



What Makes The Zatkoff Gasket Division Unique?

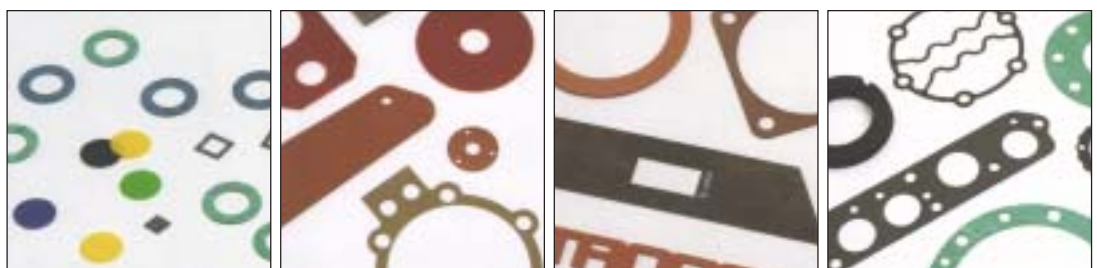
Employees focus on materials, quality and customer satisfaction

Zatkoff Seals and Packings is comprised of eight branches. Only one of them manufactures parts - the Zatkoff Gasket Division. Originally founded as the William Roy Company in 1942, the Gasket Division was created when Roger Zatkoff purchased the company in 1982. It originally operated in an old industrial complex in Detroit, and was relocated to a new building located in Warren, Michigan in 1999. Walk into the newly built 52,350 square foot shop and the first thing you notice is how pristine the manufacturing facility is. It's so clean that the building looks more like one of Zatkoff Seals and Packings distribution facilities than a place that houses slitting, die cutting and laminating machines.



The Zatkoff Gasket Division manufactures various die cut shapes from a full range of non-metallic raw materials, including open & closed cell foams, rubber, plastics, felt, thermo plastic rubber, paper & fiber, magnetic rubber, and adhesive tapes. Another unique capability they offer is the ability to supply most materials with an adhesive backing.

The Zatkoff Gasket Division offers a variety of solutions to meet client's needs, with volumes ranging from one-piece orders to over 1 million per production run, and part sizes from one sixteenth inch diameter up to 4 feet wide by 9 feet long. Their client base is equally broad, with primary customers being automotive manufacturers, automotive suppliers and the medical, electronics, heavy industrial and furniture industries. Most of the Gasket Division products serve as environmental seals, spacers, noise reduction, vibration reduction, anti-squeak, and decorative or gap hider devices.



www.zatkoff.com

The Gasket Division's commitment to clients is shown in a variety of ways. They stock many standard materials, which enables them to react quickly when clients need immediate support. In addition, their experienced team has a broad understanding of how different materials "behave" when they are processed. This gives them an edge in understanding true process and tolerance capability, as well as ensuring they choose the best tooling to provide a quality product.

Zatkoff Gasket Division has combined the best of the old with the best of the new, merging old-fashioned die manufacturing skills, techniques and machines with the power of information technology. Over twenty years, the Zatkoff Gasket Division has built a powerful reputation for swift and creative problem solving skills with high quality products. Clients frequently turn to them when they have an immediate, critical problem on their hands.



"We like customer problems," says Art Steitz, Gasket Division Branch Manager, "When a customer calls and says, 'I have a problem,' it is a thrill to be able to jump on that and solve the problem for them. I like to do what the other guys can't. Part of that is reacting as rapidly as we can," says Steitz. "We like to solve problems quickly. That's how we win client loyalty."

An automotive product launch is a stressful time for everyone involved. The phone rings at Zatkoff Gasket Division when critical problems are discovered right before a new product hits the streets, and Art Steitz and his team rise to the occasion. One example of the Gasket Division's ability to solve customer problems included the manufacture of a shim that had to meet three criteria. 1. The material had to have low surface energy to allow for a plastic latch to slide across on an automotive door handle. 2. It had to have excellent rebound properties to push the latch back to its original position. 3. It had to function at -40 degrees F temperature resistance and still rebound. The Gasket Division made twelve trips to the client and in three days they were able to solve the problem. No one foam material could meet all the specifications, so the Gasket Division selected three materials that were laminated together. For ease of assembly, they applied a pressure sensitive adhesive to the bottom of the part.



