

# Leadership in a Pandemic: How Anchor Harvey Ensured Safety, Community, & Record Sales Throughout COVID-19

By Tom Lefavre

At the beginning of the pandemic, the coronavirus's speed and scope posed extraordinary challenges for manufacturers across the country and around the world. The pandemic's rapid onset exacerbated issues with the manufacturing industry's heavy reliance on global supply chains and foreign producers. Confronting production issues, growing uncertainty, and the challenge of ensuring employee and workplace safety, companies were facing a choice: risk falling behind or step up and lead.

## Initial Response

I'm proud to say that Anchor Harvey was among the companies that stepped up. A 100-year-old precision forging company, Anchor Harvey benefits from a long history of experience. As the coronavirus spread and states throughout the country increasingly enacted lockdowns and issued stay-at-home orders, we recognized the need to pivot and lend assistance where we could, as fast as possible.

In the months leading up to the initial outbreak of COVID-19, Anchor Harvey had received our AS9100 certification. The timing was fortuitous as part of the certification proceedings involved taking a fresh look at our process-risk mitigation system and enhancing the ways we evaluated future uncertainties. Anchor Harvey has always been comfortable and adept at being able to make real-time adjustments to account for a different situation or emerging conditions — from entering a new market, expanding our facility, or redesigning the forging process into a one-piece flow. That comfort, and the thorough documentation required for our AS9100 certification, enabled us to obtain a mile-high yet incredibly detailed view of our process and redundant capabilities. When the pandemic hit, we knew exactly what parts of our business could be shifted or scaled and the timing we would need to do so safely and effectively.

With over 30-years of experience forging products for the medical industry and a corporate tradition of helping those in need, Anchor Harvey moved quickly to offer America's medical manufacturers assistance. Having been recognized as an essential business and with a 100% domestic supply chain, Anchor Harvey offered and provided rapid assistance to medical companies and other critical businesses that were experiencing upheaval in their supply chains. In a time when medical instruments such as ventilators were already in precariously short supply, Anchor Harvey expanded operations to offer assistance and help meet the increasing demand for emergency medical supplies. We even had employees begin proposing ways to modify regulator valves that we've made for fire suppression for

use in ventilators and respirators. We wanted to offer assistance to America's first responders and medical industry, and we knew we could expand our operations to 7 days a week — which is how we are currently operating.

## Safety and Community

Expanding operations to meet the needs of the medical industry came with the need to ensure that we were able to do so safely. The first thing we did once the pandemic hit was to put all of the federal and state health guidelines in place. Following that, all non-essential travel was canceled, including our attendance at trade shows, industry meetings, and we moved all of our sales calls to virtual formats. Social distancing measures were implemented along with increased cleaning and sanitation procedures throughout our facility. We provided all of our employees with face masks and sanitizer stations for use while at work and distributed care packages containing additional face masks and bottles of hand sanitizer to everyone for use outside of work to help them stay safe. At Anchor Harvey, we have long understood that our company's health is more than just financial figures; it's also about our team and our community's safety and well-being.

The leaders in Freeport have always supported Anchor Harvey, and we wanted to make certain that we were there to help them by helping the community remain strong throughout the pandemic. We ordered weekly meals from local restaurants, which were a great way of strengthening and giving back to our community and providing lunch for our team. Supporting the small businesses in our community meant supporting Anchor Harvey employees' families as it's those companies that so commonly employ the husbands, wives, and children of our team members.

## Restoring Supply Chains

As the pandemic wore on, COVID-19 began testing the manufacturing supply chains' limits like no other crisis in recent history. For many companies, the operational and financial consequences had started to grow increasingly severe as global markets convulsed wildly in the face of the pandemic and subsequent regional and national lockdowns. International supply chains experienced demand drops, supply shortages, inventory difficulties, productivity shortfalls, and suddenly posed unprecedented health and safety concerns. With such a multitude of complications occurring rapidly and simultaneously, many manufacturers found

themselves uncertain of how to move forward.

While pricing, availability, and the demand for materials and labor fluctuated wildly across the global market, Anchor Harvey seized the opportunity to promote our local manufacturing and 100% domestic material sourcing to provide struggling manufacturers with a path forward. Highlighting cost parity, higher quality, faster shipping, and continued stability, Anchor Harvey quickly became inundated with orders from manufacturers all across the country.

### Results

Anchor Harvey has thrived throughout the pandemic by understanding the importance of, and continuously reinvesting in, the health of our employees, the strength of our community, and the resilience of our processes. As a result, 2020 saw Anchor Harvey receive the highest number of quote requests in our company's century-long history. We are setting record sales numbers as we help companies around the country and across industries restore their supply chains and improve the quality of the components in their final products. At several points over the past year, we have expanded operations to accommodate the needs of a growing number of companies across a variety of industries. Currently, we continue to run around-the-clock shifts, seven days a week, to ensure that supply keeps up with demand.

We are proud of the leadership role we have taken throughout this pandemic and of all the talented and dedicated people working at Anchor Harvey who made it possible. Together, Anchor Harvey will continue to work in cooperation with our community and in partnership with businesses across the country to ensure we are all able to emerge on the other side of this pandemic stronger than ever. ■



*Tom Lefaiure  
President & CEO  
Anchor Harvey  
Phone: 815-235-3820  
Email: [tlefaiure@anchorharvey.com](mailto:tlefaiure@anchorharvey.com)*

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