

Kurz-Kasch celebrating 30th anniversary

Company says best year ever is a result of team strategy

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Fundamental changes in strategy have resulted in the best year ever as Kurz-Kasch, Inc., celebrates its 30th year in Newcomerstown this week.

Two days of activities aimed at congratulating and recognizing employee contributions and involvement will be held Aug. 23-24, including a day of activities at Atwood Resort on Aug. 24.

There were several factors in changing the corporate strategy, according to Jan Paxton, division manager at the 60,000 square foot Newcomerstown plant. One was consolidating what the facility did best and the other was making sure their commitment to each customer was "sacred."

Seven years ago, officials at the Kurz-Kasch corporate office in Dayton were considering shutting the Newcomerstown facility down and moving its operation, Paxton said. At that time, the company was producing thermo-set custom-molded pieces for as many as 170 customers.

Paxton said a review showed the company was spending 80 percent of its efforts for 20 percent of the revenue produced at the plant. As a result, Paxton and plant officials made a decision to concentrate on "doing what we did best." That meant having fewer customers but producing more for those customers.

The Newcomerstown plant embarked on a plan of a continual improvement process, with a cornerstone of employee involvement and motivation. Paxton remarked on the local work ethic, noting the Kurz-Kasch employees have been loyal and hard workers.

"I've been in other areas and there's a strong commitment here to just good hard work," Paxton said. He also noted the local unions have been cooperative in working with the company during the changes.

"It goes back to our fundamental strategy, good planning and some direction," Paxton said. "You have to know what you're good at and you have to develop an aggressive plan for improvement.

"What we're good at is producing high volume, long run engineered plastic assemblies at the lowest cost

control." Kurz-Kasch is now a nationally recognized leader in complex plastics needs, including injection molding, compression molding, transfer molding and insert molding. The company also processes a complete range of engineering compounds, such as phenolics, polyesters (granular, bulk and sheet), epoxies, malamine, DAPs, polyimide and composites.

As an example, Paxton noted a competitor had taken a product for Diesel Technology to Mexico to be produced. Because the warranty costs were so high, however, Kurz-Kasch was asked to redesign the product. As a result, the company was able to eliminate the high warranty costs and produce the piece at a lower cost than it was being produced in Mexico.

The key to that is quality control. "We said we would be the best at quality control and we have done that," Paxton said. "A major automaker wants to send their quality control people here to copy our programs."

"Things simply could not be better," Paxton said. "Employment has increased. Sales have increased 30 percent in the last year and 50 percent in the past two years. It all stems back to our strategy of consolidating our business, choosing the customers we wanted to do business with and the reputation of meeting our commitments."

The company has hired 20 employees in the past year and expects to hire another 20 people in the next year, as another new line is introduced.

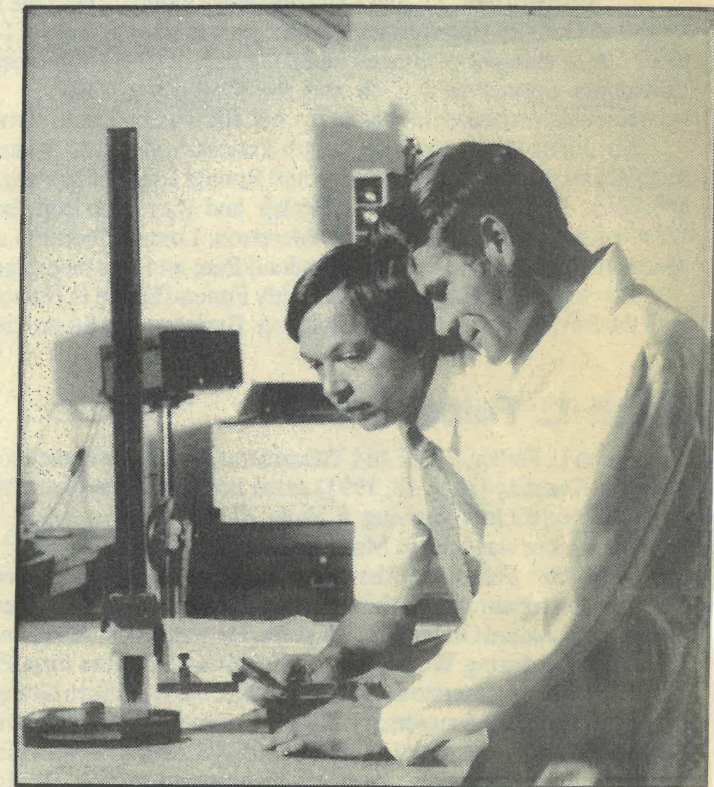
Paxton said a key was that the people at Kurz-Kasch were willing to make the change.

