

May 14, 2020 - 10:00am ET

Georgia Manufacturers Alliance News Network Roundtable: Relaunching your business!

Hosted by Jason Moss, Founder and Executive Director GMA

Call participants, alphabetically by first name:

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Welcome by Jason- Today's topic is Reopening, what are your plans?

This call is specifically focused on what you are doing to relaunch, support each other, and sharing best practices on how to support each other.

GMA is a for-profit organization, we survive on memberships and sponsorships. Live events are a source of income which we cannot host as much anymore so we are very thankful for your ongoing support. Please take a look at our sponsors, we could not survive without them! On today's call we have Jason Pollard from Southwire who is also our first digital Manufacturing spotlight sponsor!

GMA could not operate without the help of our sponsors, thank you:

Developer Sponsors:

Ad Victoriam Solutions, E2E, Optimum Productions, Salesforce and Southwire

Innovator Sponsors:

Fastenal, KaMin, Supply Chain Now, The Effective Syndicate, and Taylor English Duma Law

Community Sponsors:

Constangy Brooks, Smith & Prophete, Georgia Tech, Delta Metals, RRD Communications, SBC Southern Barter Club, and TSI Solutions

Digital marketing solutions - check out our rolling banner on the GMA home page:

We are now showcasing a "member of the week" and a "supporting partner member of the week". This is a paid marketing campaign on our home page, linked to an article, a company video or an interview, see the scrolling banner. For the inaugural week, we have:

1. Manufacturer: Southwire Company

Jason from Southwire is our first manufacturer on the GMA digital marketing banner, check out their informative video!

2. Supporting Partner: E2E Benefit Services

Raymer Sale from E2E Benefit Services always secured the back page of the directory and now jumped on board for the digital idea. He is sponsoring an education session: May 20th, focused on company benefits.

GMA is engaging with its community in a totally different way right now and it is nice for members who are further away to be able to connect.

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Share with us what you are doing right now:

Jason Pollard, Southwire: We are the largest wire and cable manufacturer in the US and the 3rd largest in the world. We have been located in Carrollton, GA, since 1950. I have been at Southwire for 22 yrs, I'm a 3rd generation employee, my grandfather as well as my dad retired from Southwire. I am the Vice President of Communications and Talent Acquisition, reporting to HR. We employ 7800 people worldwide and are located in 7 countries. On March 23, 2020 Southwire turned 70 years old.

- Two keywords: Adaptability and Agility. Rethink your people interaction and how it relates to manufacturing.
- We take care of our employees. Our executive leadership believes that people, our employees, are our most important asset. We made sure everyone feels safe.
- Remote office was implemented on Tuesday, March 16. We implemented all protocols and guidelines all from CDC. Our pandemic protocol was 10 years old, we dusted it off.
- Agility = ability to adjust. We are large, we don't move quick; we are very proud of our safety protocols and we implement them fast.
- Southwire is an essential business, we supply products for utility/power, our products matter to keep the economy moving.
- Maintaining safety protocols and adapting was crucial.
- If we had a case, we were cleaning and sanitizing equipment according to EPA guidelines. We are transparent.
- My expertise is communication - creating a consistent channel of communication is crucial.
- 70% of manufacturing personnel do not have a computer, phone or an Ipad so we had to use all managers to communicate what is happening. Safety and health was #1.
- April was our best safety month on record in company history! It worked. We work with our employees by letting them know if you are concerned about safety, we care.
- We relaxed our attendance policy, to accommodate those employees who were uncertain and wanted to stay home to focus on family and their own well being.
- We hired temp staffing to cover those gaps, finding temps was challenging. All this and still breaking a safety record is amazing.
- This pandemic has knocked down a lot of traditional barriers in the world of communication.
- Our employees can watch our CEO in a ball cap on video giving a heartfelt message.

- We have weekly updates from our CEO to all employees through a “Remind App”, digital billboards at every location, as well as email. Throw all the old ways away, and let go!

Comment Jason Moss: GMA had never done webinars before this time. Every leader circles back to communication. Straight up dialogue, listen to feedback from all employees.

Justin Hughes, Dieselgrid: what is your economic outlook for 2021?

- Before the virus hit, we had an incredible Q1, even through March. The uncertainty started in December and into Q1.
- We had a surprisingly good April. Products to temp hospitals and anywhere with temp power requirements. Next, I don't know. Economists: good/bad. Government predicts a good Q4 and Q1 is uptake. Taking it daily.
- Regarding OEM and industrial markets. OEM: RV, recreational, automation is soft. Infrastructure in utility is strong. Our diversification works, you can move with any economy. If it is slow in housing then energy in the utility sector will pick up.
- New: tools, contactor equipment, think electrician's tools. A little slow down there.
- We are financially sound, great leadership. We are cognizant of spending, not thrifty.
- Outlook: 50/50. We had a good April, not sure about May yet. In the summer we make hay when building is happening, next is wire and cable installation, that is when we make hay. The Fall and end of year is usually slower for us.

