



MATERIAL HANDLING CASE STUDY

BHS, Inc. Custom Manufacturing Wins Automotive OEM Bids for Alta Material Handling

The global automotive OEM industry was worth [\\$1.5 trillion](#) in 2020. It's a strong vertical for suppliers of material handling equipment — assuming you can get your foot in the door. Given the strength of embedded competition, that's not an easy task. If you only offer off-the-shelf products, it's often impossible.

“The automotive industry relies on a lot of custom manufactured equipment. The solution has to be very specific to the need,” said Justin Zoss, sales manager at Alta Material Handling.

A long hunt for the right manufacturing partner led the Alta team to BHS, Inc., whose custom manufacturing capabilities helped to unlock this valuable market. Here's how Alta's partnership with BHS led to a first contract with a large, tier 1 automotive OEM — and many more to follow.

PLACING THE WINNING BID FOR CUSTOM TRAILER CARTS

The story starts like so many material handling deals: with a request for quotes (RFQ).

A leading manufacturer of vehicle seating products needed a fleet of trailer carts to improve throughput at a major manufacturing facility. Given the nonstandard shapes of the OEM's products, no standard cart would do. The company's in-house engineering team outlined unique cart requirements — including integrated canvas bags — and added these details to an intricate RFQ.

The company distributed the RFQ across its supplier base, which included Alta Material Handling. Before the Alta sales team could issue a bid, however, it needed to find the right manufacturing partner. That task that had led to losses in the past.

“ I went through years of losing projects with various other manufacturers, because you need a good balance of quality and price,” Zoss said. “It’s been a heck of a journey.”

This time, that journey led to BHS, Inc., a leading manufacturer of custom material handling solutions based in St. Louis, Missouri.

Partnering with BHS



PROJECT MANAGEMENT

BHS works closely with dealers and end users to evaluate each project, gather details, and present designs for approval.



STATE OF THE ART TECHNOLOGY

BHS's advanced manufacturing practices deliver the quality and lead times the industry demands, but before your equipment ships, it undergoes our quality assurance inspection.



BEST-IN-CLASS SUPPORT

BHS offers ongoing technical support throughout the process and after the sale. Call the 24/7 Hotline for aftermarket support around the clock.

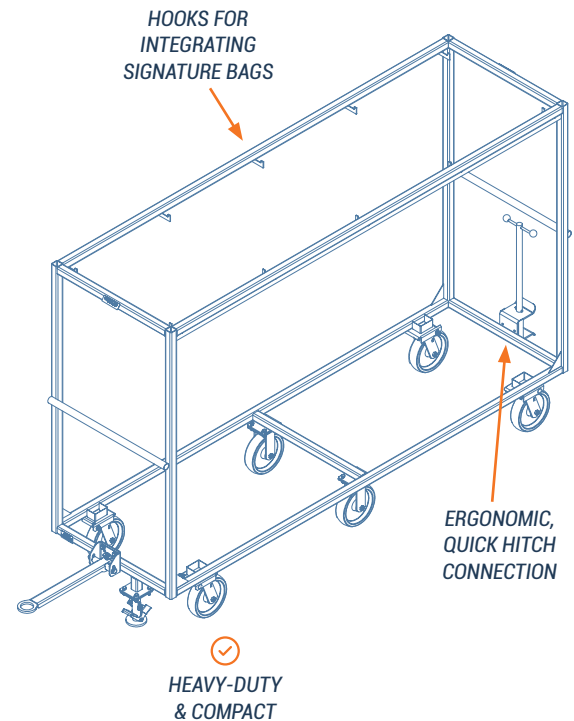
THE SOLUTION

CUSTOM MANUFACTURING FROM BHS

The RFQ called for an all-original steel cart, complete with bag housings and other custom features. But it didn't provide a complete design. That meant only a manufacturer with strong engineering capabilities would be able to win Alta the job.

Zoss approached BHS, Inc., and the collaboration began. The BHS team provided designs and quotes that helped Alta secure the bid. Meanwhile, Zoss brought in a third partner to supply the cart's signature bags. The trilateral partnership led to the successful design, manufacture, and delivery of unique material handling carts, built to spec. Overall, the project left the customer eager to place another order.

"Being able to take BHS and our other partner and pair them up not only hit the quality threshold, but hit the price point that really put us on the map with this customer," Zoss said. "It was a very big win."



Each one designed for a unique task, the steel carts were designed to be towable, integrating seamlessly into the customer's production line.

THE RESULTS

ONGOING WORK FOR A TIER 1 AUTOMOTIVE OEM

This project led to several subsequent collaborations, all supplying custom equipment for the automotive OEM.

“After the first cart project, the customer came back with additional RFQs for more mainstream carts — parts carts and double-deckers,” Zoss said.

One newer project demanded particular engineering expertise. This cart required precise placement of anchor holes, drilled to meet exacting specifications. The customer was reluctant to place the order without proof Alta and BHS could meet its standards.

“The BHS engineers were able to mock that cart up, throw it in CAD, and give a 3D representation to the customer,” Zoss said. “We were able to talk through any concerns and make adjustments quickly. It was phenomenal.”

While BHS’ engineering and manufacturing capabilities were integral to this string of projects, Zoss also attributed the success to the BHS team’s customer service skills.

“My interactions with BHS have been personable, timely, high-quality, and cost-conscious,” Zoss said. “When you can align those four things, it makes it very easy to start winning deals. It took me three or four years to find a good match for custom manufacturing, but we’ve found one in BHS.”

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DOES YOUR NEXT MATERIAL HANDLING DEAL DEPEND ON HIGH-QUALITY, FAIRLY PRICED CUSTOM MANUFACTURING?

Contact sales@bhs1.com or call 1.800.247.9500 to discuss your opportunity.

