

Industrial packager wraps up deal for Ohio competitor

Bentley, specializing in export services, buys Overseas Packing LLC

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Bentley World-Packaging Ltd., which has shown strong internal growth the last few years, completed an acquisition Tuesday that will boost its sales by 50% and take it into new markets.

The firm closed on the purchase of Overseas Packing LLC, a 70-employee export packaging company in Walton Hills, Ohio, near Cleveland.

Bentley owner and CEO Thomas H. Bentley III wouldn't disclose the price, but said Overseas Packing has annual sales of about \$10 million. That should make for a significant increase in Bentley World-Packaging's revenue, which stands at about \$20 million.

The purchase also brings Bentley's employee count to 300.

Wisconsin's largest export packager, Bentley World-Packaging has been growing about 15% annually in recent years, Thomas Bentley said.

Driving the sales increase have been a growing world economy, a weak dollar (which makes U.S. exports cheaper) and the success of a key customer, Oshkosh Truck Corp.

With sales rising, Bentley opened two plants in Racine County in 2005.

About two years ago, the company also opened a plant in Albany, Ga., near a military base. Last March, Bentley started up a plant in Chambersburg, Pa.

The addition of Overseas Packing gives Bentley a plant in Pittsburgh, as well as the Cleveland-area operation.

"They're the dominant packer in both cities," Thomas Bentley said.

He said Overseas Packing has about 300 customers, many of them manufacturers of large, heavy parts - the client base Bentley serves here.

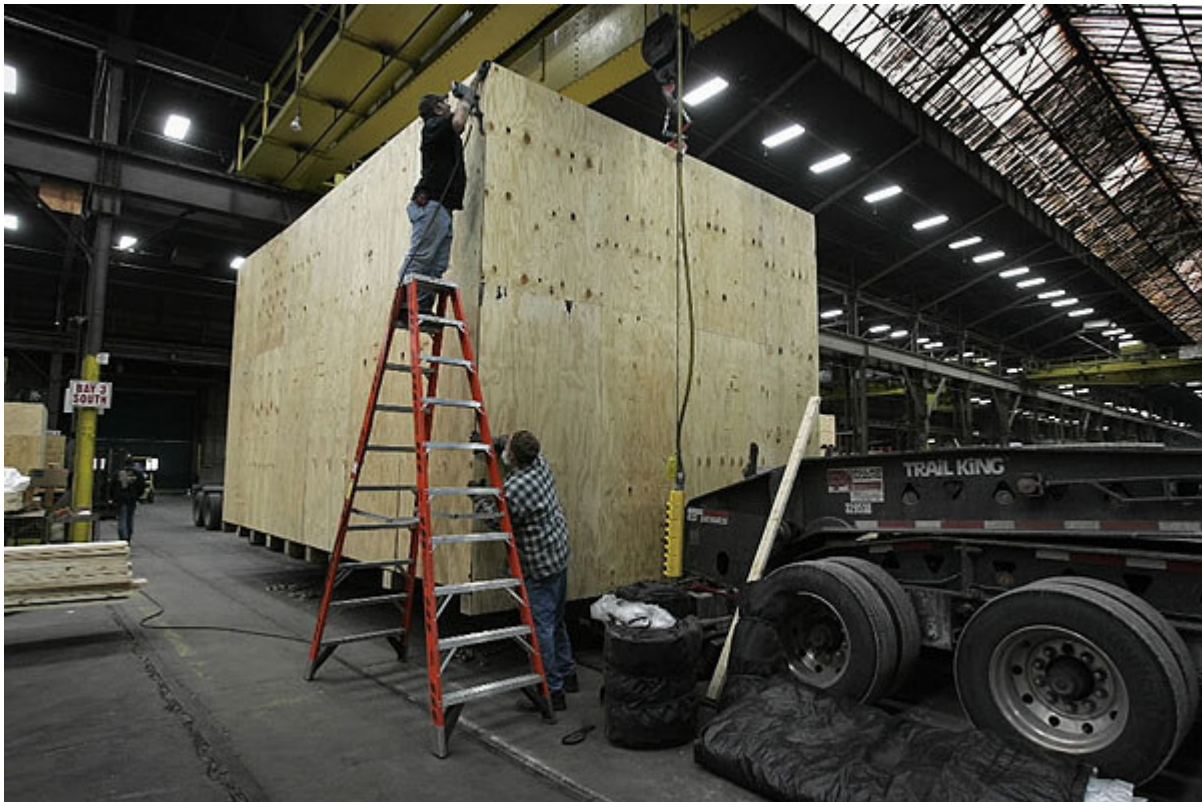
The companies differ in that Overseas Packing sells more supplies - everything from steel banding to bubble wrap - to customers who choose to do their own packing.

Overseas Packing is a family-owned firm whose owner is retiring, Bentley said.

"Our cultures are alike," he said. "He's got 20- and 30-year employees without a lot of turnover, like we do."

Bentley currently is looking for property in Baltimore and plans to add an operation there in about a year. That would place Bentley World-Packaging in a port city, and, along with the company's other geographic expansion, could accelerate its growth further, Thomas Bentley said.

Bentley's headquarters are on N. Port Washington Road, in a building that sits astride the Milwaukee-Glendale boundary.



Terry Manvilla (on ladder) and Jerry Thompson package a 150,000-pound equipment shipment at Bentley World-Packaging Co. on N. Port Washington Road. The huge package houses a compressor, a motor and a control panel to be shipped to Saudi Arabia for use on an off-shore oil rig. The package is 16 feet wide by 26 feet long by 15 feet tall.