"Sometimes people aren't willing to make changes and sometimes the company isn't willing to reinvest," Paxton said. "Whether they believed it would work in the beginning or not, the company has reinvested the money back into this division and I've never worked where I've had more cooperation from the workers. These people are willing to make the changes for long-term improvement.

We are Kurz-Kasch!

Sandy Adkins, manufacturing
David Affolter, manufacturing
Eugene Amore, lab technician
Tom Amore, manufacturing
Don Baker, manufacturing
Shirley Bartholow, manufacturing
Jeanette Baugher, manufacturing
Norm Berube, shift supervisor
Richard Birch, manufacturing
Jolinda Butler-Bliss, manufacturing
Linda Body, manufacturing
Evelyn Bouscher, manufacturing
Irene Bradford, manufacturing
Mike Bricker, manufacturing
Jason Bunting, manufacturing
Ruth Caldwell, manufacturing
Tom Cathan, engineer
Ginger Christy, manufacturing
Trudi Creachbaum, manufacturing
Rita Cunningham, manufacturing
Beth Dean, manufacturing
Beth Dotson, manufacturing
Sharon Duhamel, manufacturing
Orval Dulaney, shipping clerk
Gloria Ellis, manufacturing
Jessica Fallins, manufacturing
Wilma Freeland, manufacturing
Scott Gaba, manufacturing
Richard Gano, manufacturing
Elizabeth Garabrandt, manufacturing
Ann George, manufacturing
Kevin Glazer, manufacturing
Tom Hart, tool room supervisor
Thelma Herron, manufacturing
Doris Hooker, receptionist-personnel
Debbie Hootman, manufacturing
Vicki Humbert, manufacturing
Pat Johnson, manufacturing
Janet Jones, manufacturing
Jerry Kabacinski, shift supervisor
Pat Keffer, manufacturing
Eleanor Kelly, manufacturing
Larry Knellinger, manufacturing
Dwight Lawrence, lead supervisor
Gabe Lawrence, manufacturing
Becky Lawver, manufacturing
Vicky Layman, manufacturing
Becky Lenzo, manufacturing
Mae McMasters, manufacturing
Scott McCune, manufacturing
Judy McGarvey, manufacturing
Kenney Madison, manufacturing
Jim Marcus, manufacturing manager
Deana Miller, manufacturing

Vince Minigh, molding superintendent
Julie Nay, office, customer relations mgr.
Bob Newman, lab technician
Betty Norman, manufacturing
Randy Oberle, process engineer
Larry Ortt, manufacturing
Greg Ott, manufacturing
Sandy Paulun, manufacturing
Jan Paxton, division manager
Joan Peepers, manufacturing
Jean Plants, manufacturing
Diane Powell, purchasing agent
Bill Renaud, tooling engineer
Cindy Ramey, manufacturing
John Ridgeway, manufacturing
Dorothy Rine, manufacturing
Linda Robinson, manufacturing
Jeff Rotruck, shift supervisor
Bob Seaver, spec. plastics, products mgr.
Katy Shaw, manufacturing
Bob Smart, manufacturing
Raymond Smart, shift supervisor
Becky Smith, manufacturing
Mark Stocker, process engineer
Kathy Steinbach, manufacturing
Frank Stull, manufacturing
Gloria Taylor, manufacturing
Johnny Thompson, manufacturing
Marjorie Yanai, manufacturing
Betty Zinkon, manufacturing



JIM MARCUS AND EUGENE AMORE
Working in the laboratory



Kurz-Kasch celebrates most successful year ever

Jan. 22, 1996

NEWCOMERSTOWN — Kurz-Kasch Inc. has just closed the books on its most successful year in the history of the company as 1995 was a record year in sales and profits.

