



# Setting the Pace



*Seth Currian (centre), plant manager and Rich Roske (far right), production supervisor, pose with Allmetal staff at the Midwest Manufacturing Division*

This February an 85-year old Illinois company — a pioneer in laser-welded air spacers — began shipping insulating glass window industry products from a new plant in Germany. But tackling the world's most demanding fenestration market is characteristic of **Allmetal, Inc.**

Allmetal GmbH, a 50,000 square-foot Leipzig plant where six production lines roared to life early this year, is manufacturing and distributing roll-formed spacer products and injection moulded goods for the European Union, Eastern Europe and Russia markets.

It is the first foreign manufacturing facility for Allmetal, a privately owned company that has seen continual expansion across the United States for nearly a century.

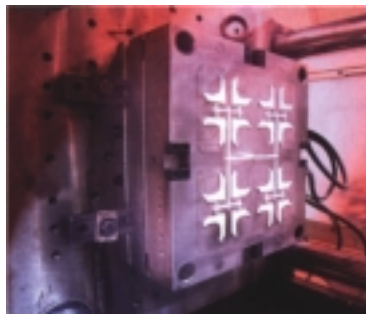
Started in Chicago in 1915 by two partners, Allmetal has evolved into a leading innovator in the insulating glass, window and door market. It is headed today by PHILLIP COLLIN, president and CEO, who is a grandson of one of the original founders.

Beginning with a core

product of weatherstrip, Allmetal also accepted a variety of custom roll-forming jobs and was soon producing stainless steel counter edging, hangers and even mop handles.

Today, the family-owned company, with facilities in New Jersey, Georgia, Illinois, Texas and Nevada, is recognized worldwide for its laser-welded air spacer and decorative products and components. Innovation and service — especially for custom jobs — have been the driving forces behind Allmetal's growth.

"Our clients can't believe some of the things we can accomplish," said GARY MATTHEWS, Allmetal manager of Product and Process Develop-



ROBERTSMITH

*An 85-year old U.S. company opens a second century with European expansion.*

BY FRANK O'BRIEN

ment and one of 300 Allmetal employees worldwide.

It is Allmetal, in fact, that pioneered the marriage of roll-forming with laser welding to develop the world's first laser-welded air spacer for the insulating glass industry back in 1980.

A decade later, Allmetal expanded its product line to include stainless steel air spacers. Because of its thermal qualities and longevity without outgassing, stainless steel is still considered one of the best warm edge spacers in the industry.

Allmetal now manufactures laser welded air spacers in nine different profiles and a full range of widths and materials. Allmetal pioneered the use of thin-walled Stainless Steel with its SST air-spacer and the use of cold-rolled steel products in addition to the exclusive Hi-Q nickel-zinc alloy and aluminum air-spacers.

## Injection moulding

Allmetal's injection-moulding capability is a further example of world-class production. This division, based in Bensonville, Ill., has the capacity to produce more than 1.4 million corner keys, straight connectors, screen corners, muntin products and decorative products every day. The products are produced from 28 moulding machines working three shifts seven days a week. The fully automated facility, considered among the most advanced in the industry, utilize a wide variety of materials into more than 1, 500 different items.

An example of the innovation here is Allmetal's Tutone Contoured Muntin Bars. Available in virtually any combination of colours, the laser-welded muntin bars

are coated with UV stable paint for fade resistance. Also available is the "capover external intersect", an indication of Allmetal's continual fine-tuning in design. The capover is a unique three piece component consisting of the intersect base and two caps. It allows the contoured muntin bar to slide under the edge of the intersect component, creating aesthetic punch for grid designs.

Another recent product addition is the Multi-Purpose Starburst (MPS) Hub. "We've taken a good product (the starburst component) and evolved it into a superior product," explained VINCE CATALANO, General Manger of Allmetal's Injection Molding Facility.

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The MPS Hub (used at the centre, or hub, of the starburst design within a decorative window) "allows the flexibility to create starburst designs using from one to five spokes with the same component," Catalano said.

Fabricators can order the new MPS Hub (made of pre-coloured, UV-stable polymer) in any colour.

## Tooling and Design

To control its own tooling requirements and improve turnaround time and cost, Allmetal also operates its own in-house tooling and design division, located in Wood Dale, Ill. The highly skilled, nine-person plant allows Allmetal to produce new and custom profiles as necessary to suit market demands. Indicative of the staff loyalty that Allmetal enjoys, most of the tool and die employees have been with the division since it opened more than 15 years ago.

"We basically supply all the dies, tools and machinery to make any Allmetal product, whether it's spacers or screens," explained plant manager MIKE LAGDAN, "and we work with all the plants, including Germany."

A Supremely vertically integrated company, Allmetal Inc. has grown into one of America's leading suppliers to the window industry. Now, with a foothold in Europe — and its reputation firmly planted — Allmetal appears ready to take on the world.

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