

1Way Technologies Enjoying Success After Merger



**Chris Grace and Jeff Jones merged two successful businesses to form
1Way Technologies, LLC located in Washington, Indiana**

Entrepreneurs and small businesses are the backbone of Radius Indiana's eight-county regional economy. The Indiana Small Business Development Center reports that the Radius Region is home to nearly 9,000 small businesses, or about 3 percent of Indiana's total number of small businesses. The Region also accounts for 3.4 percent of new businesses established in Indiana during the past year.

A recently released small business index, developed for the area by Radius Indiana, shows that rural areas possess economic factors that pose specific challenges in the creation and success of

small businesses. Most importantly, the rural economic development region has smaller population centers, and subsequently a lower number of potential consumers. This means rural counties must be proactive and intentional to foster small business growth.

While the challenges do exist, Daviess County has mastered the formula of success. This is in part because Indiana, in itself, has created a pro-business environment. The State embraces innovation while providing resources and incentives—equating to lower costs to do business.

Daviess County, in turn, capitalizes on the State's business-friendly approach by forging collaborations and partnerships between local government, economic development organizations, the community and local businesses. It offers large community resources for the small-town environment. For example, collaborations have allowed the leadership to put together strategic financing and incentive packages to make relocation or expansion plans attractive for short- and long-term growth. This helps them respond to new opportunities while also working with those small businesses in the region looking to expand.

This successful formula translates well when local businesses are poised to grow. In January 2016 Jones Engineering, father and son cylinder head and race engine design business founded in 1979 and based in Washington, Indiana merged with Weld Tech, a company that developed and marketed modified cylinder heads from Brownsburg, Indiana.

The two formed 1Way Technologies, LLC. The merger has proved successful. The merged owners, Jeff Jones and Chris Grace, report that they have furthered their global markets. "We have even more international clients," Jones explained. "We've even expanded our global markets to the Netherlands and the UK." Washington Mayor Joe Wellman describes 1Way Technologies as "a true asset" to the community. They provide skilled jobs to our residents and they have stayed with the times by utilizing high tech and even cutting-edge technology."

Even though Jones Engineering and Weld Tech had been working together for over 15 years, combining forces meant overcoming a few obstacles. The owners had to decide between locating a new facility in Washington or Brownsburg. Both areas have positive aspects but Jones and Grace felt that Washington was a better fit. "The costs of doing business is lower in Daviess County," Grace explained. "We were able to build a new 12,000-square-foot facility at a lower cost because the available land was cheaper." Ron Arnold, executive director of the Daviess County Economic Development Corporation is grateful to 1Way Technologies for locating in Daviess County and bringing national recognition to Washington.

The community welcomed the newly formed 1Way Technologies. Chris Grace relocated to Washington for the merger. "I had to adjust as an outsider. I was probably looked at as coming from a big city, but the people were very warm and welcoming," Grace said. Jones, a native of Washington, has long admired the people of Washington. This resonates well in their business as Grace and Jones are impressed with the local workforce. The owners collaborate with

Vincennes University's Advanced CNC Machining and Programming certification program. They are able to hire graduates of the program to maintain their highly skilled and professional trade.

The community has also provided additional benefits the owners did not expect. Washington is home to the 20th Century Chevy Inc. car club, a club the business owners fully embrace. "We support and enjoy interacting with the club," Jones said. "They even had a day when the club toured our facility."

The facility has also hosted students from the local high school's CEO class. In early 2017, the CEO program, designed to teach entrepreneurship, toured 1Way Technologies and spoke with the owners. The CEO class, Ron Arnold explains, is an amazing opportunity that "changes students with not just what they learn but with how they think about things."

The formula of success seems to come easily to a community that embraces these unique collaborations. Daviess County is dedicated to ensuring a viable and sustainable future by offering the flexibility that attracts and supports businesses. A pro-business environment alongside an exceptional quality of life has been the key variable that this County thrives on.