

# AIAM MEMBER HIGHLIGHT



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*REL, Inc. | Calumet, Michigan*  
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[www.relinc.com](http://www.relinc.com)

REL Inc. of Calumet, Michigan was founded in 1993 as a job shop machining business that serviced local customers. A 1200 ft<sup>2</sup> shop space, a vertical knee mill, an engine lathe, and a dream to become an equipment OEM was the original propulsion to the company REL is today. REL now has 48 employees, a 40,000 ft<sup>2</sup> World Class Manufacturing facility, and 3 lines of equipment solutions to provide solutions to a global customer base.

REL has extensive background in manufacturing, mechanical design, and advanced materials that allow for cutting edge, deployable technology solutions to Aerospace, Automotive, Oil, and Material Testing industries. REL deploys highly engineered automated material handling solutions, Non-Destructive Evaluation solutions, and Chemical Etching/Cleaning solutions.

REL also sells high strain rate material platforms to discover properties of materials that keep vehicle occupants safe. High Strain Rate Material properties are necessary to design for safety in vehicular crashes in transportation applications or understanding ballistic properties of materials that are important to the safety of our Warfighters in theatre. Viewing high strain rate events in real time involves ultra-high intensity lighting solutions that have become an emerging product line at REL. These efficient, LED lamps are available in visible white light and UV-A wavelengths.

## TOTAL NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

48

Every employee is engaged in aerospace activity

## ECONOMIC IMPACT OF REL, INC. IN MICHIGAN

"REL, Inc. has benefited greatly being situated in Michigan with the quality of the employee we have been able to attract. Our business, like a lot of others, is technical in nature which requires various engineering disciplines, business acumen, and technical skills. Our ties to the local universities in Upper Michigan including, Michigan Tech University, Northern Michigan University, Finlandia University, and the Local ISD CTE programs have allowed REL to gain access to the best people that continually ensure REL success.

It is no secret that Upper Michigan is ‘off the beaten path’. This doesn’t help logistics, especially shipping, but the attitude and work ethic of people that work here allow for the company to overcome some of the geographical, and yes, weather challenges, we face. It’s always great to tell people we are from Michigan. They tell us they have been to Detroit. (The joke we receive based on Yooper accent: ‘Is Calumet in Canada eh?’) We ensure them it’s a short dog sled ride from there to where we are!"



## ***PRESENCE IN MICHIGAN AND OTHER STATES/COUNTRIES***

"REL, Inc. World Headquarters is in Calumet, Michigan. REL also has an office location in Minnesota. REL has a strong distribution network for our Packaged products with 23 North American distributors, and 3 distributors overseas. REL sells testing equipment worldwide and has now placed equipment on continents excluding Antarctica. Current and past customers include almost every branch of the US Department of Defense along with a vast number of US based and International Universities and Technical Institutes of higher education and research. REL, Inc. also has a strong presence within the Aerospace community in Michigan and across North America."

## ***AS AN AIAM MEMBER, WHAT DO YOU SEE AS SOME OF THE BIGGEST CHALLENGES FACING MICHIGAN AND THE AEROSPACE INDUSTRY?***

"The biggest challenge of the next 2-3 years is business survival for exclusively aerospace companies due to the 2020 downturn. Diverse product offerings are instrumental to survival in this environment. REL is fortunate to have product offerings to service other business sectors including automotive which has a strong Michigan presence."

## ***WHAT HAS BEEN, IN YOUR OPINION, YOUR COMPANY'S GREATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT?***

"REL's greatest accomplishment has been its ability to reach such a large diverse customer base from the Upper Peninsula of Michigan. This enables REL to offer job opportunities to individuals which they can grow into manufacturing careers."

## ***WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS AND VISION FOR YOUR COMPANY OVER THE NEXT 5 AND 10 YEARS?***

"REL will at least double in size over the next 5 years. We are establishing new channels to market our current products through our expanding distribution network, and increased market presence. The REL brand is becoming a name synonymous with quality for all business sectors we service. REL products survive the toughest and most severe work environment on planet earth.."

## ***HOW DOES THE AEROSPACE ASPECT OF YOUR BUSINESS BENEFIT FROM THE AUTOMOTIVE INDUSTRY IN MICHIGAN?***

"A lot of students entering college, especially at Michigan Tech, are aware of the immense automotive industry in Michigan. They begin their college career with a path that typically ends in lower Michigan as a member of the automotive industry in some capacity. REL has used aerospace products we design and manufacture to lure unsuspecting students from this path and turn them into REL team members. Thank you automotive industry!"

## ***AIAM & REL, INC.***

"REL, Inc. has enjoyed its time with the AIAM from Halloween banquets to the great networking opportunities afforded. We would like to recommend any other Michigan based manufacturers who work in or would like to work within the aerospace community of Michigan to join."



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