

## Stability Through Domestic and In-House Control Panel Manufacturing

*In a market defined by global supply chain volatility, Empire Abrasive Equipment stands out for its long-term commitment to American manufacturing and in-house control panel production. We sat down with Geoff Moore — Director of Sales and a key leader at Empire — to learn how this approach drives stability, quality, and customer satisfaction.*

**(?) MFN:** Empire often emphasizes “The Empire Advantage.” What does that phrase mean in practice?

**(!) G. M.:** The Empire Advantage really boils down to stability. In today’s dynamic market, external factors — from shipping delays to overseas tariffs — can create uncertainty for manufacturers and their customers. At Empire, we’ve built our business model around reducing that uncertainty. We prioritize in-house manufacturing first and domestic sourcing second. This allows us to maintain steady costs, consistent quality, and on-time delivery for our customers — no matter what’s happening globally.

**(?) MFN:** Why is manufacturing in the United States such an important part of that strategy?

**(!) G. M.:** Our dedication to producing equipment in the U.S. is a core value.

By sourcing a significant amount of our parts, components, and assemblies domestically, we keep our supply chain close and predictable. This means fewer surprises and better coordination with suppliers. It also allows us to work with them to maintain stability in pricing, quality, and delivery schedules. In most cases, we’re not at the mercy of long-distance shipping lanes or sudden import surcharges.

**(?) MFN:** How much of Empire’s manufacturing process is handled internally?

**(!) G. M.:** A lot — much more than many people realize. We handle much of our manufacturing process in-house, from working with raw materials to painting the finished product. We’re continually reinvesting in our fabrication capabilities, including recent expansions with new CNC equipment. This level of control allows us to deliver consistent quality and to adapt quickly to custom



**Geoff Moore, Director of Sales and a key leader at Empire**

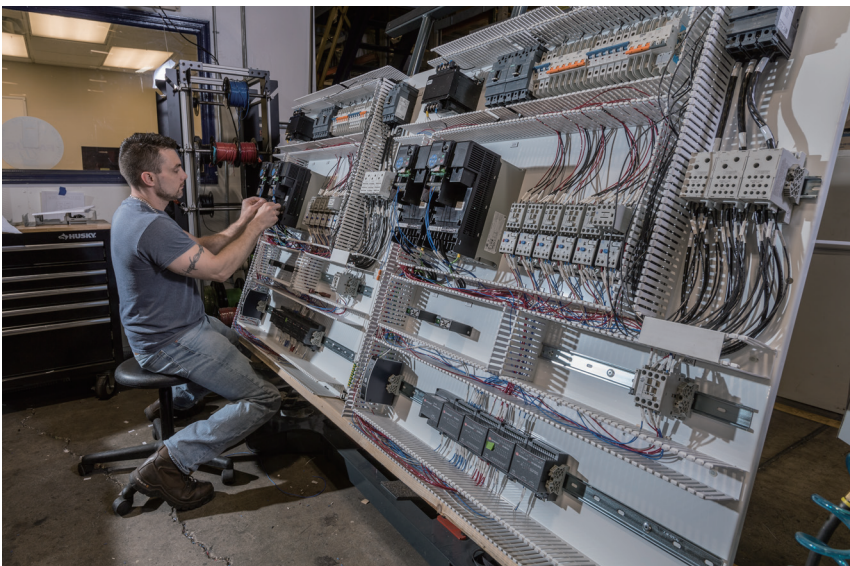
automation needs or customer-driven modifications. If needed, our engineers can even personally visit vendors for our castings and other key components, ensuring quality control that would be nearly impossible with overseas suppliers.

**(?) MFN:** Are there areas where Empire still needs to source components externally?

**(!) G. M.:** There are some components — like electrical switches and certain specialized parts — that we do outsource. But even in those cases, we’re doing everything in our power to continue purchasing domestically. This focus on a domestic supply chain helps us manage costs and avoid the volatility that often comes with imported parts. By keeping so much in-house, we’re able to offer a stable and consistent pricing model for our customers.

