



SPECIAL REPORT

Score One for Michigan Business

Best of Michigan Business

BY J.D. BOOTH & S. VOYLES

When *Corp!* asked readers to nominate Michigan businesses they considered among the top in their category, the response was overwhelming. Nearly 1,000 responses came into our offices via our Web site, fax and mail. And not only was the volume impressive; so was the message conveyed: there are plenty of companies prospering here. What's more, the business owners and executives we spoke with have plenty of positive things to say about doing business here. We invite you to read what some of the nearly 300 companies nominated said.

Manufacturers

De Giulio Industries www.degind.com

Founded in 1969, De Giulio Industries in Dearborn focuses on kitchen and bathroom design and remodeling, along with home office work. Both the showroom and manufacturing facility are under one roof, meaning customers can see the designs and personally meet their cabinetry designer at the same time. "We have great access here to a good pool of tradesmen, along with good supply sources," says President Chris De Giulio, 47, whose parents founded the company.

Global Tooling Systems

www.global-tooling-systems.com

For Utica-based Global Tooling Systems, the future is looking up—way up. With a focus on manufacturing equipment and tooling for the aerospace and defense industry, Ronald Bellestri, executive vice president and part-owner, started the company after leaving the automotive industry. What sets the company apart is the performance and service: "Delivering the product they want or exceeding that requirement, on time or ahead of schedule." How's business? The company employs 240 and enjoyed 25 percent growth last year.

General Motors Corp. www.gm.com

As General Motors enters its second century, there's no denying its mark on Michigan's first 100 years. "From a technical, social and economic standpoint, GM has been a terrific contributor to the state," says Matt Cullen, general manager for GM's Economic Development and Enterprise Services group, citing GM's role in cities like Detroit, Pontiac and Lansing. Cullen, who's also MEDC chairman, is upbeat about doing business here. "We have talented, hardworking people, great universities ... a terrific environment to live, work and play."

Herman Miller, Inc. www.hermanmiller.com

Another great company with roots in West Michigan is Herman Miller, founded by D.J. De Pree (son-in-law of the company's namesake). Strong values and hard-working employees continue to drive the company, as does being in

close proximity with some of its key competitors, akin to the automotive sector in Detroit. "It keeps us on our toes," admits corporate communicator Susan Koole. Key reasons for remaining in Michigan include access to top quality talent, a product of the many fine universities in the state.



The Herman Miller Leaf Personal Light.



D.J. De Pree

Michigan Box Company

www.michiganbox.com

From pizza delivery boxes to containers holding auto blocks to product displays, Michigan Box Company in Detroit makes them all—and more. Founded 1927, Michigan Box has design, production and fulfillment operations serving manufacturers, the food industry and advertising agencies, among others. CEO Joe Fontana says strong relationships with staff and clients alike have led to the company's success. Detroit's location is a plus, too. "It's a major transportation hub for a lot of companies and puts us in touch with that activity."

Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing, N.A.

www.toyota.com

Toyota Technical Center, with operations in Michigan, California, Arizona and Massachusetts, is a division of Toyota Motor Engineering & Manufacturing. The TTC in Ann Arbor is responsible for development of the Sienna minivan, Solara, Tundra pickup, the new Venza crossover (coming in late 2008) and other vehicles. Quality of life, good educational system, concentration of auto suppliers, engineering talent, and support from the MEDC are reasons the company likes doing business in Michigan, says Bruce Brownlee, senior executive administrator.



Toyota Technical Center headquarters in Ann Arbor.

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American Axle & Manufacturing www.aam.com

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www.asahithermofil.com

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Chrysler, LLC www.chrysler.com

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