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BMC Metalworks takes flight with leadership

You would be charmed upon meeting Jimmy Phillips, the company president of BMC Metalworks, a full service machining and fabrication company. His boyish good looks and upbeat air are a cover for the tough and astute first-time entrepreneur.



**Roben
Mounger**
*Business
Perspectives*

After college, Phillips pursued a career in sales and operations and worked in administration with national consumer products companies like Earthgrains, Sara Lee and CooperSmith. He traveled extensively in each of his roles, and when a corporate offer was made for a move to Chicago, he decided instead to settle back in his native Tennessee.

"I was looking for a challenge and a new opportunity," Phillips said.

His corporate skill-sets and a penchant for reading a balance sheet and profit and loss statement parlayed into a search for a good business investment. He discovered just what he was looking for: Brooks Machine Company in Columbia.

"I was fortunate, even though banks were not very willing in the aftermath of a recession to lend money, to find Brooks — a 34 year old business — rich in tradition," he said.

And then Phillips did his



BMC Metalworks employees pose for a picture to celebrate the company's 40th anniversary. (Courtesy photo)

due diligence. Customers and the community were interviewed, revealing a solid foundation for growth. After the company was purchased in Aug. 2009, rebranding/identity development brought on a name change, new logo, professional website design, new marketing collateral and a much improved exterior. BMC soon encircled three buildings and 70,000 square feet. The 22 employees donned uniforms, and BMC began to hold quarterly "state of the business" meetings.

"Our goals were simple," Phillips said. "We wanted to grow the business, become the dominant company in the industrial machining and fabrication markets we compete, and provide job security for every employee and family."

BMC set about expanding their service footprint throughout North American and into Mexico and Canada. They have experienced double-digit sales revenue growth in each of the last five years. The number of employees has doubled and second shifts have been

added in service areas. In addition BMC has not laid off a single employee as a result of a lack of work or a reduction of workforce.

"We have been blessed," Phillips said.

"We also wanted to be a turnkey operation for the industries," he said, summarizing the additional services offered. With that came an investment of \$1 million dollars in upgrades of cutting edge equipment and technology.

Today, they recruit workers who have computer numerical control training for their machining centers and turning centers. Top of the line technology, such as the Fab-Line APHS press brake and Hypertherm Plasma cutting burn table, has allowed BMC to complete many difficult tasks for the some 300 customers in government, defense, aluminum recycling, automotive, food, mining, agriculture and aviation.

BMC's ongoing quality assurance, service and safety are hallmarks in an environment where each employee, regardless of role, has a performance

evaluation. Strengths and opportunities for development are identified based on performance. "We give merit increases," Phillips said. "People want to be accountable for their work."

The growth of BMC is not just a derivative of employee drive but also because the company provides all the components that customers require, including product design, prototyping, engineering, machining, fabrication, delivery, field installation and 24-hour emergency service.

For Phillips, people are not only central to the work at BMC but also central for a strong community.

"We just completed a company-wide collection of school supplies and backpacks for The Family Center who served 300 plus Maury County students," he said.

BMC employees and customers continually seek ways to contribute. Phillips currently serves on the boards of The Family Center, and the Maury County Chamber and Economic Alliance.

Celebrating 40 years in business this year, BMC is proof that to keep in tune with the times is to meet solid goals. Managers, employees, customers and shareholders will revel in their successes with community-based activities until the new year.

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