

**“Partnering with AMADA and investing in their latest equipment and technology has enabled LockersMFG to become an industry leader.”**

— Keith Dunham,  
Founder/CEO  
LockersMFG



## Setting new industry standards for quality and security. Guaranteed.

Described briefly, LockersMFG manufactures premium metal lockers. However, that statement falls woefully short of describing the company. Established in 2014 in Batesville, Mississippi, LockersMFG sets itself apart from competitors in several ways, including being a stateside manufacturer of top-of-the-line lockers and smart security storage systems. In keeping with the company tagline (Any Design. Any Material. Any Technology.), LockersMFG can customize lockers to meet the specific needs of its customers. Security and durability are ensured by utilizing high-quality, heavy gauge steel. And all products are finished with a minimum of 2-3 mils of premium powder coat. A lot of competitors use lesser steel and only 1-1.2 mils of powder coat. By doing everything right in the manufacturing process, LockersMFG ensures the longevity of its products in the marketplace. The company is so confident in the quality and durability of its products that they back them with a lifetime warranty.

Understanding how LockersMFG became an industry leader requires reflection on key milestones. Keith Dunham, the company's Founder/CEO, grew up in the industry. His father was a wholesaler, and he used to sell some of the same types of products. As a young man, Keith was involved with product assembly and installation. Later, he went off to college and worked for a couple of Fortune 500 companies. He decided to come back into the business after earning an MBA. Keith provides additional details about that transition. “I didn’t think I would be back in the industry. Instead, I thought I would end up in New York or Miami pursuing a career in investment banking.”

Keith explains how his business education—combined with his previous industry work experience—would serve him well. “Before the establishment of LockersMFG, we had another company that focused more on the international side of the business.



The shop floor at LockersMFG features state-of-the-art AMADA technology, including high-speed, high-precision, blank-to-bend solutions, and automated material handling/storage systems.



However, my goal was to stop sourcing offshore and bring manufacturing back to the United States. In addition to the pride associated with manufacturing products in America, we wanted complete control to ensure optimal quality and on-time delivery. We also wanted a clean brand with no footprint of an international concept. So, in 2014 LockersMFG was established with the goal to become a premier stateside manufacturer. And we’ve spent the last couple of years investing heavily and building upon that platform to become a market leader in product customization, high-throughput, and unsurpassed quality.”

“In addition, the move to U.S. manufacturing allows us to control production schedules and be more resilient—because we have not been vulnerable to several of the supply chain constraints that have occurred over the last few years. Consequently, we’ve been able to overcome scheduling issues easier than some of our competitors that don’t have the manufacturing flexibilities and capabilities we now have. The last 18 months have proven to be very interesting—with the highest degree of complexity in the supply chain both domestically and internationally. Having great partners like AMADA stand alongside us has not only allowed us to push through products, but we’ve been able to successfully navigate through historically challenging times.”

Another reason Keith chose to partner with AMADA is that he shares the company’s commitment to quality and rugged reliability. Keith explains why these assets are essential for LockersMFG. “The whole concept of the locker is to protect the belongings of others and make sure their personal items are safe. So we’re really in the business of providing secure storage solutions. And the way that we deliver solutions to the communities we serve, is through the vehicle of a locker storage system. We don’t see ourselves as simply a locker company. Instead, we’re committed to solving storage problems—at a multitude of venues ranging from schools to sporting events—by ensuring personal items are safe and protected. We have no interest in producing cheap lockers as a way to turn revenue for our company. Instead, we’re setting industry standards by offering top-of-the-line products that can be customized so clients get exactly what they need. Then, we back our products with a lifetime warranty.”

