



Columbia Marking Tools

Columbia Marking Tools, Inc.
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News Release

For Release: **IMMEDIATELY**

RESHORING BY MICHIGAN MANUFACTURERS BRINGS NEW BUSINESS TO CHESTERFIELD TOWNSHIP, MICHIGAN-BASED COLUMBIA MARKING TOOLS

The reshoring phenomenon is now a reality for part marking and identification specialist Columbia Marking Tools. According to Tom Phipps, Columbia CEO, “We’ve recently seen significant new business for our marking equipment as a result of several Michigan-based manufacturers intentionally reshoring capital equipment purchases to local companies.”

Phipps points out, “The tsunami in Japan and the floods in Thailand may have been ‘the straw that broke the camel’s back’. Over the past year, we’ve seen an increased number of inquiries with a renewed emphasis on engineering know-how, high quality and fast delivery. It has been a pleasure not to see cost as the only driver. It appears that the frustrations of the ever increasing shipping costs, the midnight phone calls and the poor delivery schedules have prompted companies to again look closer to home. We too have had to look for new sources here in North America to meet the needs of a number of components that we use in the manufacture of our own marking machines.”

“It’s incredible what you find when you step back and seriously evaluate purchasing the components offshore”, Phipps explains. “The paper work is ridiculous, let alone the customs hold ups at both ends. The crating, handling and shipping costs are going out-of-site and God forbid the parts aren’t the right ones when they arrive...and a lot of times they’re

not right...and then what. You start all over again. Our data reveals that 18 percent of the time the parts are wrong or damaged. Time is money...and lead times for the kinds of customers we have do not have much wiggle room...so you risk losing a customer. It's not worth it today, good customers are too hard to come by. I implore all companies to review the TLC (Total Landed Costs) in both time and dollars to add every person and place that touches an overseas order...it's worth the exercise."

"Recently we have received an order for a specially-designed roll marking machine to place part numbers on spark plugs for a large worldwide spark plug manufacturer with facilities here in Michigan", Phipps says. "Reshoring was a priority for this project. We also have recently entered into a partnering agreement with ABI Systems, Inc. a designer and builder of special assembly machines to incorporate our marking systems capabilities into a series of assembly cells for a German suspension system manufacturer with operations here in Michigan."

Phipps adds, " Because the majority of the old assembly systems companies that used to dot the Detroit metropolitan area have long since gone, we have found that there again appears to be a real need for experienced assembly engineering design and build know-how with the ability to integrate a wide array of processes, knowledge of PLCs, motion integration and controls, testing, vision systems and ultimately the best methods of placing the required identification and traceability marks."

Phipps adds, "As North American manufacturers who still machine and design in-house, we were confident that reshoring was eventually going to happen because of the horror stories we've all heard about the poor quality of goods coming from those countries with cheap labor. I only hope we haven't lost all of the great manufacturing engineering minds that used to dominate our machine tool suppliers capabilities. Fortunately we have been able to hold on to our experienced people here at Columbia Marking Tools an experienced team of assembly systems engineers at ABI Systems , Inc. too. The future looks bright."

Columbia Marking Tools is a leading designer and manufacturer of metal and plastic marking equipment including stamps, roll marking dies, roll marking and impact marking

machines, fully programmable pulsed fiber diode laser, peen/scribe marking and UID/2D Square  Dot® machines, numbering heads and special marking machines.

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