

## EMERALD TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS HEAD: REFRIGERATED VEHICLE SPECIALISTS DELIVER EFFICIENCY

**ABOUT EMERALD TRANSPORTATION SOLUTIONS.** Emerald Transportation Solutions is a privately owned, end-to-end provider of refrigerated vans and trucks. Headquartered in Fayetteville, Georgia, with a manufacturing facility in Griffin, Georgia, the company has been around since 2013 and has 65 employees.

**THE CHALLENGE.** After growing steadily from 2013-2019, Emerald found business skyrocketing as more and more people had groceries and other necessities delivered to their homes during the pandemic, increasing demand for last-mile delivery vehicles. As leaders searched for ways to build an increased number of vehicles in a more efficient manner after Emerald outgrew its space in 4 buildings and 2 surface lots, they realized that moving trucks and vans from building to building as they were assembled was no longer sustainable. With their eyes on a large facility in Griffin that would bring assembly under one roof, leaders contacted the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech, part of the MEP National Network™, to help design a new, more efficient workflow.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Sam Darwin, operational excellence project manager for GaMEP, examined the facilities' layout, business operations, and sales growth projections. His goal was to design the workflow in the new facility so that it would be possible to efficiently build 3 vehicles per day (and to increase that to 4 the following year and 5 the next).

"Sam worked with the Emerald team and was able to develop a layout that we 90% follow today," Wes Funsch, Emerald's COO, said. The layout involved not just the facility and equipment; it encompassed the whole production system. Darwin spoke to employees, watched the way they worked, checked out the new larger building, and got to work. Similar to an assembly line, Darwin says, Emerald now works on a continuous flow, moving vehicles from station to station, rather than building to building, every few hours, assembling them in half the time.

Following the move, David Apple, GaMEP operational excellence project manager, visited Emerald to teach employees a problem-solving course - A3, a method for solving any challenges that might come up in the business. He taught employees the step-by-step method for tackling and solving them. Kelley Hundt, GaMEP East Metro Atlanta region manager, worked with Emerald to resolve their data issues by helping to implement an enterprise resource planning system (ERP). "Going with an ERP system allowed them to have one data repository, with all of the data relating appropriately," she said. "That reduces efforts to keep track of the information that they need, while at the same time improving the reliability and timeliness of that data."

"Hands down I would recommend the GaMEP. They were more forthright and helpful than anyone else we worked with. They got back with me in a timely fashion. They got back to me with a detailed response. They followed up. They gave the impression that they actually cared if we made the improvement or not."

-Wes Funsch, Chief Operating Officer

## RESULTS



25 jobs created since 2021



Employees build **3** trucks or vans per day, up from 1 to 1.5



Throughput this year will average **75%** more than last year.

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