Kurz-Kasch is a leader in thermoset plastics and special composite processing that provides many Fortune 500 companies with well-engineered programs, consistent products, dependable quality and

responsive customer service.

Founded in 1916 by C.A. Kurz Jr. under the name of Dayton Insulation Mold Co., the early maker of phenolic buttons for World War I military uniforms evolved into the producer of components for the radio and automotive application industries during the 1920s. This was the time period when H.J. Kasch joined efforts with Kurz, hence, the

Kurz-Kasch Co. was formed.

Today, that same type of partnership and dedication has extended to the automotive, electromagnetic and water purification industries while serving these areas with the latest in technology from video conferencing to cell manufacturing.

With corporate operations located in Dayton, and engineering offices in Detroit, Mich., and an-

other manufacturing location in Wilmington, O., the company's "Blue Ribbon" customers include Eastman Kodak, Xerox, General Motors, Mitsubishi and Diesel Technology.

According to Jan Paxton, vice president and general manager of the Newcomerstown Division, the company's success is directly related to its people.

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Kurz-Kasch

"The people employed by this company from the Newcomerstown and surrounding area communities have a very strong work ethic," Paxton said. "They also have positive attitudes toward change and involvement in this company. There were times when we thought of moving this division but because of the people factor, the decision was always to stay in Newcomerstown."

This decision has proved itself rewarding. For the last several years, the company has grown in sales and profits, and 1995 also was a record year for the company in that it was the first year that profits were shared by all employees in the Division in the form of Christmas bonuses. Planned for 1996 also is more success with sales targeted to increase by 15 percent.

Profitable growth over the last several years has allowed the company reinvest its profits. For instance, 10 percent of Kurz-Kasch's 1995 sales went back into capital.

Along with this inward remodeling, the manufacturing operations at Kurz-Kasch are taking on a new approach. Cell manufacturing is being developed specifically for key customers and similar manufactured products.

This style of manufacturing at Kurz-Kasch involves clustering together all operations of pro-

ducing a product to eliminate waste and to improve communication between operations to produce a higher quality product at the end. Business data recording and reporting is also done by the cell to create an accurate picture of sales and inventory at a moment's glance.

Kurz-Kasch also is succeeding in the quality area. Last year the company was recognized for receiving registration to the internationally recognized ISO 9002 standard, which is comprised of many business processing requirements that all must be satisfied before registration can be granted.

While continuing to satisfy the requirements of ISO 9002, the Newcomerstown manufacturer is currently preparing to satisfy additional requirements of the nationally recognized QS-9000 automotive standard developed by Ford, General Motors and Chrysler.

Last year also proved to be a terrific year for the welfare of the people at Kurz-Kasch.

The company had no safety accidents in the year, lengthening the safety record at the Division to almost three years without a serious accident.

With success stories like these, Kurz-Kasch at Newcomerstown will continue to succeed as a leader in its industry in 1996 and beyond.



T-R/Tom Dunkes

Greer employees Glen Geib and Randy Ryan guide a cooling cover being lowered onto an annealing base by Bob Bloom.

In Plastic Molding

Joe Carl has worked for Kurz-Kasch Co. Inc. off and on since 1928. The company was already 16 years old and well-established when he began the first time. Founded by C.A. Kurz and H. J. Kasch Sr. at Dayton in 1916, the company is one of the oldest plastics molders in the U.S.

Carl is manager of the local plant. He and Kenny Duhamel, who was hired when they came here, and Mrs. Joe Jacobs, comprise the local office staff.

The Dayton plant started by molding raw plastic into control knobs for various equipment and making kits for building radios. They soon branched into molding parts for Bulldog switch gear for electrical equipment.

Two years after Carl went to work for them—in 1930—Kurz-Kasch molded the first plastic dishes in the U.S. and for many years dishes were their principle product.

There were several expansions at the Dayton plant between 1928 and 1961, when the first branch of the plant was opened here.

Joe Carl isn't the sort of plant manager who sits in an office in a white shirt and reads reports. He is in and out of the plant overseeing operations of the 100 employes as they put the plastic through the performing process, the molding presses and the 5 or 6 finishing operations which follow.

