica can shop instead of settle for the price it pays. "We haven't used any of the vendors we had been using before we found MFG.com," Edminster says. "Once we found them, we realized the local guys were raking us over the coals for prices on things."

Overhead, local labor, production time, quality: all of these are factors in Electromechanica's cost of doing business. Going national through MFG.com's online resource reduces each of those costs. There's no time spent bird-dogging iffy suppliers. There's a choice of regional markets where wages are lower than in Electromechanica's home base. There's little chance of the production delays that slow sales. Top-quality parts make for finished products that enhance the company's reputation – and draw new and repeat business.

### **The one-stop shop difference**

It seems counter-intuitive to say that it's easier and cheaper to find the right supplier by prowling the world instead of the community where you do business. But that's what has happened for Edminster and his company. "It's one-stop shopping," he says. "You have everything right on site and well organized." MFG.com is heavily invested in Electromechanica's success. "We get calls every so often from them if something's posted and hasn't been responded to," tells Edminster. "They'll ask us 'how's it going? Are you guys going to release this?' It's good that they stay on top of things like that."

Getting costs down, locating hard-to-source parts easily, finding vendors who can do a cost-effective job for you: those are MFG.com's strong points for Edminster. "I'd say that pretty much sums it up."

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