





Fabricating the future

STAINLESS PRECISION ENGINEERING

Showing South African Strength Globally



PRODUCTION:
Dan Thompson

SPE is one of the most impressive steel businesses in South Africa thanks to its focus on quality and its record of delivery. The brand is so consistent that it has expanded to the US and is opening more doors around the world. MD Kaveshan Nayager talks to Enterprise Africa about success from Roodeport, Gauteng to Jacksonville, Florida.



INDUSTRY FOCUS: STEEL



South Africa's manufacturing environment has not made life easy for ambitious industrial players. Pressure on domestic demand, a tough operating landscape, and long-standing constraints around energy and infrastructure have



Kaveshan Nayager, MD

pushed many in the metals and fabrication space onto the back foot. Yet in the middle of this challenging backdrop sits a business moving in the opposite direction. Stainless Precision Engineering (SPE) – a long-established contract manufacturer specialising in light to medium sheet-metal work – has doubled down on quality, scale, systems and global intent. The result is a company not only holding its ground, but expanding its reach far beyond the local market.

The business employs around 300 people and runs a substantial footprint, but its trajectory has been anything but typical of a South African fabricator. At the centre is a belief in capability backed by investment, and a culture that insists on precision. Managing Director Kaveshan Nayager captures the breadth of the operation clearly: "SPE is a contract manufacturer for light to medium sheet metal work. We

offer a full turnkey solution from laser cutting and bending to welding and grinding, and then powder coating, and final assembly and shipment."

SPE's customer base spans a surprisingly broad mix of industries, reflecting the versatility of the company's engineering capability. Nayager sums up the extent of influence: "We are strong in the outdoor and leisure sector in both retail and online, and we are recognised across point of sale, access control, IT and comms, hospitality, healthcare, banking, rail and automotive, safety and security, and aerospace." SPE has also introduced a Turnstile range of products to the market and will soon release its own product line backed by patents.

BUILDING CAPABILITY

The depth of SPE's offering is anchored in a remarkable amount of in-house capability. The company operates

under 17,000 m2 of roof space and has accumulated a manufacturing asset base that few can match. "There are not many facilities like ours globally. We have a lot of specialist equipment, including more than 30 CNC machines," says Nayager. The constant refreshing of equipment has been a deliberate strategy. "We have recently procured a panel bending machine which was installed in 2024. We also have a 3kW fibre laser for welding. We are always innovating and getting the best equipment and technology possible."

Beyond machinery, SPE's internal systems distinguish it further. Its ERP system is designed around the company's own workflow and quality expectations. "We have an ERP system which has been developed and refined internally for more than 20 years, covering everything from quotation to invoicing to scheduling. It documents everything including quality checks at every single station through every single process. It gives you a build history for every single product and we can see everything very easily," says Nayager. In a sector where traceability and repeatability are vital, the ability to track every station and every quality gate is a powerful advantage.

This culture of controlled precision aligns with Nayager's own professional roots. "I am an Aeronautical Engineer with a BSc Honours Degree from Wits University. I joined the business seven years ago after working in the aircraft industry. I worked on design and engineering and quality across aircraft, rail, and military sectors." The discipline of these industries filters naturally into SPE's operating ethos.

EXPANDING HORIZONS

Growth for many South African manufacturers has been constrained by local conditions, but SPE has taken a different approach. When domestic markets softened, the company lifted its eyes outward. "The shifting of the markets, and the shrinking of the South African market

and the subsequent expansion into international markets has been a real challenge," says Nayager. "I want the business to naturally expand, but conditions have been challenging."

Rather than waiting for conditions to turn, SPE deliberately expanded its global footprint.

One of the most significant moves has been into the United States, where SPE has established a division in Jacksonville, Florida. "In the last few years, we have grown our presence there and we now have light assembly and warehouse space," says Nayager. This gives SPE not only a logistical foothold, but an on-the-ground presence in a major global market where quality, reliability and short turnaround times are critical.

The expansion is supported by an export-enabling logistics

partnership. "We have partnered with a logistics company and we are able to export throughout the entire world," Nayager details. SPE's US presence has deepened thanks to sustained leadership focus on the market, with a permanent senior presence on the ground. "Our CEO Dean Findlay is now based in Florida and he has been there for more than five years," says Nayager. "He continues to search for new opportunities in the US, and the team in SA controls the manufacturing operation. Currently, our focus is on the US, but we look at opportunities anywhere in the world."

RESILIENCE IN A TOUGH MARKET

South African industrial businesses have been forced to become resourceful, and SPE has gone further than most in engineering



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resilience directly into its facility. The company aims to reduce risk at every stage, especially when it comes to energy, water and the availability of critical inputs. "We like to work independently and we don't like to rely on other parties," says Nayager. "We have around 3000 amps at our facility and we have a 250 kVA, a 630 kVA and two 400 kVA diesel generators, with 8000 litres of diesel storage capacity, as well as a 1.2 MW solar system. We also have around 60,000 litres of water storage capacity, and 750 kg of LPG storage. We also bulk store welding gasses." This kind of underpinning is uncommon and reflects a commitment to shielding clients from operational risk. In a manufacturing landscape where disruptions can undermine even the best-planned production runs, the ability to