An average of 80,000 pounds of dry plastic, compounded to Kurz - Kasch specifications, are used in the local operation each month.

This plastic makes from 500 to 350,000 separate plastic parts per month, depending on the size of the piece being molded.

Military items are the biggest business at Kurz - Kasch these days. Although they have no contracts with the government directly sub-contracts are held from the Colt Rifle Co. for pistol grips and forearms for Colt's military rifle, and parts are made for grenade detonators along with all sorts of electronic parts. Last year's largest item was a tail support for the Davy Crockett Rocket.

Other major companies using parts molded at the local plant include Frigidaire, Eureka, Philco, Kodak, General Electric, Wagner Mfg., and Bausch & Lomb.

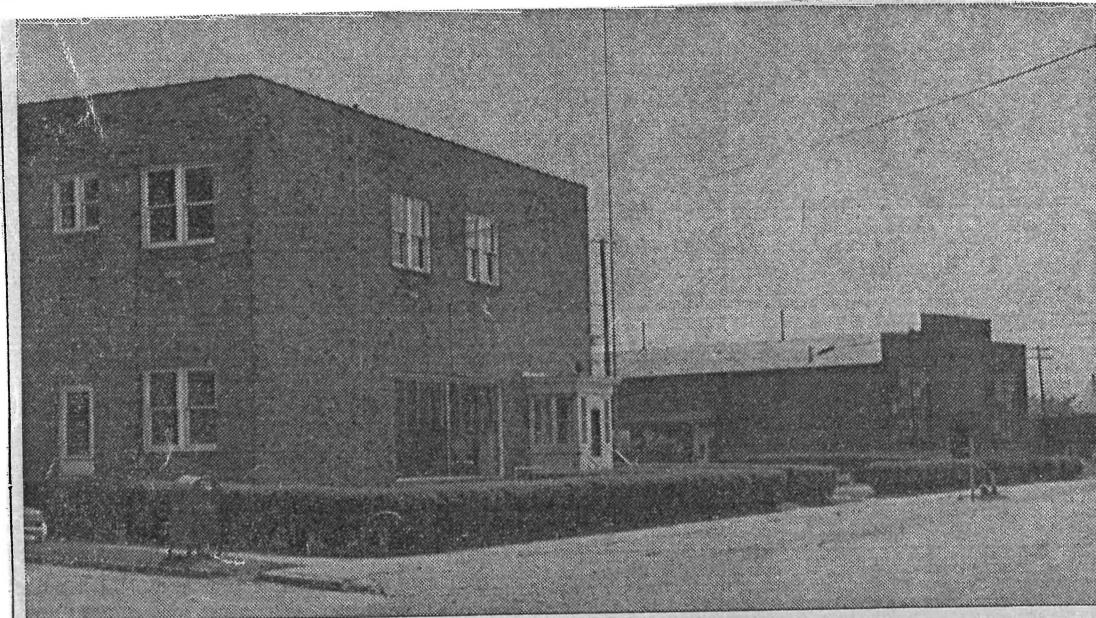
There is no limit to what could be molded. Kurz - Kash engineers and designers will work with any company to design plastic parts for any product imaginable.

Products molded in the local operation over the past 6 years include pan handles, sharp blocks for organs, control knobs of every size, shape and description, pump impellers, prime trays for Winchester caps, safe handles, divider bars for duplicating machines, telescope bodies, dryer vent opening covers, lens barrels for slide projectors, camera cases and backs, light brackets for movie cameras, agitator posts for washing machines, end panels for toasters, baffles for dryers and conveyor buckets, to name a few. The list goes on and on through several different products.

Presently employes are working 3 shifts in the press room and 2 in the finishing departments, and most of them work 6 days per week.

Plans are underway for an expansion and modernization of the old Clow Co. building where the plant is housed. A boiler room will be added and several new presses will be installed in the near future. Carl expects to hire about 10 more people within the next month or so.

He is grateful for local citizens help in establishing the plant here and confidently looks forward to many years of progress and growth in the village.
— SD



Offices and portion of plant of Kurz-Kasch concern on East State st. are shown in the above photograph. The company occupies part of the former Clow Pipe works facilities.
199 E STATE ST

