

COMPANY PROFILE

DORSEY METROLOGY | BY TAYLOR DOWD



THE DORSEY WAY

A Legacy of Excellence in Precision Measuring

Front: Andrew Totten, Quality Manager. Back: Mark Swenson, Vice President, performing calibrations and inspections.

Dorsey Metrology International (Dorsey) is a Poughkeepsie-based company specializing in custom designed measuring tools. A third-generation family-owned business, Dorsey is operated by Devon Luty-Sweson, President, and her husband, Mark Swenson, Vice President. Since Dorsey's founding in 1955, the company has set itself apart with superior quality, USA-based manufacturing, and a talented team of employees.

“To really understand the ins and outs of my father's work is special,” Luty says. “To this day, with everything we do, we go back to whether my dad would do it.”

THE DORSEY STANDARD

Put simply, metrology is the science of measurement and weights. Dorsey primarily manufactures in-process comparative gages, which take measurements compared to a standard or master while the part is on a machine in production. The parts measured are generally round and Dorsey's products measure both ID (inside diameter) and OD (outside diameter) with high precision. Dorsey's product line includes bore gages, snap gages, dial indicators, chamfer gages, countersink gages, optical comparators, and vision systems, among others. Additionally, the company makes custom gages and offers contract manufacturing, calibration, repair, and engineering services.

Dorsey services the aerospace, medical, and industrial industries, among others. The company is a rare manufacturer whose products and parts are entirely made in America, where most of their customers are located, while a small percentage are located abroad. “Our tools are high quality and they're made here in the U.S.,” says Swenson.

DORSEY'S HISTORY

In 1955, Dorsey Gage Company was incorporated in New York State by its founder, Devon Luty's grandfather, Theodore F. Luty Sr., and her grandmother Helen Luty. The company began in Hyde Park as a machine shop specializing in simple inspection gages and subcontract machining.

As it grew, the company ventured into building and designing more custom equipment. Dorsey purchased the instrument division of the Hamilton Watch Company in 1975, and relocated to Mansion Street in the City of Poughkeepsie the following year. In 1986, Dorsey Gage acquired Pexit, an English company known for their high quality, precision optical comparators. The design and facilities of Pexit were relocated to Poughkeepsie, where it became the Optical Metrology Division of Dorsey Gage.

In 2001, the metrology division became a separate company, with Ted Luty Jr. as president. Dorsey Gage Company and the E.S.C. Division were sold. The new and current company, Dorsey Metrology International, consisted of the division's former management, employees and assets.

DORSEY'S THIRD-GENERATION

Devon Luty handles most front end operations, including sales and marketing. Luty goes by her maiden name, explaining some Dorsey customers who worked with the company under her grandfather's and father's ownership like to speak to a Luty— it is what they are comfortable with. Swenson oversees production and handles the back end of the company. For years, the couple has valued the same standards put forth by the previous two generations. Luty, however, did not always expect herself to be working in her position today.

Luty was “born and raised” in the business. With her father Ted Luty as president, she spent her childhood exposed to the machine shop, learning about parts and seeing her father's work. “When I was really little, around five-years-old, every other kid would say they wanted to be a nurse or doctor or firefighter,” she says. I said that I wanted to run Dorsey

Gage Company.” As she grew older, she changed direction. Devon is a 2005 Graduate of Salve Regina University who pursued a real estate career after graduation but several years into her career, she realized she was not pursuing a job she loved.

At the time, Luty and Swenson had only been dating for a couple of months. Luty, unsure of her next career step, expressed to Swenson her uncertainty of what to do. He suggested she go work for her father at Dorsey, and the rest is history. Swenson began working for the company a few years later. With a construction background and a knowledge of how to build things, and a double-degree in finance and accounting from SUNY New Paltz, he began to learn the ins and outs of the company from Ted Luty, who would become his father-in-law. “I never thought I would enjoy something like this but its enormous amount of problem solving and I love it,” Swenson says.

Luty started for Dorsey as a receptionist, before working in purchasing and accounting (“We found out accounting was not my forte!” she jokes) before moving to quality, then marketing. “I really found my niche inside the sales role,” Luty says. “Sales is nothing more than a personal relationship with your customer.” She became vice president before earning her position as president in 2012. Today, Luty continues to form relationships with customers and enjoys a people-focused role.

