# Nashville Fab - Bringing the Heat in Structural Steel

## Executive Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Customer Name:</strong></th>
<th>Nashville Fabrication &amp; Engineering</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Industry:</strong></td>
<td>Structural Steel Fabrication</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Location:</strong></td>
<td>Nashville, Tennessee, USA</td>
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<td><strong>Challenge:</strong></td>
<td>Move away from manual processing and find a CNC machine with versatile operations and a small footprint.</td>
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<td><strong>Solution:</strong></td>
<td>Ring of Fire 360 degree thermal processor</td>
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<td><strong>Results:</strong></td>
<td>Increased production 4-5 times from previous manual methods with the Ring of Fire investment.</td>
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Nashville, Tennessee, USA, also widely recognized as the ‘Music City’, is home to legendary country music venues and historic architecture attracting tourists worldwide. The thriving city was named one of America’s fastest-growing cities in 2015 by Forbes magazine with approximately 1.8 million residents to-date.

Aside from the flourishing population, Nashville’s structural development has spiked in recent years. The city skyline boasts infamous structures such as the AT&T building (renowned as the “Batman Building”), the Pinnacle skyscraper and a more recent project, the Music City Center. Professional sports team venues and renowned universities round out the eclectic atmosphere in this colorful city.

A 10-minute drive outside of downtown will bring you to Nashville Fabrication & Engineering. Here you will find a sight that isn’t fairly common within the steel industry: a husband and wife partnership. Together, Andy Hobbs and wife, Jen, have recently teamed up to launch Nashville Fab into the structural steel spotlight.

## Nashville Roots

Nashville Fab originated in 2007 with Andy and a former business partner operating out of Andy’s grandfather’s business. A quick decision moved Nashville Fab from the restricted 400 square foot space (40
square meters) into its current 35,000 square foot (3,200 square meters) facility. Utilizing every square inch of the new home, Nashville Fab has evolved serving the structural steel, industrial and commercial industries as well as various municipalities across the United States.

Further changes came about in 2015 when Andy’s business partner walked away from Nashville Fab leaving Andy to decide the future fate of the business; without question, he looked to his wife. This time he wasn’t looking for advice or support, but offering her the business opportunity. Familiar with the company, Jen willingly stepped up from the sidelines to co-owner in June 2015. According to Andy, the transition has been ‘seamless’ ever since.

‘Stone Age’ Operations
Teaming up has had its benefits for the husband and wife duo. Jen focuses her attention on driving the administrative and financial components of the business, while Andy focuses solely on sales and being the face of Nashville Fab. Together with 52 employees, Nashville Fab is a one-stop shop specializing in miscellaneous work. But completing timely projects for the Music City Center, Nashville Sounds baseball stadium, Michelin tire plant facilities, airport expansions, large oil pipeline facilities and the Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) St. David’s Medical Center has not always been an easy feat. “(Before Peddinghaus) we were in the stone age is what I like to tell people,” Andy joked. “We hand-drilled and hand-operated everything.”

“The operation was slow,” Nashville Fab CAD/CAM Director, Corey Williams, explained. “We laid out, cut and drilled holes all by hand. We coped beams with a hand torch. It was literally the slowest method we could use but we had to do, what we had to do. We still produced good parts; it just took a lot more man hours and time to get it done.”

FABTECH for the Win
Andy ventured to FABTECH Chicago in 2013 in search of a solution to move Nashville Fab processing into the future. “I wanted to find a single machine that would take up the least amount of floor space in the shop and could drill or burn holes, process holes, process the ends of the channels, and/or layout the channel for stair treads, clips and miscellaneous parts,” Andy explained.

After searching McCormick Place for the latest in CNC technology, Andy stumbled upon Peddinghaus and the Ring of Fire 360° thermal processing system. One could say it was a different kind of love at first sight. Andy was intrigued by the machine’s mechanical design and
instantly knew he had to have it. “He came home from FABTECH and would not stop talking about the Ring of Fire,” Jen explained. “That was my first introduction to Peddinghaus, and we’ve had a great relationship with our sales rep (Kevin Woods) and the company ever since.”

**The Ring of Fire Circles Around the Competition**

Following the Ring of Fire installation at Nashville Fab, Andy, Jen and their team were most impressed by the difference the ‘all-in-one’ thermal processor made in production. “Our investment has been a huge increase in production,” Andy stated. “I would say 4-5 times from our previous manual methods, which gives us more capacity to get jobs through the shop faster.”

With the machine acting as a coper, angle line, drill line, band saw and providing CNC layout marking, the Ring of Fire has helped Nashville Fab complete complex projects throughout the southern and southeastern markets. From steel lintels for the University of Kentucky to a million pounds (450,000 kilograms) of angle clips for a local barge company, the Ring of Fire completed work where other firms fell short. “One of the most unique projects we’ve run on the Ring of Fire were beams for trailers that haul oil drill pipe up to an oil drill platform,” Andy explained. “It had 105-110 holes down through it, 12” (300 mm) holes down to a 5/8” (16mm) holes were taking another company 8-10 hours to process. We could process one in just 30 minutes from start to finish.”

**Pushing Forward with Peddinghaus**

With business growing and backlogs in the books, Andy, Jen and the Nashville Fab team are firing out production with their new CNC machinery. “This past year we’ve had the best growth of any year,” Andy said. “We attribute most, if not all, of that to the new automation we put in, which has all been Peddinghaus ironically enough.”

“Our Peddinghaus equipment has definitely helped us become a stronger player in the industry now,” Jen confirmed. “It has allowed us to really expand our business. We’ve been able to increase our capacity without increasing our overhead with the Peddinghaus equipment.”
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