

# Growth drives Flexial expansion

November 5, 2019



Local officials and business leaders gathered to celebrate the groundbreaking for the Flexial expansion. From left to right: Kim Taylor, Chamber Ambassador; Chris Smith, Process Engineering & Maintenance Manager; Seth Johnson, Quality Manager; City Mayor Ricky Shelton; Dinky West, President & CEO; Putnam County Mayor Randy Porter; Greg Maxwell, Director of Sales & Program Management; Scott Higbie, Director of Engineering; Dianne Callahan, Chamber VP Member Development; Adam Cunningham, Chamber Ambassador.

## By Michelle Price

UCBJ Managing Editor

**COOKEVILLE** – For some companies, the sky is the limit, but not for Cookeville’s *Flexial Corporation*. Flexial already has seven products on the International Space Station and is working on more. In fact, business has been so good that the company just broke ground on a 10,000-square-foot expansion and hopes to hire 25-30 new employees in the next two to three years.

*“The expansion was due to growth and timing,”* said Greg Maxwell, Flexial director of sales and program. *“We’ve been growing at over 10% for the last four or five years, and the things that we’ve been in qualification for are now going to production.”*

*This growth demanded that the company expand its current 38,000-square-foot facility to allow room for additional production capacity and a new service that they will be offering.*

*"We're also adding a new service, which is engineering and environmental testing," Maxwell said. "One of the showpieces of the expansion is going to be an engineering test lab that we can test not only our parts but other parts in aerospace."*

*The 3,500-square-foot engineering environmental test laboratory will allow them to offer testing services to companies like Collins aerospace, Hamilton Sunstrand, Pacific Design Technologies, Boeing, Airbus, Lockheed Martin, Wylie, Honeywell, etc.*



*Rendering of future Flexial*

*In addition to the new construction, J&S Construction is doing some major renovations inside the facility.*

*"They are closing in a clean area. We have had a tent for probably 10-15 years, and Johnny Stites has agreed to close that in completely for us ... new ventilation systems, isolation pads for some of our larger presses and to help some of the more sensitive CMC measuring equipment in the building," explained Flexial President & CEO Dinky West.*

*Flexialis an aerospace manufacturer for the military and commercial aviation industry, as well as space exploration, medical, energy distribution, oil and gas and several other sectors. The company has become the premier, high-tech company within the aerospace industry for edge-welded metal bellows and related products.*

*"Bellows is our core competency, but we've expanded that, and now supply the assemblies that the bellows go into – which is the next step – but most of our business is fluid controls, but we also do some things outside of that – pressure gauging and things of that nature," explained Maxwell.*

**Related video: For a closer look at Flexial click [here](#).**

*Flexial's products can be found in many applications, such as the Lockheed Martin F35 Joint Strike Fighter, General Dynamics F16, Northrop Grumman E-2D Advanced Hawkeye, SpaceX Falcon and Dragon, Airbus A350, A220, A380 and the Boeing 787.*

*Most recently, NASA has implemented the President's [Space Policy Directive-1](#) to "lead an innovative and sustainable program of exploration with commercial and international partners to enable human expansion across the solar system."*

*Through this program, Flexial is working with several companies progressing the initiative for the United States to return to the moon and low earth orbit. NASA intends to develop an orbiting lunar outpost that will serve as a pit stop between Earth and the moon, eventually pushing onward to Mars through the Artemis program.*

*Flexial has designed, tested and manufactured system components for the Lockheed Martin Orion spacecraft, the Sierra Nevada Dream Chaser spacecraft and the Boeing CST-100 Starliner spacecraft toward this initiative and the International Space Station's mission.*

*The company has a lot of space activity going on.*

*"The U.S. is going back to the moon, and we're right up in the middle of that on several programs," said West.*

*"We do micro-welding through a microscope," explained Maxwell. "It's really a different kind of welding than you would probably see anywhere else because this material is only 3- or 4/1000ths thick, so you're only just above the thickness of a human hair. So, they're welding those through a microscope.*

*"On the space station bellows, I think we measured, there was a mile and a half of continuous welding that we had to do without error, so it was a big deal. We're really proud of that. We probably have about seven part numbers on the station right now. We've carved out a little niche with NASA. They like us. We are their exclusive bellows provider on those type systems."*

*Military projects are about 30% of Flexial's business, and their engineering team is currently working on the F35 Joint Strike Fighter.*

*"They have about four parts on the F35 right now, and they are in prototype development for three more parts. That's about a 15% add to our overall business," West said.*

*Due to their reduced weight, some of the parts on the F35 are titanium, making Flexial the ideal manufacturer to supply them.*

*"Our ability to weld titanium is one of our advantages in the market," said Maxwell. "There are only a couple of people in all of the United States that's able to do that, so we're real proud of that too."*

*Flexial was founded in Cookeville in 1993 and was acquired in 2018 by [Hyspan Precision Products, Inc.](#), a California based 100% employee-owned company. Flexial employees are now employee-owners.*

*"We are machinists, welders, assemblers, engineers and business people locally, who work hard to provide our customers with a quality product on time with great service, all the while growing our own company," according to a company press release.*

*The increased business and new services are going to result in a sizable increase to Flexial's staff.*

*"Over the next two to three year period, I could see 20-25 adds," said West. "We have 85 right now, so that's a little over 30% increase."*

*According to West, they are going to be looking for all positions, including precision machining, micro-welding, assembly, engineering and a few business positions, hiring "pretty much all through the disciplines."*

*Flexial will be accepting applications immediately for eight to 10 positions in precision machining, micro-welding and assembly. Some of these positions require no prior expertise with Flexial providing the training. Additional openings are anticipated throughout the next year. Information about job openings is available on their website, [www.flexial.com](http://www.flexial.com).*

*"We're all locals. We want to be here, and we want to stay here," said Maxwell.*

*West agreed, adding, "We're looking forward to a lot of growth, new people and opportunity."*

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