

Innovative Peening Systems Builds New Facility

INNOVATIVE PEENING SYSTEMS (IPS) has moved into its new manufacturing facility in Braselton, Georgia. Heavy metal fabrication, machining, robot assembly, component assembly, machine assembly, electrical panel building, and contract shot peening and abrasive blasting work areas are housed in the new plant. In addition, IPS now has a larger airfoil coating shop to accommodate their work in graphite coatings, sacrificial airfoil wear coatings, and airfoil moment weight scaling for blade radial placement.

The building also holds two 20,000-pound overhead bridge cranes. Both cranes have a 340-foot runway and a 22-foot hook height. The cranes move heavy components into the assembly areas for faster machine construction.

Building a new facility is a large undertaking for a manufacturer and we wanted to know more about the project. Dan Dickey, Chief Executive Officer at IPS, generously answered our questions about the building and the company.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

What prompted the need for a new building?

DAN DICKEY:

We needed larger production areas to accommodate a rapid growth in machines sales, and we wanted to attract employees with manufacturing experience. The mild climate of northern Georgia and its resort amenities are wonderful. The facility is located northeast of Atlanta, Georgia. It's next to the Michelin Raceway Road Atlanta and the Chateau Elan Winery and Golf Resort. The 692 miles of Lake Lanier's shoreline are nearby. All this coupled with the manufacturing corridor of I-85 allows IPS to fulfill its goal of hiring quality key employees.

We have increased our staff size by 20% in the first quarter of 2019.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

Describe a feature of the new facility that has improved productivity.

DAN DICKEY:

IPS now has in-line manufacturing. The raw materials arrive in one end and move across the plant using the building bridge cranes until the machines are assembled and shipped. Machine deliveries are up 35% in 2019.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

We notice you offer airfoil coatings. When and why did you add this service?

DAN DICKEY:

IPS added this service in 2005 at the request of a customer. It may be unusual for a shot peening OEM to offer coatings, but it is not unusual to add diversification to the business revenue.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

Did you move to the new location to better serve a specific market?

DAN DICKEY:

No, IPS has a balanced portfolio of aerospace, energy and automotive customers.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

Do you have advice for anyone thinking of building a new facility?



Innovative Peening Systems' new facility was designed to accommodate in-line manufacturing.

DAN DICKEY:

We designed the building for Innovative Peening’s needs but also added many features with other users of the building in mind. Our mission is to outgrow this building one day and when that happens the building needs to be marketable to other companies. We designed the building with this in mind. We also spent the money for more square footage than was originally planned. The theory, which proved correct, is that the cheapest square footage of the building is the last square foot and the most expensive is the first square foot. The facility was planned for current production and growth.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

What is the history of IPS?

DAN DICKEY:

I founded the Innovative Peening Systems as a division of a metal finishing company. Our first machine build was in 1994 for an aerospace company in Ogden, Utah. In December 1999, I purchased the assets of IPS and incorporated the company independent of all others in January 2000.



Dan Dickey, CEO at IPS, in front of the construction site of the new facility.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

How did you get started in the shot peening industry?

DAN DICKEY:

I started servicing and selling blasting and shot peening machines in 1983 at the age of 21. I attended the first shot peening workshop as a student in 1991 in Atlanta, Georgia and I have been involved with the workshop as an instructor and exhibitor ever since.

I owe a great deal of our success to the workshop and its supporting members. The exposure to the students who are customers or potential customers is a critical part of the event. Having interaction with other people in the industry allows IPS to keep up to date with the industry and its trends.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

What motivates you to continue to grow the company?

DAN DICKEY:

Innovative Peening Systems has a business philosophy that guides our actions:

“Satisfaction of past accomplishments stifles future achievements.”

For us, every component of every machine must be better than the last. This improvement program will keep IPS competitive for as long as the improvement program exists. To improve in this manner you must also improve the facilities, the management team, the employees and your supply chain.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

Is there anything else you would like our readers to know about Innovative Peening Systems?

DAN DICKEY:

IPS is an OEM of CNC and robotic shot peening and blasting machinery. IPS fills an industry niche with our standard CNC machines that comply to every high-end shot peening specification known, including AMS 2432.

These standard machines are extremely versatile, permitting IPS to fill most shot peening applications with a proven machine design. This business practice allows faster machine delivery times at a favorable price to the customer.

The machines are controlled by a powerful Fanuc motion control system with a passive human machine interface and CIMCAP software. If you can fit a part inside the enclosure, the motion system canpeen it accurately with repeatability. Our precision robotic gantry nozzle movement system eliminates the high maintenance of ball screw drives.

Our drive systems provide long service use with extreme accuracy. Our motion system is so accurate it can paint an exact replica of the Mona Lisa on Abraham Lincoln’s forehead on a US penny.

THE SHOT PEENER STAFF:

Thank you, Dan, for your contribution to the magazine. ●



The IPS conference room window overlooks the full length of the production floor. Photographed from left to right: Nick Hart, Chaz Jackson, Dan Dickey (CEO), Kristina Loftis, and Julian Piszczak.