

SUCCESS STORY: BREHMER MANUFACTURING, INC.

2018 Export Business of the Year



Founded in 1974 by Joe Brehmer and his father, Reynard, Brehmer Manufacturing, Inc., has many business divisions and serves a broad range of markets, including dry fertilizer tenders, hog feeding equipment, truck customization and more recently, fitness equipment.

The division that has brought the company global attention is Eagle International tire recycling equipment. The Lyons, Neb. company has customers in 27 countries and is in the process of adding three more foreign markets. "This is something we've put 30 years of effort into," says Joe Brehmer, company president, who has been involved in every aspect of design for this line of tire-reduction equipment.

In addition to foreign sales, Brehmer Sales Representative John Tejkl says the company is working hard to establish dealers internationally. "We have a dealer who currently covers five countries, and we are getting others officially signed on," he says.

The international presence is the product of research, training and hard work by Brehmer and his company, along with the services of the Nebraska Business Development Center (NBDC). NBDC has provided advice, information and training since 2000, when NBDC consultant Renee Held gathered a group of non-competing manufacturers to learn about lean manufacturing processes. "I really enjoyed that experience," Brehmer says. "I liked learning about lean manufacturing and being able to meet others like myself." Since then, the company has hosted lean workshops and leadership training.

"We're really fortunate in Nebraska to have a lot of programs available that help promote and grow businesses," Brehmer says. "The big thing is finding those opportunities. That's where NBDC's services come in very handy."

Brehmer and his father began the business in Oakland, Neb., and in 1983 moved to Lyons. The company has expanded eight times, Brehmer says, growing from 19,000 square feet to 60,000 square feet. Brehmer Mfg. employs 52 people fulltime and "we're fighting to recruit more."

The company continues to innovate and improve its line of products, with patents pending on three new products, including a universal system to help load pontoon boats onto trailers.

Being diversified has helped Brehmer survive at times when many markets were slumping. When Eagle started in 1991, Brehmer provided design, manufacturing and customer services for the start-up, which became the nation's leading provider of tire-recycling equipment and reached into Chile and South Africa. Brehmer acquired Eagle in 2017.

Tejkl says Eagle delivers good brand recognition and a strong Internet presence. "Now that we have taken Eagle on board, there are few, if any, competitors who can operate at the capacity we can."

NBDC has assisted Brehmer with market research obtained through Nebraska's State Trade Expansion Program (STEP) to assess the potential for sales in several foreign markets. NBDC also has provided the company with a sample distribution agreement, as well as resources for developing opportunities in Russia.

REPORT DATE

- › March, 2019

INDUSTRY

- › Truck equipment, tire recycling equipment, fertilizer tender boxes

CONSULTING

- › Market research
- › Participation in STEP program
- › Export assistance

RESULTS

- › Exploring Russia as market
- › Doing business in Chile and South Africa
- › "The people we have worked with at NBDC have helped our company in a number of ways. We appreciate their knowledge and expertise."—Joe Brehmer

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