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New Name Reflects 'Team' Concept:

## Field Packaging Group Says 'Yes' To Success

by Anna Dutko Rowley

Andrew Field, Marty Field, and Brian Herzog have come a long way since they bought Jet Age Container back in 1999. Since then, the three entrepreneurs have built annual company sales from \$5 million to over \$30 million today, and have updated their plant over the years with new equipment.

"[We've been successful] because we've focused on maximizing efficiencies and turnaround times, while delivering top quality, competitive priced boxes to our customers," said Marty, Andrew's father, Brian's father-in-law and the Managing Partner. This year, the Fields wanted to establish their own identity with the company; as a result, they changed the company name to Field Packaging Group.

When they did research on a new name, they felt it was very important to have "group" in the name. "The word 'group' to us really means team. That's the most important thing. We had some very nice success in being able to grow this company. Now we can operate at a higher level with the machinery that we have in the system. None of this would have been possible without the top quality people who we have," said Andrew. He and his father argue that their company has the strongest team of people across the board - from shipping, plant operators, plant managers, sales, customer service and design, and even to people who sweep the floors.

### Bonuses For Efficiencies

About five years ago, Field Packaging Group collected data to determine how efficient its operations were. "We found out that the efficiencies came out to



Marty, left, and Andrew Field, who attribute part of the company's success to never saying 'no' to orders, stand in front of their truck, which displays the company's motto, 'Yes.'

45 percent. Through that, we created an efficiency bonus program," said Brian Herzog, Chief Financial Officer. The bonus program, which continues to operate today, works like this: the company communicates monthly with its employees on how well they are performing, and workers are rewarded for their performance.

## Efficiencies Grow, Bonuses Continue

The bonus system has dramatically improved the plant's efficiencies. "We've taken our efficiencies from 45 percent five years ago to around 95 percent today,

**\$75 PER MONTH FOR 85% EFFICIENCY  
\$5 PER POINT UNTIL 90% EFFICIENCY REACHED,  
THEN \$10 PER POINT**

Efficiency %	\$ Per Month	Annualized Dollars
85	75	900
86	80	960
87	85	1020
88	90	1080
89	95	1140
90	100	1200
91	110	1320
92	120	1440
93	130	1560
94	140	1680
95	150	1800
96	160	1920

Field offers bonuses to its employees for improving plant efficiency.

and there's been months where we've exceeded 100 percent," said Marty. "We don't pay any bonuses if we're more than 2 percent late during the course of a month. Since we've been doing this, I think we have not paid any bonuses only two or three times. The average bonus ranges between \$100-\$180 per person, paid each month," he said.

The company posts the efficiencies in the plant every day on each machine, for each shift and also for the plant as a whole. "If we don't post the efficiencies by a certain time, people in the plant come in and ask what is the efficiency rate. We also talk about how the company is doing, the industry as a whole, how we are doing against our competitors. The object behind all this [is] by increasing our efficiencies, we create extra capacity; we take that capacity and it gives us extra flexibility. The extra flexibility allows us to meet our customers' demands almost 100 percent," said Herzog.

## A 'Yes' In Every Box

Field Packaging Group's motto is to that there's a 'yes' in every box. On every truck, the company's logo is listed along with one word that says it all, a

great big 'Yes.' "We never say 'no' to orders due to delivery issues," said Andrew. "In fact, about 60 percent of orders that are taken today are delivered tomorrow," he added. This is due to being efficient on machines, said Andrew. "By being more efficient, our set-up times on our flexo folder gluers range from 4-6 minutes. If a customer calls for delivery the same day, it's not that big of a deal for us," said Marty.

The Fields say that they will do whatever it takes to finish an order. "Simply put, 'no' is not an option for us. If that's means that one of us has to get on a forklift at 8 o'clock at night [to finish an order of boxes], my father or I will do it. It has been done in the past," said Andrew.

## Big On Brown Boxes

The majority of Field Packaging Group's business is in brown box with some preprint and partition work. The plant produces about 27-28 million square feet per month. The company serves industries from candy, food, durable goods, furniture, and metal stamping to direct retail. "We service 300 customers within a 150 mile radius," said Andrew.

Field Packaging Group also makes partitions, which nicely complements its primary business, said Marty. When asked why the plant makes partitions, Andrew



Partition-making is said to be critical to the success of Field Packaging Group.

replied, "Because it goes into a corrugated box. People who buy partitions need both. Generally the raw materials are the same." He explained that his company can take advantage of its costing structure on paper to be more competitive on partitions. "We bought very state-of-the-art machinery and we make partitions all day long. They are critical to our success," said Andrew.

The company also offers other services, enabling it to be a full-service provider. "We are a distributor of industrial packaging supplies. We buy all our products, such as 3M tape, stretch film and bubble wrap,



The installation of a new Sun Automation lead edge feeder on the 23-inch by 67-inch Emba flexo folder gluer allows for higher production speeds and greater efficiency.

manufacturer direct," said Andrew. "Our customers like that we can provide for them both corrugated products and industrial supplies, all of which can be put on the same invoice, same truck, etc., for ease of ordering. This has helped our customers - and us as well," he said.

The company's board mix includes 50 percent ECT and 50 percent mullen grades. "We can run from E-flute all the way up to triple wall," said Marty.

The 200,000-square-foot plant in Bedford Park, Illinois houses a two-color 32-inch by 70-inch Langston printer slotter; a two-color 60-inch by 138-inch Hooper flexo printer; a 45-inch by 67-inch Meihle flatbed

die cutter; two Emba flexo folder gluers, one a 23-inch by 67-inch machine, the other a 43-inch by 94-inch unit; a two-color 66-inch by 110-inch United rotary die cutter; a two-color 66-inch by 166-inch Ward flexo folder gluer; a partition die cutter and assembler; and assorted tapers, gluers, slitters, bandsaws and stitchers. The plant has a design lab, complete with an Artios CAD table and drawing system, and a full-time design staff.

### **Reinvesting Leads To Growth**

As a matter of policy, Field Packaging Group takes its profits and reinvests back in the plant with new technology and equipment. One example is the recent installation of a Sun Automation lead edge feeder on the 23-inch Emba, a move that has enhanced plant efficiencies.

Reinvestment continues. "The company recently installed a new Martin stacker on its United rotary die cutter to allow for unitizing multiple out die cuts and installed a new lead edge feeder on the Emba flexo folder gluer to allow for higher speeds and efficiency," said Herzog.

The Fields are pleased with the plant's recent gains, but are always looking for improvement and company growth. "We've created a formula for a successful operation and we are looking forward to possible acquisitions in the future," said Andrew.

Please visit [www.fieldpackaginggroup.com](http://www.fieldpackaginggroup.com) for more information.