

## Technical Member Profile: Corey Steel Company

Corey Steel Company is a leading manufacturer of cold-finished steel bar. With headquarters in Cicero, Ill., the privately held firm also distributes a range of aluminum and copper bar, rod and wire products.

The company was founded in 1924 as a full-line service center supplying ferrous and nonferrous metals to machine shops and fabricators in the Chicago area. In the 1950s, the service center installed its first drawing line to produce cold-drawn and cold-finished carbon and alloy steel bar.

Today, Corey Steel Company occupies more than 400,000 square feet of manufacturing and warehouse space. That space includes a multi-million-dollar, 110,000-square-foot addition built in 2003 that houses the company's state-of-the-art coil to bar drawing lines.

The equipment is designed to produce cold-drawn bar directly from hot-rolled coil in diameters ranging from 1/4-inch to 2-inch. The manufacturer also draws cold-finished bar up to 4-inches in diameter from individually fed barstock.

As a distributor, Corey Steel offers aluminum, copper, copper alloys, high-leaded brass, leaded nickel-silver and stainless long products to complement its cold-finished bars. Additional capabilities include turning, grinding, polishing, chamfering, saw cutting and burnishing, as well as magnetic and ultrasonic testing.

"We were a service center that evolved into a manufacturing company," says John Kenefick, vice

president of marketing and sales at Corey Steel. "But we never lost sight of our roots as a service-oriented company."

One of the company's largest markets is the precision machining industry, according to Mr. Kenefick, who has been with Corey Steel since 1988. While most customers are in North America, the company also sells to customers in Asia.

Mr. Kenefick currently serves on the PMPA marketing committee and on the PMPA national board of directors as a technical member. He says he is a frequent user of the technical Listserve, as well as the corporate and national board Listserves.

Corey Steel's vice president believes that one of the association's biggest benefits is the oppor-



"Our company has been a PMPA technical member since 1992," Mr. Kenefick says. "We participate in all of the conferences and trade shows, whether they are at the local or national level. We also participate heavily in PMPA chapter meetings in Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, Michigan and Ohio."

tunity to develop relationships with other PMPA members. "PMPA allows us to introduce ourselves to precision machine shops—companies that we can really help," he explains. "We not only help members by supplying bar product, but also by working with them to find, for instance, a potentially better



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grade of steel that will make the same part.”

Mr. Kenefick feels that PMPA is a good representation of American manufacturing as a whole. “As a manufacturing segment, precision machine shops give you a good feel for how the entire country is doing. That’s because the member companies sell to all markets—from aerospace and automotive to fluid power and medical.

“There’s not a segment of manufacturing that PMPA members don’t touch in some way,” he continues. “From that standpoint, you get a very good idea of how industries are doing throughout the whole country.

“Most PMPA members are family-owned companies that have been in business for a long time,” Mr. Kenefick says. “It’s a very forward-thinking group. Members are heavily involved in helping American manufacturing, both at the grass-roots level and in Washington, D.C.

“Precision machining shops have been ravaged by offshore parts coming into this country and taking away business,” he adds. “These companies have been forced to be competitive with countries that are hard to compete with; countries that keep their citizens employed by manufacturing parts cheaply and then shipping them to America.

“PMPA members are very successful at what they do,” Mr. Kenefick says. “They have a passion for new products and new innovations. They know how to deal with the challenges they face,

including foreign competition.

“For certain parts, companies are starting to take a look at what was contracted out to other countries,” Mr. Kenefick continues. “Some of those precision parts are now being resourced back here. It was too difficult to manage and too hard to control the quality. People are saying that outsourcing wasn’t worth the costs involved.”

In summing up, Mr. Kenefick says, “PMPA provides the foundation for a supplier like Corey Steel to help the other members succeed, while at the same time helping us succeed. As a tech member, we’re here to provide our fellow members with useful technical information that can help them grow their businesses.”

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