**(?) MFN:** One of Empire’s differentiators is its in-house control panel manufacturing. Why was that decision made?

**(!) G. M.:** For us, control panels are the heart of our machines. Unlike many manufacturers who outsource this critical component, we made a strategic decision to build a dedicated in-house team for engineering, panel board assembly, installation, and programming. That decision gives our customers a



**Empire’s in-house panel manufacturing ensures quality and reliability**

# Interview

number of significant benefits – from enhanced quality to faster delivery and better post-sale support.

**(?) MFN:** Let's talk about quality first. How does in-house control panel production improve it?

**(!) G. M.:** By manufacturing control panels in-house, we maintain complete control over the process from start to finish. All our drawings and specifications are on-site, which ensures consistency and a higher level of accountability. This eliminates the variability that can occur when using different third-party vendors, whose quality may fluctuate from one batch to the next. Our approach guarantees that every panel meets our stringent quality standards – something we can stand behind with confidence.

**(?) MFN:** How does this approach affect efficiency and project timelines?

**(!) G. M.:** It's a huge advantage. When you're relying on a third-party vendor, you're often just another client in their queue. By manufacturing control panels ourselves, we have greater control over scheduling and production. We can prioritize projects based on our own needs and our customers' deadlines. That allows us to better meet delivery commitments and keep projects on time. Plus, our in-house team can collaborate directly with installers, leading to more efficient production and improved workflows.

**(?) MFN:** Does in-house panel manufacturing limit the control platform options available to customers?



**Precision welding at Empire showcases stability through domestic manufacturing**

**(!) G. M.:** Not at all. In fact, it gives customers more freedom. We partner with leading control platform providers such as Allen Bradley, Siemens, Emerson, Mitsubishi, Unitronics, and more. Because our team builds the panels themselves, we can integrate whichever platform best fits the customer's application. That flexibility is harder to achieve when you're relying on a single outside vendor.

**(?) MFN:** How does this in-house capability impact post-sale support?

**(!) G. M.:** This is one of the areas where our customers see the biggest difference. If a customer experiences an issue, our in-house control panel department can troubleshoot quickly and effectively. We have immediate access to

all schematics and wiring diagrams, so we can provide a swift solution without waiting for a third party to locate the necessary information. This direct control ensures our technical service team can deliver prompt and accurate support whenever it's needed.

**(?) MFN:** What does this mean in terms of value and cost stability for customers?

**(!) G. M.:** By bringing everything in-house that makes sense financially and from a quality standpoint, we're able to keep costs down. Domestic control panel manufacturing allows us to absorb certain costs internally and avoid the volatility and surcharges associated with third-party vendors. That creates a more stable cost structure that benefits our customers – both in the short term and over the life of their equipment.

**(?) MFN:** Some companies see in-house manufacturing as an added burden. Why does Empire see it as an advantage?

**(!) G. M.:** Because for us, it's not just a department – it's a reflection of our commitment to quality, control, and customer satisfaction. In-house control panel manufacturing and domestic sourcing aren't simply operational choices; they're strategic investments.

« **It's a reflection of our commitment to quality, control, and customer satisfaction. In-house control panel manufacturing and domestic sourcing aren't simply operational choices; they're strategic investments.** »

**Geoff Moore, Director of Sales and a key leader at Empire**



**One corner of Empire's commitment to US manufacturing**

They give us the ability to deliver consistent quality, adapt quickly to customer needs, and stand by our products for years to come. That's the essence of The Empire Advantage.

**(?) MFN:** Looking ahead, how will Empire continue to build on this model?

**(!) G. M.:** We're constantly reinvesting in our facilities and capabilities. Whether it's upgrading fabrication equipment, expanding our engineering team, or deepening relationships with domestic suppliers, our focus remains the same: keep the supply chain close, maintain control over the process, and

deliver stability to our customers. We believe that's the best way to honor our commitment to quality and service – today and in the future.

**(?) MFN:** If you had to sum up The Empire Advantage in one sentence, what would it be?

**(!) G. M.:** The Empire Advantage is about giving our customers peace of mind – knowing that the equipment they invest in is built with care, control, and stability right here in America. By keeping manufacturing and control panel production in-house and sourcing domestically, Empire ensures

that customers receive not only high-quality equipment but also reliability, responsive support, and stable pricing – benefits that extend well beyond the final product.

*MFN would like to thank Geoff Moore for this interview!*

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