Several years before her father's passing, Luty had the opportunity to work with her father and further understand



Cathleen Newman, Lysko Assembler, assembling bore gage heads.

his business from a new perspective. “There’s something really interesting about knowing your parent as an adult versus a child. To really understand the ins and outs of my father’s work is special,” she says. “To this day, with everything we do, we go back to whether my dad would do it. He could be a pain in the butt, but he had a vision,” she jokes.

Under Devon and Mark’s direction the company has made several strides and improvements. They implemented an ERP, Enterprise Resource Planning System, enhancing their efficiency and optimizing capacity, expanded into a second building, as well as acquiring a competitor, expanding their optical products into the vision world, to name a few.

Being a family-owned company, Luty and Swenson aim to provide a family-like environment and build trust in relationships with their employees. “We take care of each other,” Luty says. “My grandfather used to say this all the time, and it’s the mentality I’ve known my whole life: You spend eight hours with your spouse, you spend eight hours sleeping, and you spend eight hours with the people you work with, who, in essence, become your family.” Today, two men in their late ‘70s still work for Dorsey, which Swenson says is like home to them. “The company wouldn’t be here if it weren’t for the employees,” he says. “I’ve grown very close to everyone here. They all have my cell phone number. If they need something, we do it, we help them.”

DORSEY TODAY

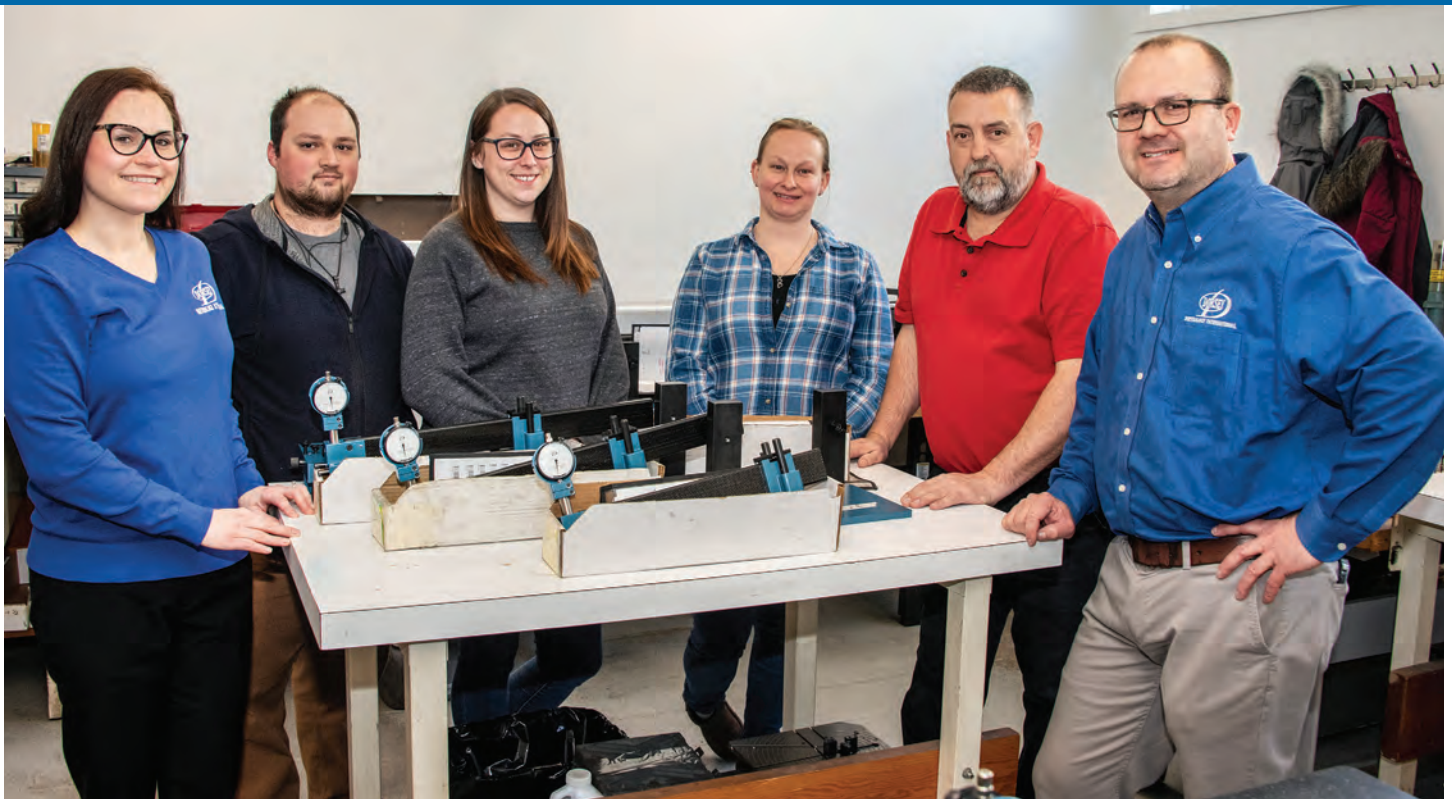
Luty acknowledges her position as a woman in manufacturing, a responsibility she carries with pride. “There were a lot of women