Jason Moss: in a traditional year, what is your indication for growth:

- We have partnerships with organizations such as NEMA, a large electrical outlet. Also COMEX and AMM Groups as we are a metals company. (note Cokkie: not sure whether I spelled these names correctly) If you Google copper, you see us. Housing is another indicator.
- We check the price of metals and what manufacturing is doing, we have ongoing discussions with our partners. Our leadership participates in organizations with like minded people. Those organizations know the economic tilt, how the economy relates to our market, etc.
- The selective vertical markets: oil, petrol, hospitals - we listen to those leaders' discussions and that affects us.

Jason Moss: Builders are looking to see who is buying heavy excavating equipment = contracts have been secured.

- An old friend of mine used to say: If you see Caterpillar in your town, it is good! If red dirt moves with yellow equipment = good!

Justin Hughes, Dieselgrid: supply chain for dedicated warehousing, distribution centers, transportation. Market dropped, so shifted to higher demand transportation: local grocery stores. We are gearing towards zero physical contact, we are building automated software for messaging between our drivers and the receiver. The receiver will get a photo ID and BOL from our drivers. Other scenarios are auto processes for drop trailers or locked cargo. You can track shipment throughout its travel. Upon arrival: communicate which dock door etc. Keep drivers safe = keep supply chain going.

Roger Grabman: do you need a Beta test site. I know several manufacturers that are potential users.

Justin: We have a developer on staff, I am the beta tester, it is more than an App, it is a database, based on my new business structure.

LD DeKatch, Fastsigns Snellville: Since Kathleen/Southwire spoke at one of the previous GMA Summits, it convinced LD to join GMA! Kathleen spoke about their employees being their biggest asset which made them successful and set them apart from competition. You must have a great basic system to be able to hire temps and still have outstanding safety month, congratulations!

Jason Pollard: Kathleen is now the EVP of all Operations, all of manufacturing, a great lady!

LD to Jason Pollard: What is happening with your At Risk students program?

Jason: We follow the schools recommendation, the schools screen and hire the students/workforce for our facilities in Carrollton and Florence. Once COVID hit, we followed the schools recommendation so students are not currently working. It is a health/safety decision. We will re-open when the school system is open, and it is safe to do so.

LD about Justin: likes his forward thinking of zero contact, to safeguard employees and in the process they will probably also become more efficient. Justin's goal to streamline with other manufacturers is great for higher efficiency in the supply chain overall. I provide signage to help people communicate what the procedures are. In this case, we are adding graphics on back of the truck, when doors open, it lists the steps of all the procedures.

Comment Jason Moss: Southwire may be a key manufacturer for feedback. This automation can cover all steps of the supply chain. Companies can show that they are Safe Shipper Certified, so the driver feels secure. If a truck backs up to the dock, the dock workers know drivers are safety conscious, ie hands off or at least cautious.

Justin: the efficiency, it will bring transparency in 2020. Also, timing, it will get busy, think 20 trailers on dock, this communication is a friendly reminder which docks need attention.

Joshua LeBarre, Sonnen, Director of manufacturing operations. We are an energy storage systems company in Tucker, Ga. For residential spaces, we provide a cleaner longer lasting source for providing power. We are a German based company and have been in the USA for 5 yrs. It all comes back to communication: key stakeholders, customers, support structure, supply chain. Estes Shipping about the economy: as long as you see trucks on the road, we are in good shape, as long as freight is moving, we're good! My biggest thing to prepare for on the supply chain side, is shipping after this pandemic - work with your freight company! Building your product is one thing, if it doesn't arrive at your customer, you don't get paid! We expect huge Q3 and Q4, so need to get freight lined up.

Comment Jason Moss: GMA was founded in 2008 but in 2011/2012 I saw concrete trucks, it was an AHA moment, building is happening! Not sure what it will be this time, but cars seem to be on the road already. GMA has 350 members statewide. Looking for GA to lead the pack to bring manufacturers back.

Joshua Lebarre - shoutout to Laura Madajewski: I was brainstorming Sunday night. Called Laura early Monday morning to ask for a specific type of person referral and she provided it within hours!

Laura Madejewski, HLB Gross Collins: I lead the manufacturing and supply chain area of the accounting firm, and am also the Cobb County GMA contact. We have been playing the true helper during this time, answering a variety of questions. Biggest learn is relationships that we have built and the people we have come to know over the years. That network has been invaluable. Learning of implementation measures from old clients, and they are willing for me to share them.

Comment Jason Moss: communication and community is a magic combination. Please let me know how I and GMA can make you more successful!

Closing comments Jason:

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Digital and Print Member Directory:

New Members will be digitally introduced, starting with all 2020 new members and including new members since last printed directory. Print directory will become an annual directory. Will be doing more digital promotions, see page 2.

GMA Annual Summit:

Registration for the September 15, 2020 Summit is open. Exhibit spots still available and refunds will be issued if Governor Kemp mandates new rules that would prohibit us hosting the Summit.