

### DISTINCTION



IAS

#### IAS INC.

New Berlin

**INDUSTRY:** Automation system integrator

The coronavirus pandemic has created plenty of challenges, including sharp increases in demand for a variety of essential products.

For the makers of things like sanitary wipes, packaged good foods and single-use testing kits, it can be hard to meet the increased demand for products. After all, no one had a global pandemic built into their sales forecasts for 2020.

That's where New Berlin-based automation system integrator IAS Inc. enters the picture. The company has designed and implemented automation systems that allow its manufacturing clients to operate

safely, add production capacity and get products to consumers who need them.

Those clients include a sanitary wipe maker using robotics to increase production volumes, food and beverage companies that need new assembly lines to meet online order volumes and the makers of swab test kits that need robotics to meet the demand created by COVID-19.

IAS says manufacturers big and small are also looking for ways to keep personnel separated or to bring employees into the production areas at different times throughout the day to maintain social distancing. The company has also addressed the challenge of not having some of its personnel available by creating remote access to its systems to allow a quick response that keeps manufacturers moving.

IAS has done this work to support the supply chain while also adding 15,000 square feet to its headquarters and adding six new employees during the pandemic.

All of those efforts earned the company a recognition with distinction in the Established New Links in the Chain category of the MMAC Focus on the Future awards. ■

### DISTINCTION



The PartsBadger team

#### PARTSBADGER

Cedarburg

**INDUSTRY:** Manufacturing

PartsBadger, which makes CNC-manufactured parts for just about every industry, saw the potential for a major manufacturing shutdown in China before it happened. Company leaders sought to address this in two ways: securing manufacturing capacity in other areas, such as Malaysia and Singapore, and investing more in domestic production.

Roy Dietsch, chief executive officer of PartsBadger, said the company decided to act once China extended its New Year shutdown in January. The next day they created a "control center" to lay plans, and shortly after sent employees overseas to establish

new links for their international capacity and maintain volumes during the shutdown.

"I think we had the meeting on a Thursday, and then they were there (in Malaysia) on Monday," Dietsch said.

PartsBadger additionally invested about \$750,000 through the purchase of four new CNC machines to beef up domestic output. Dietsch said PartsBadger now does 25% of its manufacturing in house, compared to 5% last year.

Dietsch said these actions were part of a multi-pronged plan that allowed the company to have a number of alternatives to fall back on if needed.

"At the same time we were building up Malaysia, getting production there, we knew we needed to build up the domestic (production) because if Malaysia started dropping off, we would be ready to go domestically," he said.

The COVID-19 pandemic provided the impetus for PartsBadger to grow capacity at home. Dietsch said the company once outsourced all its manufacturing, and just two years ago opened its shop.

"You kind of need to get over this hump to get processes and systems in place to be more efficient, and COVID allowed us to do that," he said. "Combined with the investment, now we're running multiple shifts; it's way more efficient." ■

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business problems through custom software solutions. Across industries, we create and support software, middleware, API's, integration, and have award-winning web design.

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better ways to do things, saving businesses time and money by reducing workloads and helping them achieve a return on their investment.

"Thank you" to the MMAC in recognizing our efforts in streamlining meat processing by creating our startup, Field to Freezer®. This story has a very "Wisconsin" beginning – a drive back from a hunting trip.

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## Established NEW LINKS in the CHAIN

These honorees have retooled their supply chain or made new links in another supply chain to meet new market demands.

Duet Resource Group

Exciting Events

Gross Automation LLC

Hunger Task Force

IAS Inc.

Lanex LLC

MicroSynergies

PartsBadger



GLANCE AT YESTERYEAR



La Joy Restaurant on Lisbon Avenue

This undated photo shows La Joy Restaurant at 4720 W. Lisbon Ave. in Milwaukee. The restaurant was established by Joe Wong in 1945, according to a 2019 OnMilwaukee feature. Wong's grandsons would go on to start the Wong's Wok restaurants. Today, the site of La Joy is home to a Town Bank branch.