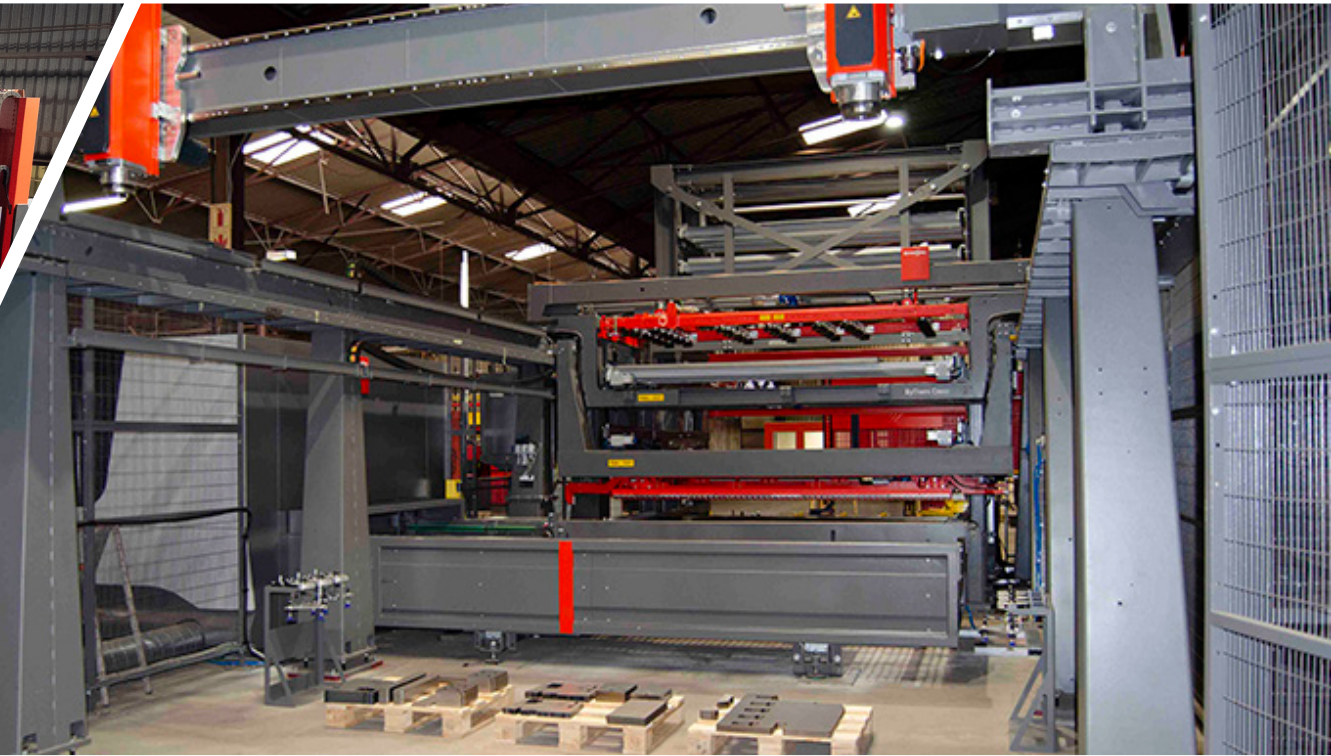
remain self-sufficient creates trust and reliability. "In terms of our services, we build our reputation on quality and committing on due dates for customers. We like to control all processes, and that is why we keep everything under one roof. If there is an unforeseen circumstance, we are able to mitigate and communicate clearly with customers," reiterates Nayager.

TRUSTED PARTNERS

SPE's supply chain approach mirrors its operational philosophy. Rather than chasing opportunistic deals, the company has built long-term partnerships with suppliers embedded into its processes. "Our key suppliers are very long-term. On metal, powder coating, fasteners – all of partners have been working with us for more than 10 years. We like to build

partnerships, and we integrate our suppliers into the business," says Nayager. This embeddedness supports the company's ISO certifications: ISO9001, EN15085-2 CL1, and ISO3834. "Our supply chain is key in our various quality accreditations, so they are essentially audited as well. Our ERP system tracks everything so there are always reminders on what should be where and when."

While many inputs are sourced locally, the company remains flexible enough to draw on global suppliers when projects require specialised materials. "The majority of our supply chain is local but for certain projects we will deal with international suppliers from Europe or elsewhere if special materials are required," explains Nayager. "We offer a turnkey service to our clients, and so we make the effort to deliver for them without



issue. Everything aligns with the vision of our clients and if they need international supply chain input, we are happy to work on that basis."

TURNKEY THINKING

The idea of being a turnkey partner is critical for SPE, and it's not just a marketing line. The business has deliberately built itself into a model where design intent, production, finishing and final shipping sit under one coordinated structure. This reduces friction, improves reliability and, importantly, gives clients a single point of accountability. "We are an international turnkey manufacturer, offering everything under one roof, all controlled. We don't work within any borders," says Nayager. He adds: "Our slogan is fabricating the future – we are expanding internationally and that is something we are proud of."

In a South African context where many manufacturers are consolidating or scaling back, SPE's momentum is striking. The combination of engineering expertise, systems maturity, global expansion and operational resilience paints a picture of a business designed for longevity. It has built the muscle needed to compete internationally, backed by decades of refinement and an unwavering focus on quality.

The market continues to evolve, but SPE is positioned not just to respond, but to lead. With a US presence adding new channels, South African capability reinforcing operations, and a client promise centred on reliability and seamless delivery, the business stands as a compelling example of what local industry can achieve. In a sector where certainty is hard to come

by, SPE's approach is refreshingly clear: build capability, control the process, back your quality, and open the doors to the world. **Ei**



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EA AFRICA



Published by CMB Multimedia
Chris Bolderstone – General Manager
chris@cmb-multimedia.co.uk
Kiln House, Fuel Studios,
Pottergate, Norwich NR2 1DX
T. +27 87 550 2420
E. info@cmb-media.co.uk
www.cmb-media.co.uk

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