

Opportunity Profile

Vice President of Engineering



The world's leading manufacturer of
automated egg processing equipment

Ketchum & Associates, Inc

"WHEN LOCATING AND SELECTING THE RIGHT LEADERSHIP
IS A MATTER OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE"

THE OPPORTUNITY

For more than seventy years Diamond Systems, a \$43 million dollar privately held company, has been a driving force throughout a niche of the agricultural industry. Known for the continuous introduction of technological advancements, the company's revolutionary products have positively impacted egg grading, packaging and breaking operations throughout the world.

Poised well for both product and market expansion over the next five years, the company is currently seeking an experienced Vice President of Engineering who is able to implement a structured approach to product development and management thus enabling Diamond Systems to pursue its goal of being the #1 supplier of egg processing systems in the world.

Many reasons may lead a seasoned engineering professional to explore this very special opportunity. Perhaps an individual is currently working for a larger company and desires to work in a smaller, less bureaucratic, entrepreneurial environment. Another engineering executive may be attracted by the opportunities involving international growth and product line expansion. Regardless of the specific reasons, the right candidate will be attracted to the company's leadership, its technologies and the tremendous potential for growth. This is truly an exceptional opportunity for the right technical leader.

THE COMPANY

With 70 years of experience and success, the company today ranks #2 world-wide among suppliers of egg processing systems and is gaining on the #1 position. The business is both profitable, and in most respects, stable. Company revenues are currently in the range of \$35-45 million dollars, but are subject to fluctuations due to the volatility of the U.S. egg market. Recognizing this, current management has made several key improvements to increase financial stability. First, they have transitioned manufacturing operations from being fully integrated to being assembly focused. Secondly, they have made several operational improvements, including laying the foundation of a quality system and implementing lean principles throughout the plant, e.g., cellular manufacturing and kaizen teams.

Diamond Systems currently employs approximately 120 individuals and manufactures its product lines in a 150,000 square foot plant in Farmington Hills, Michigan. Additional sales, parts and service locations are in Europe, Latin America, and Asia. The company's product lines are in three main areas:

- **Farmpackers** gather and pack unsorted eggs at the farm production units at a rate of 25,000 to 72,000 eggs per hour.
- **Grading Systems** load, wash, inspect, weigh and pack eggs into cartons and trays at a rate of 10,000 to 150,000 eggs per hour.

- **Breaker - Separators** load, wash, inspect, break and separate the egg yolks from the egg whites at a rate of 1,000 to 144,000 eggs per hour before pasteurizing, drying or freezing.

The company enjoys a leading market share for several product segments in the Americas, while in other product segments and geographic regions of the world the market share is less than 20%. Throughout all markets the company continues to maintain its reputation for “taking care of the customer” which is so critical in the fraternal industry in which it operates. As such, a prospective candidate will appreciate the dynamics of a “relationship driven” industry rather than one that is driven purely by price.

THE POSITION

Diamond Systems is currently seeking a new Vice President of Engineering who will be responsible for directing and managing all new product development and engineering activities within their Farmington Hills, Michigan headquarters.

As a member of the executive team, the VP of Engineering will work closely with the President of the company and together with the VP's of Sales & Service, Operations and Finance will develop a future vision for Diamond Systems. They will translate this vision into a strategic plan and will foster its acceptance and implementation throughout the company.

This position will work closely with the Sales Department and the company's customer base in order to fully understand the technical needs of the markets served by Diamond. They will lead the technical development of profitable customer solutions and once awarded will have ultimate oversight of all projects from concept through successful start up in the customer's plant.

The new VP will be skilled in project planning as they will assign the necessary technical resources to each new project. Through their skills in work flow planning and their professional management approach they will insure that formal processes of product development are followed and that a high degree of structure and accountability exists throughout the department.

The position is responsible for overseeing a staff of 15 individuals representing the software, electrical and mechanical engineering groups within the department. With a need for increased bench strength and lead engineering competency throughout these groups, the new VP will be charged with identifying, developing and mentoring a team of dynamic and forward thinking engineers who are organized, well planned and positioned to meet the future needs of the corporation.

The new Vice President will manage and assign all engineering resources as it relates to manufacturing support. They will improve upon existing design procedures and processes in order to insure that clean releases are provided to manufacturing.

QUALIFICATIONS

The right candidate will have a minimum of 10 years experience as an Engineering Manager, Director or Vice President depending upon the size organization they have been employed by. Ideally they will be coming from a business that is of a larger size within the custom engineered equipment marketplace where they will have served in an executive engineering capacity.

The new VP of Engineering will be working closely with the President and Vice Presidents of Sales/Service, Operations and Finance. As such, the right candidate has a track record of effective, collaborative leadership. They will be an adaptive “team player” and will be able to drive needed changes throughout the company in a manner that allows all involved to see the benefits of change.

