



Success Story: Super Lawn Trucks

Landscape Truck Manufacturer Grows Business by Rethinking Their Product Designs

Tony Bass, CEO and founder of Super Lawn Trucks, in Fort Valley, GA, a town of 10,000 people, began his career as a lawn maintenance contractor. Always focused on improving efficiency, he developed a plan to eliminate trailers from his growing landscape company. Other contractors saw what Bass had created and started asking how they could get one too. Bass realized there was a need in the market for specialized landscaping truck systems for storage and transport of tools and equipment.

Bass raised capital to start a new business, Super Lawn Trucks. He and his team began manufacturing truck systems in 1998. Starting with three employees, he has grown his business to more than a dozen team members. Today, the company has clients in 45 states and Canada.



The GaMEP has helped Super Lawn Trucks to:

- *Decrease steel by 18 percent on a particular product, helping to decrease weight on that product, allowing for better efficiency for the client.*
- *Redevelop and reengineer numerous products, helping to grow the company from three employees to 12.*
- *Create a new position to focus on the manufacturing of their bolt-on loading ramp system.*
- *Break into a new market, developing and selling more than three dozen contractor trucks.*

»» Situation

During the economic downturn, Bass originally contacted the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) to learn how to improve their processes. He partnered with Bob Wray, project manager of the GaMEP, and what he quickly found was that for Super Lawn Trucks, it became less about process improvement and more about rethinking the design of their products. From their initial redesign project, which resulted in cutting 20 percent of the product weight, allowing clients an improved fuel load, Bass found a long-term partner in Wray.

Over the course of the years, Bass and Wray have teamed up on reengineering products for Bass's clients and a recent effort to break into a new market space.

»» Solution

Recently, Wray helped Bass redesign a bolt-on loading ramp to make it stronger and more economic for Bass's customers, which led to a new product line for Super Lawn Trucks. Bass was able to create a new job in his company, hiring one person to manufacture only this product line. Additionally, this product has produced numerous variations, including an eco-series.

Bass also takes individual requests from the market and after manufacturing a custom piece will determine if there is a market need and call in Wray to help redevelop the product. This recently happened with a landscape dump truck. Wray helped design these dump trucks to include an enclosed body for landscapers to store their tools, equipment, and additional fuel, allowing crews to stay on-site from the start of the day to the end of that day.

After selling these products in the lawn maintenance market, Wray and Bass began discussing the need of a similar product for a new market – construction contractors. By creating a truck to help contractors mobilize from job to job, while allowing them to get more organized with equipment and supplies, as well as ensure tool security, Super Lawn Trucks began serving their first adjacent market. Bass and his team have sold more than three dozen specialty trucks to this new market in a short period of time.

Next up, Bass and Wray are teaming up to produce various lengths and configurations, to create additional products for the customers.

To account for Super Lawn Trucks continued growth, Bass is working on a revised plant layout. Wray is an integral part of the plan, helping Bass and his team develop a plan for maximum efficiency.

"I began working with Bob a few years back and he has become a part of our team. We continue to utilize the GaMEP because they help us grow sales and improve products. We appreciate the relationship...and frankly...don't know where we would turn without this important service provider."

- Tony Bass, CEO and Founder

See what all the "Buzz" is about.

» Connect with the GaMEP



gamep@innovate.gatech.edu



404-385-0630