who had to take a backseat for me to be here,” she says. “Years ago, a manufacturing company would have been sold or closed before a woman would take over. I think people are a little confused when I walk in and they may question what I know. But when I start speaking, the tune changes.”

She accredits her predecessors for their contributions in paving the way for her opportunity. “So many women have done so much footwork for me to have the privilege of this position,” she says. Until my father was in charge, my grandmother didn’t get any recognition for the work she did. She helped start the company, she did all the office work and basically ran the company when my grandfather was on the road.” Dorsey was officially recognized by the Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC) as a Women’s Business Enterprise.

Like many other manufacturers, Dorsey has experienced some setbacks due to the pandemic. In the spring of 2020, the company continued to stay open, navigating changing schedules and accommodating employees with school-aged children. “We’re lucky that we had the flexibility to do that, and that our staff had to drive to do that,” Luty says. Dorsey had contracts to fulfill during the shutdown, but afterward underwent about three months with very few calls. Some employees were furloughed, and while most have returned, some have not. The loss of these employees has created “a hole” that Dorsey is still trying to mend, Swenson explains. “The more the pandemic pushes out, the more these problems trickle into every aspect of the business,” he says. “It makes things very, very hard.” Despite these challenges, Dorsey continues to prioritize its work family. “I like to go to sleep at

They continue to uphold the values set forth by previous generations, maintaining a legacy of excellence in precision measuring.



From left to right: Devon Luty-Swenson, President, Colin Kenny, Assembler, Cathleen Newman, Lysko Assembler, Kasia Wojda, Assembler, Joseph Couture, Production Manager, and Mark Swenson, Vice President.



From Left to Right: Kathleen Thompson, Customer Service, Devon Luty-Swenson, President, and Jennifer Broas, Office Manager.

night knowing every decision I make affects the other 39 people in this company positively instead of negatively,” Luty says.

Still, issues like inflation and industry changes have long lasting effects. Raw materials are critical to manufacturing Dorsey’s products, some of which have experienced price increases of over 300% in recent months. Some of the company’s vendors are no longer in business or cannot get their products, Luty explains, and the industry has changed so drastically that few other companies make tools that Dorsey does. “We have some customers who really depend on our products. If something were to happen to us, it would cause trouble for their company,” Swenson says. “Similarly,

if something were to happen to one of our suppliers, if a product is cut out or supply needs to be resourced, it could get very difficult. And you never know when something like that could happen.” Overall, Dorsey’s inventory and preparation ensured that the company was stocked with appropriate amounts of material and equipped to continue filling orders during the pandemic. Now, Dorsey continues to adjust to inflated costs and navigate the aftermath of the pandemic and the changes it brings to the manufacturing industry.

Looking ahead, Luty and Swenson aim to continue growing the company amidst so much unknown. “We’re going to continue to run our path slow and steady,” Luty says. “Business as usual is what we’re aiming for for the foreseeable future.” In the next few years, they look to focus on refining their product line and potentially releasing a couple new products. “With the loyalty we have in our employees, the products we turn out, and the customer service we provide, I believe we’re a value to a lot of customers,” Swenson says. For now, they will continue to uphold the values set forth by previous generations, continuing a legacy of excellence in precision measuring.

Taylor Dowd is Communications Coordinator at the Council of Industry. She is a journalism graduate of SUNY New Paltz.





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