- Mylar Plastic Top
- 3M® Pressure Sensitive Adhesive
- Foam RE41 Low Temperature Material
- 3M® Pressure Sensitive Adhesive
- Foam Rogers Poron® - Excellent Compression Set Resistance
- 3M® Pressure Sensitive Adhesive
- Paper Release Liner

Although the part was in production for only a short time, while a permanent fix was developed, Gasket Division's ingenuity, responsiveness and teamwork earned the respect of the client.



Problem solving is everybody's business at the Zatkoff Gasket Division. Dori is an Automatic Systems Operator and has worked for the Gasket Division for four years. She enjoys the meetings held to solve customer problems. "We work out on the floor, and we know what's going right or wrong. We give the managers input, and then we work together to solve the problem." Dori believes Zatkoff Gasket Division is unique because of the team approach to customer satisfaction. "We all work on customer satisfaction," says Dori. "Excellence and team work – without either, you're not going to have quality parts."



Sandy, a Press Operator at the Gasket Division with nine years experience, echoes Dori's remarks. "If I have a better idea on how to do the job, they take heed to that. They listen to you. They will even order another tool to make the job run smoothly. We provide quality products and on time delivery – that way, our customers keep coming back."

This top-to-bottom approach to providing quality solutions to client problems isn't lost on Zatkoff employees from other divisions. Larry, a salesman responsible for clients in the automotive industry, appreciates the fact that Zatkoff Seals and Packings isn't just a distributor of sealing devices, they are a manufacturer as well. "I have had many instances where the Zatkoff Gasket Division has come up with a creative solution to a customer problem," says Larry. "My customers appreciate our technical experience, and our ability to prototype and deliver product within days, or even hours."

Customers come to the Zatkoff Gasket Division for service, quality and good ideas. They often work directly with the engineering groups to solve critical problems. "Anyone can talk about being a good company," says Larry. "But it boils down to our ability to address problems and address them quickly. It boils down to response time."



No job is too big or too small for the Zatkoff Gasket Division, says Andrew, a Customer Service Representative. "We service all sizes of clients and all sizes of orders," he says. "We fit the middle ground if someone wants a large or medium sized order, or needs help solving a problem

with just a few parts. Lots of larger manufacturers would turn that kind of job down. We have the resources to do the small and the big jobs."

The other 172 Zatkoff Seals and Packings employees were polled for this article, and answered the question, "What makes the Zatkoff Gasket Division unique?" Several statements appeared over and over again.

- Response Time in quotes, prototypes, and on-time delivery to the customer.
- Creative solutions to customer problems
- Wide variety of materials
- Proactive, knowledgeable staff
- Meet and exceed customer expectations



Those remarks make Marc Staudt, Gasket Division Production Manager, very proud. "Our ability to cut a wide variety of materials helps us serve a broader base. And we do have an involved staff committed to quality – that's what keeps our clients coming back." Employees

are given sheets of paper to jot down ideas for improvement so that good ideas don't get lost in the shuffle of every day work. Staudt values their input. "It's the people doing the work day in and day out who can help you improve things."

Naturally, the Gasket Division is ISO9001:2000 certified. But the Gasket Division employees don't look at quality as just a banner on the wall, or a rubber stamp of certification. For them, quality is a personal matter.

"Our quality comes from working with clients to make better parts," says Tim, a Prep Operator on the Adhesive Laminator. "We bounce ideas around with them, versus having them just buy gaskets from a supplier who doesn't make parts – they don't have a clue. We are instrumental in solving the customer's problems because we make the parts ourselves." The Zatkoff Gasket Division has a

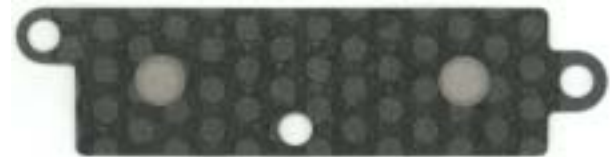
special adhesive lamination manufacturing area for coating rubber and thermoplastic materials with a range of adhesives, which can be laminated to one or both surfaces. They also have the capability of providing composites consisting of multiple layers of materials, or material with films or adhesives on both top and bottom surfaces. Some of these multiple laminations can be done in line at the die cut process, which eliminates secondary operations and reduces costs.

Unique product offerings come in handy when clients have a tough problem to solve. Recently, a client needed a gasket that had to meet specific temperature and fluid requirements for transmission fluids. In addition, the client desired a filter element to be part of the assembly. Zatkoff Gasket Division designed a multi-piece gasket to provide a complete seal solution. The process for manufacturing the gasket was intriguing.