The new Vice President will have a high degree of business process orientation as they will assist in continually driving improvements throughout the company. Exposure to or experience in quality standards and procedures will be to their benefit. The right candidate will have strong skills in design for manufacturability and will have a basic understanding of finance which will enable them to understand the costs related to developing and manufacturing new products.

The new VP will be skilled at forming relationships with customers and may have at one time in their career served in a sales or sales engineering function. He/She will have a nose for new business development and by nature may be an introvert but is bent towards being an extrovert. Given the international characteristics of Diamond’s customer base, the right candidate will be accepting of foreign cultures and will look to accommodate any special needs or technical requirements that may be relevant to a specific market.

Strong leadership skills are required in this position as the new Vice President will be developing and mentoring a professional team of engineers who will develop new products for the company. Typically the company has up to three products at one time in the development phase and as a result will require someone who has prior experience in project planning and in developing organized work flows. They will be organized and able to balance competing workloads.

An engineering degree is required in this position and the chosen candidate will preferably hold an advanced degree in business. Diamond Systems designs, manufactures and services a highly automated, engineered product that is specific to a customer’s application. As such, a candidate who is innovative and has prior experience with high speed automation will be able to maximize their contribution to Diamond Systems.

THE LOCATION

It is quite probable that the right candidate has enjoyed living in a locale similar to Southeastern Michigan, an area with “Midwestern” values and metropolitan accessibility. Perhaps the candidate grew up in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, or Ohio and would like to return to their roots. Regardless, they will value the quality of life in the Midwest and see it as a great place to live.

Located in Southeast Michigan, Farmington Hills is situated within minutes of the Detroit River, Lake Huron and Lake Erie. Water recreation for eight months of the year abounds. Boaters enjoy the beauty and vastness of these beautiful Great Lakes, while the sports person may take advantage of plentiful fishing in these waters all year long.

Known as “The Fraternal Twins”, Farmington and Farmington Hills offer an atmosphere that fosters business growth and progress as well as an exceptional standard of living for its 95,000 residents. The Cities make up a total of 36 square miles, consisting of a unique balance of historical charm and a sense of high-energy business growth and progress. With an average home price of \$192,000, this community offers living accommodations 20% less than the national average. Situated in the heart of Southeastern Michigan, the Farmington/Farmington Hills region offers accessibility to major thoroughfares. Located at the crossroads of Interstates 696 and 275, the corporate and residential communities find access in and around Southeast Michigan to be easy.

For the individual with a love for the arts, Southeastern Michigan has much to offer. The City of Farmington is home to the historic Farmington Civic Theater, fully restored to preserve its 1940's flair and décor. Surrounding areas offer music and theatre at such well known places as the Fox Theatre, Detroit Symphony Orchestra, and Detroit Institute of Art, just to name a few. Southeastern Michigan, rich in history and culture, is also home to many museums and cultural exhibits.

For the sports enthusiast, the Detroit area has much to offer. Detroit is well known for its NHL Stanley Cup team, the Detroit Red Wings and the NBA Champion Pistons. Detroit is also home to a MLB team the Detroit Tigers and an NFL team the Detroit Lions. Additionally, the area was host to the 2005 MLB All Star Game, the 2006 NFL Superbowl, and will host the 2008 NCAA Midwest Regional Finals and the 2009 NCAA Final Four.

With over 125 golf courses, Southeast Michigan has been ranked #8 in the country in courses with real estate according to the National Golf Foundation. Golf Digest has rated Michigan as the 12th best golf destination in the world! The area is also home to the Buick Open (Warwick Hills Golf Resort), 2004 Ryder Cup (Oakland Hills Country Club) and Ford Senior Players Championships (TPC, Dearborn).

Residents of Southeast Michigan place a great emphasis on quality education for youth and adult students alike. In addition to a number of highly acclaimed private institutions, Southeast Michigan is home to two Big Ten schools: University of Michigan and Michigan State University, as well as other top rated universities: Oakland University, Wayne State University, and the University of Detroit.



Our client is an equal opportunity employer and does not discriminate on the basis of race, age, color, religion, sex, ethnic or national origin, or physical handicap.

If you know someone who meets most or all of the requirements described in this brochure, please feel free to suggest that person for consideration. If possible, it would be helpful if that person were agreeable to your nominating them.

We fully respect the need for confidentiality of information supplied by interested parties and assure them that their backgrounds and interests will not be discussed with anyone, including our clients, without their prior consent. Additionally, reference contacts will not be made until mutual interest has been established.



Ketchum & Associates is an international management consulting firm specializing in retained executive search & selection. We are a generalist firm and focus our efforts on senior level leadership positions throughout industry.

Our mission is to perform the most professional, highly ethical search work, which results in the creation of long-term value for our clients.

*Gladstone, MI * Fort Myers, FL * Akland, Norway*

For further information on, or consideration for this position, please contact:

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Ketchum & Associates, Inc

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