

TECHNOLOGY TODAY

HEADLINE

A LOOK INTO CRITICAL MANUFACTURING

AN INTERVIEW WITH DAVID
TRAIL JR., VICE PRESIDENT OF
SALES, SMT AND ELECTRONICS,
CRITICAL MANUFACTURING



Founded in 2009, Critical Manufacturing is a young, agile, customer-centric company providing leading-edge, Industry 4.0-ready software solutions for advanced manufacturing industry segments. The company is dedicated to empowering manufacturers of complex, high-tech discrete products with a manufacturing execution and intelligence system to achieve their digital transformation goals. We recently spoke with David Trail Jr., Vice President of Sales, SMT and Electronics, to find out more about the company and how it is moving forward during these uncertain times.

Q. Critical Manufacturing has been a successful software solutions company for more than a decade. What sets you apart from your competition?

A. First of all, Critical Manufacturing is an amazing company to work with and for. We have nearly 250 employees and the vast majority are some of the most talented software engineers I have ever met. Led by a visionary Management team with a strong sense of the future of MES and manufacturing, Critical has redefined the capabilities and expectations of what a manufacturing software solution is and should be. This vision and the strong support of our talented team has been rewarded with some of the most robust growth seen within our space. Over this past decade we have seen robust revenue growth year over year since our inception. We have been hiring at a record pace, and our customer base has grown exponentially. A large part of this is due to the fact that our solution is well known as the most modern, flexible and configurable manufacturing execution system (MES) available.

Q. For those unfamiliar with your technologies, can you provide a brief overview of Critical Manufacturing's manufacturing execution system (MES)? Is the software solution Industry-4.0 ready?

A. I often explain to others that the term "Industry 4.0" is present in both our Vision and Mission statements and has been core to our company even before the term and philosophy became part of the "mainstream" conversation within manufacturing. Our MES solution and revolutionary technologies help manufacturers stay ahead of stringent product traceability and compliance requirements; reduce risk with inherent closed-loop quality; integrate seamlessly with enterprise systems and factory automation and provide deep intelligence and visibility of global production operations. As a result, customers are Industry 4.0 ready. They can compete effectively and profitably by easily adapting their operations to changes in demand, opportunity or requirements, anywhere, at any time.

Read our White Paper: The New MES: Backbone of Industry 4.0
<https://criticalmanufacturing.com/en/resources/documents/white-paper-the-new-mes-backbone-of-industry-4-0>



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Q. Is Mexico a successful market for Critical Manufacturing? Why or why not?



A. As one of the most important manufacturing regions within North America (and the world), Mexico is and has been part of our focus for many years. This is especially true given the manufacturing and supply chain shifts that we have been seeing in many of our key sectors and industries recently. As more and more companies begin to evaluate and commence "reshoring" of their manufacturing operations, Mexico is a logical location. The stability in the region and political climate has vastly improved over the past decade and many of the past concerns have been eliminated. Because of these factors we have partnered with SMarTsol who, is a leading Manufacturing Representative organization in the region.

Read our Press Release: Critical Manufacturing Appoints SMarTsol Technologies in Mexico
<https://criticalmanufacturing.com/en/newsroom/press-releases/posts/press-releases/critical-manufacturing-appoints-smartsol-technologies-in-mexico#.XqMOWmhKg2w>



LED BY A VISIONARY MANAGEMENT TEAM WITH A STRONG SENSE OF THE FUTURE OF MES AND MANUFACTURING, CRITICAL HAS REDEFINED THE CAPABILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS OF WHAT A MANUFACTURING SOFTWARE SOLUTION IS AND SHOULD BE.



Q. We've seen in the news that Critical Manufacturing has increased its rep base significantly in 2020 for the Electronics and SMT Industry. What is the reasoning behind this?

A. In the early 90s, I started my career in this industry as a Manufacturer's Rep, and I am a big proponent of the strategy of using Reps in key territories. The depth of the relationships these reps have with their customer base is something that would be very difficult to develop with a "direct" sales force. Since we have partnered with some of the best reps in North America who have extremely strong line cards, the exposure to key individuals within our target customer base is vastly enhanced.

Find a Critical Manufacturing Partner <https://criticalmanufacturing.com/en/company/partners/find-a-partner>.

Q. Has Critical Manufacturing been deemed an essential company by the government? If so, what role has Critical Manufacturing played in helping to stop the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic?

A. Interestingly, while many companies and industries have seen devastating effects due to the current global crisis, Critical Manufacturing has been extremely busy over the past few months because we provide important capabilities to help manufacturers better respond to changes in demand. The industries we serve such as Electronics Assembly, Semiconductor and Medical Device have all had critical parts to play in helping government and front-line agencies respond to the current crisis by efficiently ramping up production of critical components and medical supplies to treat patients. Our Medical Device customers are some of the most recognized names in the industry and are on the front lines in supplying the products currently saving lives.

Q. Do you think the pandemic will change the way we do business moving forward? How so? How will Critical Manufacturing adapt?

A. Most of us have never seen a situation like this within our lifetimes. The devastating disruption of "business as usual" has resulted in many unique adaptations and caused many of us to rethink the way we go about both our personal and business lives. The ways we go about creating and maintaining relationships with customers, associates, and coworkers have had to evolve in a very short amount of time. Fortunately, our business model is rather friendly to remote technologies and the use of Microsoft Teams, GoToMeeting, and Skype type technologies has been very beneficial as we interact with our customers, prospects, employees, and partners. Over the past month or so, we have gone to a 100% work from home model and have not only been able to grow revenues at record levels, we have been able to maintain the unique and tight-knit culture within our company. Most importantly, we have been very successful at keeping our current implementation projects going to plan, with much of the work being done by the services and engineering teams remotely. This is the direct result of providing the most modern MES platform available with a unique implementation methodology.

For more information, read our blog: A Quick Guide to Remote Implementation: Keep MES Projects Going in the Midst of a Crisis <https://blog.criticalmanufacturing.com/a-quick-guide-to-remote-implementation-keep-mes-projects-going-in-the-midst-of-a-crisis/>

Q. What can we expect on the horizon from Critical Manufacturing?

A. Critical Manufacturing has always been about innovation. Since we began, we have reinvented the capabilities, expectations, and definition of what a MES should do, can do, and what the technology means to manufacturers around the world in many different industries. We are pushing the limits of existing technologies and have been inventing and envisioning new methods of managing data, creating an environment conducive to Artificial Intelligence and Machine Learning, and reimagining everything from life on the manufacturing floor to the utilization of advanced data analytics for operating a successful manufacturing corporation in the 21st century. There are many exciting projects and technologies on the horizon, and we are looking to sharing them with the industry.

www.criticalmanufacturing.com