First, a laminate adhesive is cut and applied to the gasket material. This sounds basic enough, but this process had to not only work (the part had to adhere), but it also had to be modified to limit fluid attack.



Second, stainless steel filters were cut and attached to the gasket back, satisfying the filtration requirements.



Third, the gasket was provided on a white liner for easy attachment to the product on the assembly line. This solution offered the customer a turnkey, ready to use, one-piece assembly that saved money by reducing vendors and assembly time.

Bob, Zatkoff Gasket Division's Quality Manager, has been with the company for eight years. Prior to that, he worked in a plant in Canada where he did everything from operating the machinery to serve as Plant Manager. In short, he's seen and done it all. He likes that Zatkoff Gasket Division believes that actions speak louder than words, and there is more than just lip service to quality. "Lots of places have fantastic ideas," he says. "At Zatkoff Seals and Packings, there is a strong emphasis on part verification procedures and process traceability, to get to the root source of issues, and prevent them from the beginning. Our employees are involved because they know more than we do – we see the surface, they see it all." Commitment to quality includes a state of the art measuring system with accuracy out to six decimal places – far more than what they need - which enables

them to study the dimensional process capability of their tools across their full range of materials. The Zatkoff Gasket Division has an industry reputation as a “tight tolerance manufacturer.”

The appropriate use of technology has helped the Gasket Division earn the respect of 3rd party quality systems auditors. Every container of product includes a label with a code that can then be traced back to the shop ticket used to manufacture the parts. Traceability ranges from the date, machine, operator and materials used to make the parts. They can also follow the material back to the original supplier, including specific material lot numbers. The employees are proud of the Zatkoff Gasket Division’s reputation for quality. But that’s not the only thing they’re proud of.

“We’re also unique because every single product we manufacture is unique,” says Patricia, Customer Service Supervisor. “Every day is challenging, but we have a 100% commitment to client satisfaction. I’ve seen Art Steitz and Marc Staudt work to all ends for a product to meet the customer’s needs. We have a commitment to work together for a good product.”



The Zatkoff Gasket Division is unique in its ability to create the kind of positive work environment that results in prodigious employee involvement and high client satisfaction. Nobody represents that more than Fennie, who has worked for Zatkoff Gasket Division since

1982. She opens the manufacturing facility at 4:30 am – every workday.

So what makes the Zatkoff Gasket Division unique? It offers unique quality products, committed, well-trained employees, and a corporate culture focused on client satisfaction.

Written By: Maureen Electa Monte

Bio-bibliography

- Maureen Electa Monte is a professional writer and commercial photographer. Her work has appeared in magazines and newspapers in Detroit, Chicago and Minneapolis. She also possesses a Bachelor of Science and Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering, and was an engineering consultant at IBM for thirteen years, where she focused on streamlining the engineering design process with Chrysler and their suppliers.



**Different Gasket Choices
Multiple Gasket Solutions
ONE Resource**

STOCKING BRANCH LOCATIONS

www.zatkoff.com

CORPORATE OFFICE

23230 Industrial Park Drive
Farmington Hills, MI
48335-2850
(248) 478-2400
Fax: (248) 478-3392

Toledo Branch

8929 Airport Hwy.
Holland, OH
43528-9604
(419) 866-1600
Fax: (419) 866-4668

Grand Rapids Branch

4678 50th Street S.E.
Grand Rapids, MI
49512-5401
(616) 698-6880
Fax: (616) 698-6877

Saginaw Branch

5925 Sherman Road
Saginaw, MI
48604-1173
(989) 754-2900
Fax: (989) 754-2974

Indianapolis Branch

9334 Castlegate Dr.
Indianapolis, IN
46256-1001
(317) 842-8822
Fax: (317) 842-8383

Cleveland Branch

2475 Edison Blvd.
Twinsburg, OH
44087-2340
(330) 405-8700
Fax: (330) 405-8701

www.zatkoff.com

Cincinnati Branch

9220 Seward Road
Fairfield, OH
45014-5420
(513) 874-0067
Fax: (513) 874-8537

Zatkoff Gasket Manufacturing Division - 31773 Denton Drive, Warren, MI 48092 ♦ (586) 264-4100 ♦ (586) 264-4003 FAX ♦ ISO9001:2000

Statements and recommendations in this publication are based on experience and knowledge of typical applications for this product and shall not constitute a guarantee or warranty of performance nor a modification or alteration of our standard product warranty which shall be applicable to such products.