— Photo courtesy of Historic Photo Collection/Milwaukee Public Library

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COMMENTARY

Analyzing the Milwaukee Public Museum's future site

ON A FEW OCCASIONS in this space I have said that the ideal location for a new Milwaukee Public Museum would be in the Deer District, which last year became the hottest spot in downtown Milwaukee.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic sent everyone home, the Deer District had become downtown's newest and most popular entertainment destination and a development hotbed. Putting MPM there would provide museum goers with additional dining and entertainment options and it would help attract more people into the vibrant district during the daytime hours.

Museum officials recently announced that, after considering numerous sites, they have decided to build the future Milwaukee Public Museum northeast of North 6th Street and West McKinley Avenue. That site is adjacent to, but not actually located within, the Deer District. It's

close to what I had in mind, but not quite.

I thought the ideal location for the new Milwaukee Public Museum would be within the block formerly occupied by the Bradley Center, just south of Fiserv Forum. That would have put the museum right next to the plaza and restaurants just east of the arena.

The 6th and McKinley site is a little further away — about two to three blocks — from the plaza and the restaurants at the heart of the Deer District.

The owners of the Milwaukee Bucks, who are developing the Deer District, have big plans for the land between the arena and the future museum site. Development of that area would make the museum site more attractive. The Bucks recently announced plans for a 230-room Marriott International Autograph Collection hotel north of Fiserv Forum, which would be about a block or two from the future museum site.

McKinley Avenue leads directly to I-43, so the future museum site should be extremely easy to get to for people driving into downtown. The only downside is the museum might be so easy to get to and from that visitors will be less inclined to hang out downtown after leaving the museum.

The future museum site is directly north

of a massive parking structure connected to Fiserv Forum. Hopefully the museum can take advantage of that facility. Most museum visits occur during the day and most arena events are at night. It would be wasteful for the museum to have to build its own large parking facility when there is such a big parking garage across the street.

MPM recently announced that its future facility will also be the future home of the Betty Brinn Children's Museum. That's a great collaboration that should benefit both institutions.

The biggest challenge for building a new Milwaukee Public Museum will be figuring out how to create a modern facility to attract visitors young and old in this day and age, while somehow maintaining at least some of the charm of one of Milwaukee's most cherished cultural institutions. The architect hired for this project will have a tall task. ■



AROUND TOWN



Focus on the Future Cocktail Reception

The Metropolitan Milwaukee Association of Commerce recently hosted its Focus on the Future Cocktail Reception in Heidelberg Park at the Bavarian Bierhaus in Glendale.

1. JEFFRY VEENHUIS of Surfaced Manufacturing and GUNNER LYSLO of Surfaced, LLC.
2. D.J. PAETH, TAYLOR DEBS, BLAKE MARKEE, all of Sitzberger & Company, and STEVE BOBOWSKI and RENEE MARTIN, both of Dale Carnegie Training.
3. TINA JONES and ANNE KRUG, both of Girls on the Run of Southeastern Wisconsin, and DARREN FISHER of Spearity.
4. DANA JENKINS and SANDRA MCCARTHY, both of Lueder Financial Group.
5. DOUG ARNOLD, LAUREN WINTER and MATT WHITE, all of Blue Cross and Blue Shield.
6. DENISE SALAMONE of MMAC, MAGGIE PINT of BizTimes Milwaukee, and BARB SMITH of MMAC.
7. TIFFANY TYNER-SOHN, KYLE KORNFELD and DANIEL GANADO, all of PartsBadger.
8. GINGER BRATH, KATE BREWER, MICHELLE STREGE and JOHN WOLSKE, all of Rehab Resources.
9. HOWARD LISTER, BOB HARTLINE, ANGIE HARTLINE and BROOKE STEINBRENNER, all of Xymox Technologies, Inc.
10. TERI ZWYCKI and DENNISE LAVRENZ, both of MCFI.

Photos by Lauren Anderson