

Jordan Reborn and Revitalized

Now Investing in New Press Line

Jordan Aluminum Extrusion Co., a family operated extrusion company, recently announced plans to install a new press at their facility in Memphis, TN (Figure 1). This will be the second press to be put into operation by the company and marks a milestone in the company's journey from its start as a window and door company to a thriving aluminum extruder.



Figure 1. The new extrusion press currently being installed at Jordan Aluminum Extrusion in Memphis.

The Bumpy Road to Aluminum Extrusion

The Jordan Window and Door Company, which had been founded in Memphis as a wholesale and retail lumber and millwork business in 1896, began to manufacture a line of aluminum windows, storm doors, and wood door units in 1961. The company later entered the aluminum extrusion business in 1979 with the installation of an extrusion press, which primarily supplied the window and door operations. Following the entry into extrusion, the company achieved a period of dramatic growth.

At the height of the residential housing boom in 2007, the Jordan Company extruded 11 million lbs of window profiles for their own internal use on a 7 inch, 1,800 ton Sutton press. With a corporate office in Memphis and a west coast distribution and light fabrication center in Phoenix, AZ, the company was profitable, with revenues that year over \$90 million and an employee headcount

above 600. Trucks lined the shipping bays day after day, ready to carry Jordan windows and doors across the country to new-home material distributors. Times were good for residential construction material manufacturers.

Then, in the downturn of 2008, sales fell off dramatically and revenues dropped to \$30 million from \$90 million the year prior. Losing \$600,000 each month and with no recovery in sight, the Jordan Window and Door Company shut its doors and put its assets up for sale.

National Guard Products, an architectural door accessory company located a few blocks away from Jordan, took notice of the assets sale. Chuck Smith, owner and president of National Guard Products, dropped in to tour the Jordan facility. When he noticed that the extrusion press was not listed among the furniture, computers, and window fabrication equipment in the Asset Valuation List, he asked about it. The owners at the time were startled, stating, "The press? Really, you want the press? It's fully depreciated. You can have that!"

Shortly thereafter, Chuck Smith reached a deal with the former owners of Jordan Window and Door Company. The window fabrication equipment was sold off, and the Jordan Window and Door Company became the Jordan Aluminum Extrusion Company.

Like a lot of companies with exposure to building and construction markets, Jordan Aluminum Extrusion was slow to recover out of the recession, operating only one shift and struggling for business. "We rarely worked past Wednesday, but somehow we made it work," said James Rodgers, longtime press manager and now plant manager for Jordan. However, as the company's reputation for regional service and delivery grew, so did the volume. By 2012, the company was able to put two shifts into full operation and the company was turning a small profit.

As the company continued to grow and recover, the investment base changed dramatically and the owners decided to construct a state-of-the-art Walgreen anodizing line in 2013 (Figure 2), making it a premier anodizing supplier. "When visitors come to Jordan, we always show them the press room first since that was commissioned in 1980 and—despite our best efforts—looks like it was commissioned in 1980," said Lewie Smith, current president and partner of Jordan. "We always finish a tour with the anodizing line, because hopefully they'll remember that the most."



Figure 2. Anodizing line.

In late 2015, as part of the family business transition, brothers Lewie Smith (Figure 3) and Foster Smith (Figure 4) acquired 100% of the company's stock from their father, Chuck Smith. The current Jordan Aluminum Extrusion management team is pictured in Figure 5. "The opportunity to partner with my brother along with our excellent management team doesn't come along every day," said Foster Smith, partner. "Seeing the hard work that led to the transformation of the business has been exciting."



Figure 3. Lewie Smith.



Figure 4. Foster Smith.



Figure 5. Jordan Aluminum Extrusion management team (L-R): Keith Rayburn, general manager; Lewie Smith, president; and James Rodgers, plant manager.

New Extrusion Press

Following the investment in the anodizing line, volumes at Jordan Aluminum Extrusion continued to grow and three shifts were put on the press. Talk began in 2014 on the idea of adding a second press. "We really felt like we were busy enough to add another press, but we were worried about getting our money back," said Lewie Smith. "We wanted to get this right and, being only a five-year-old extruder, I think we were well-served to wait a few more years and get a little smarter about our business."

Finally, in early 2016, Jordan set in motion plans to commission a new press line. After visiting Italy, as well as some plants in the U.S., the company selected the Presezzi Group to manufacture the line, including the installation of an 8 inch, 26 MN extrusion press capable of ex-

truding billet up to 48 inches long, a complete handling system with a 177 ft cooling table and flying cut system, and a log oven from COIM. "The Jordan team is enthusiastic about our partnership with Presezzi," said Keith Rayburn, general manager for Jordan. "We were impressed with all the equipment we saw, but Presezzi stood out to us. It'll be a game-changer as far as efficiencies."

Lewie Smith added, "This investment complements our anodize line nicely and, more importantly, signals to all of our stakeholders that we are very serious about this business." The new press line is scheduled to be operational December 2016.

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