Abuma Manufacturing Limited

Abuma Manufacturing Ltd (Abuma) is a Build-to-Print metal fabricator capable of manufacturing custom components. Abuma fabricates the metal components and upper-level assemblies and integrates additional outside services like surface coatings, electrical, pneumatics, and purchased equipment as required.

Headquarters	531 Admiral Dr, London, Ontario, N5V 4L6
Year Established	1982
NAICS	332999 - All other miscellaneous fabricated metal product manufacturing
Employees	35
Major Expansions	1983, 2002
Exports	US
Parent Company	Armo-Tool
Other Locations	N/A

Like many other sectors, manufacturing can involve many challenges and struggles. Kevin Schildroth is a passionate and driven business leader who was not afraid of these challenges when he accepted the general manager position at Abuma Manufacturing Limited (Abuma) in 2011.

Just prior to Schildroth's involvement in Abuma, custom manufacturers were facing challenging times. Many original equipment manufacturers shifted facilities and had outsourced their production processes to China. However, in time, some of these companies have seen the economic benefits of low-cost regions decline, and have recognized other soft benefits of sourcing production within their key markets, close to home. Product life cycles are shrinking, and the research and development for new design iterations demands new efficiencies, supported by proximity between the engineers and production facilities. Distant time zones, shipping logistics, and the protection of intellectual property are newly valued in the total equation. Now, North American companies are increasingly reshoring manufacturing back to locations such as Canada. Abuma has weathered this trend by maintaining a collaborative relationship with its clients and being ready to grow with the returning demand.

Abuma is a build-to-print custom metal fabricator, and one of Canada's premier contract fabrication companies. Since Jan Maars started Abuma in his garage over 30 years ago, the company has been a

valuable part of the London manufacturing community. In 1983, Abuma moved to a permanent facility and built additional space as it grew. In 2002, the firm built a 100,000 square foot facility, where it has remained since 2004. Abuma specializes in stainless steel and aluminum fabrication, and project management for clients in the highly regulated defence, wastewater treatment, and energy sectors.

With a focus on providing quality service, Abuma's key differentiator is reliability. Its clients trust Abuma to deliver exactly what they need, on time, every time. By emphasizing this key deliverable, the firm earns a mixture of large and small contracts from selected clients. Some of Abuma's clients include General Dynamics Land Systems Canada and Trojan Technologies (both of which have been with Abuma since its inception).

The company continues to build its capabilities by fostering relationships with new clients and business sectors. For example, looking to further its involvement in the booming defence and oil and gas sectors, Abuma attended trade shows in Western Canada to form relationships with new companies. However, Schildroth quickly realized that one small company would not be able to address the needs of the large industry players that develop and operate in Canada's oil sands, and decided that a regional approach was required. He feels strongly that a regional manufacturing initiative and national transportation plan to link Ontario and Western Canada is essential to develop these resources and efficiently move goods. Accordingly, Abuma is collaborating with the London Economic Development Centre (LEDC) to achieve these goals and emphasize Southwestern Ontario's potential. In particular, the LEDC is gaining support with its board to promote a regional trade mission to illustrate to prospective clients the vast opportunities that the London area has to offer.

The LEDC has also introduced Abuma to other government agencies that can provide it with funding opportunities. Currently, Abuma takes advantage of the Scientific Research and Experimental Development Tax Incentive (SR&ED) program, as well as support from various levels of government, including the Canadian Trade Commissioner Service, the Ministry of Economic Development, Employment and Infrastructure, and FedDev.

Abuma distinguishes itself from its competitors with quality service and sensitivity to clients' needs (such as those of clients operating on private projects). Schildroth has been improving and even rebuilding relationships with clients to prepare Abuma for the future. He furthers such preparations by devising strategies to ensure the proper training and management of Abuma's employees. The welders and equipment operators at the facility have extensive and invaluable industry experience. When hiring, Abuma looks for loyal and capable employees that are able to perform their jobs with efficiency and precision. Cross-training is an important method to maintain a lean and responsive workforce, and with new growth, Schildroth plans to implement a mentorship-based training process in which experienced employees work in teams with new employees to pass on their hard-earned knowledge. The supervising and training from the experienced employees will allow the newer employees to become true craftspeople and artists in their trades.

Like the manufacturing sector in general, Abuma remains persistent and continues to grow. Clearly, there are still opportunities in manufacturing, and it will continue to be a valuable part of Canadian economies.

Update: In September 2017, Abuma was acquired by Armo-Tool.