



Partnering with



## Customized Testing Press Creates a Superior R&D Solution

IDI Composites International works with Wabash MPI to develop a custom testing press with tighter tolerances to help clients enter into new markets



### CUSTOMER

IDI Composites International is the premier global custom formulator and manufacturer of thermoset molding compounds and composites for OEMs, Tier 1s and molders.

### CHALLENGE

The company's previous test press was dated, would not stay level when molding flat panels, and resulted in an unacceptable level of tolerance.

### SOLUTION

Wabash worked with IDI to develop a custom testing press with tighter tolerances and live readings on molding conditions.

### RESULTS

The new press enabled IDI to help its customers break into new markets with innovative materials and designs.

*IDI Composites values its ability to innovate on behalf of its customers. With a new press from Wabash, IDI is now able to better prepare mechanical prototypes for testing high-performance materials.*

There's another side to the old adage, "If it ain't broke, don't fix it." For IDI Composites International (IDI), that flipside was: If it's not allowing you to innovate, it's time for a change.

IDI had been using an older press to prepare mechanical samples for material testing. This press wouldn't stay level when molding flat panels, resulting in unacceptably high tolerance levels. The old press was an essential part of the R&D process for IDI but was not fulfilling that role successfully.

To solve those challenges, Wabash developed a new hydraulic press for IDI that:

- Provides accurate, real-time data during the molding process
- Maintains consistent temperature and tonnage during the molding process
- Allows for tight tolerances when molding flat panels
- Enables IDI to use the press for other tooling and prototype projects

## WORKING TOGETHER FOR A UNIQUE SOLUTION

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IDI manufactures composite materials for some of the most demanding industries, including electric vehicles (EV), marine, medical, infrastructure and more. These clients need materials that can push the envelope of what's possible with composites. IDI stood ready to fulfill that call and saw that a new press would accelerate growth.

This press was an essential part of the company's R&D process as it was used to create the mechanical samples that would be used for materials testing. "This is most important since we qualify and characterize our thermoset products through mechanical testing," said Darrell Jern, Senior Project Development Specialist, IDI Composites International.

*"We felt like Wabash was the only manufacturer that cared about our needs and not just a sale. We needed help moving forward quickly and needed to rely on Wabash's expertise to make this happen. Wabash took the wheel and did all the hard work."*

*- Rob Holcombe, Senior Product Engineer, IDI Composites International*

*"Our company takes pride in our technical advantages over our competitors. We can brag about our Wabash equipment and team, as well as recommend Wabash equipment to our customers for their production floor. We are the proud leaders in our industry and this helps us set the bar even higher."*

*- Darrell Jern, Senior Project Development Specialist, IDI Composites International*



IDI approached three other press manufacturers as a part of its buying journey, but none of them were able to lend a guiding force toward creating a new press for a unique testing and R&D application. "We felt like Wabash was the only manufacturer that cared about our needs and not just a sale. We needed help moving forward quickly and needed to rely on Wabash's expertise to make this happen. Wabash took the wheel and did all the hard work," said Rob Holcombe, Senior Product Engineer, IDI Composites International.



## SOLVING KEY PROBLEMS TO PUSH BOUNDARIES IN MATERIALS MANUFACTURING

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Working hand-in-hand with IDI stakeholders, Wabash engineered a press that addressed the composite manufacturer's specific needs. "Wabash engineering manager Ron Gilman was able to come in and tell us exactly what the issues were with our existing press! He provided over-the-top service and ideas for us to discuss internally," Holcombe said. The new, state-of-the-art press provided real-time readouts for temperature and tonnage, a feature which pays dividends further down the line in the materials-testing process by enabling operators to address inconsistencies quickly. The new press also provided the tight tolerances IDI needed when molding flat panels. Most importantly, the new press gives IDI the versatility it needs to customize the molding process. The company can also assist its customers with tooling and prototype projects.

*"Other companies we hosted did not seem like they could or would support us with customer service in the future because of our relative location to them. Wabash actually cared about helping us and in doing so made us look good, too."*

*- Darrell Jern, Senior Project Development Specialist, IDI Composites International*

Once the press was built, Wabash senior electrical engineer Kyle Schuler came on site to help IDI commission the new machine and fine-tune programs to meet specific needs. "Other companies we hosted did not seem like they could support us with customer service in the future because of our relative location to them. Wabash made us look good. They cared about helping us and in doing so made us look good, too," Jern said.

## HELPING CLIENTS ENTER INTO NEW MARKETS

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The true value of the press that Wabash helped develop for IDI is how it helps the composites manufacturer innovate on behalf of clients — helping them enter into new markets. Innovative materials with tight tolerances are paramount to that innovation.

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## NEED A PRESS SOLUTION TO ENABLE INNOVATION?

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Wabash MPI / Carver is the leading manufacturer of presses for composites applications. Offering standard and custom hydraulic and pneumatic presses for compression molding, vacuum molding, ASTM testing, laboratory and R&D applications. Transfer presses offer precise molding of electrical components, medical products, and other applications.

To discuss your press application, please contact us by email at: [WabashMPI@acscorporate.com](mailto:WabashMPI@acscorporate.com)