“When you enter a locker room, you may have 200 locker openings, and the average opening may have \$2,000 worth of personal items in that locker. As a result, that locker room can easily contain a quarter million to \$300,000 worth of items. If a company does not build a quality product like we do, that

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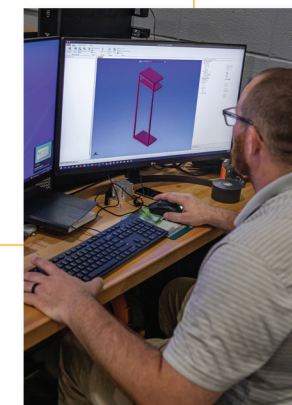
**LockersMFG is a single-source manufacturer.**

*In addition to precision blanking and bending, other in-house capabilities include:*

- Engineering,
- Welding
- Powder Coating
- Assembly
- Packaging



*The HRB 2204 is equipped with Sheet Followers capable of supporting up to 220 lbs. The arms can operate individually or in unison with the press brake to provide accurate bending.*



company is significantly exposed. And theft can occur. In contrast, our lockers are built to last. To ensure products do not degrade, we use the appropriate steel. We utilize a lot of heavy gauged steel and weld concepts that we've perfected specifically for our products."

"We specialize in high-end customization—getting clients exactly what they want and when they need it. We also have another side of our business that performs all the installation—so we are vertically integrated from design, production, and installation. Consequently, we can ensure customer satisfaction throughout the entire process."

#### **Establishing The Partnership With AMADA**

Before building a factory, Keith had his mind set on buying an existing one. In fact, he initially had a deal in place. Two days before the deal was scheduled to close, the factory owner called Keith. He informed him that he could not complete the transaction. The owner couldn't let go. After the failure of that deal, Keith and his team set out to build a factory. It was a daunting task.



Rather than purchasing an existing factory and refurbishing it for their product mix, the new plan meant starting with a blank slate. Complicating that decision was the need to partner with the ideal equipment manufacturer. Keith comments on that process by adding the following.

"We decided to take a very comprehensive look at the vendors that sell the type of sheet metal equipment we needed. And we established an extensive list of criteria. We started with whiteboards and quickly moved to detailed spreadsheets that included twelve equipment manufacturers with the potential to meet our specific needs. After several phone interviews, we narrowed it down to four companies that we felt were the premier providers for the type of equipment that best fit the profile for our products."

"Next, we visited with representatives from each of those companies. We did comparative studies with each potential vendor. We conducted extensive Q&A sessions. We asked about their service expertise, including how many technicians were on staff and where they were located. We asked in-depth questions about post-sale support and warranties.

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We questioned each company about the type of technology they had available and inquired about their process for upgrading or developing new technology. In short, we went through an intensive vetting process that included a great deal of scrutiny. We knew selecting the right partner was essential—and we couldn't afford to get it wrong."

The in-depth selection process took nearly a year before twelve potential partners were reduced to just two, AMADA and another company. Keith reflects on the final selection process, "When we brought AMADA in, we were extremely impressed with their knowledge, expertise, and patience with us. Throughout the selection process, they always made themselves available. There was never a dip... there was never one person we contacted that made us feel like there was a weak link or a bit of a flaw. And during the pandemic, we saw far more resiliency in AMADA than in the other final competitor. AMADA did a great job of explaining everything to us. More than that, they made sure everything works the way it should."

"AMADA was willing to work around our schedule rather than asking us to conform to theirs. Also, I like the fact that there are not a lot of layers in AMADA's business model. Instead, we have direct contact with highly-trained personnel. After selecting AMADA, we started negotiations, and it was clear that we partnered with the ideal company. They work

with us and within our budget. They make sure we get the equipment we need. The entire experience, from start to finish, was great for us—and very beneficial to our business. Because of this, we are starting another round of talks to discuss additional equipment needs. And we recently purchased AMADA's IIoT software solution, Influent. It gives us real-time visibility so we can quickly pivot our strategy based on the performance metrics of every machine in our shop."

"At the end of the day my team is the prime company asset. They are the ones that get the job done. My job is to be a servant leader and serve our staff by ensuring they have the best of everything, including equipment, technology, working conditions, benefits, and opportunities—and then get out of the way and let them do their job."



LockersMFG is a high-volume plant. Maximizing throughput via innovative punching, bending, and laser cutting solutions is essential for LockersMFG to excel in the manufacturing of customized products.



Keith Dunham,  
Founder/CEO  
and Rodney Wolfe,  
Plant Manager