

PRIVATELY HELD MANUFACTURING INVESTMENT FIRM

Senior Vice President of Operations

carterbaldwin
search done better™

About Huizenga Group

Huizenga Group is a privately held investment firm based in West Michigan, with roots going back to 1985. Founder J.C. Huizenga has spent four decades building and running a portfolio of roughly 15 manufacturing companies across industrial automation and robotics, tool and die, precision plastics, electrical contracting, and communications services. Together, the portfolio generates approximately $400 million in annual revenue.

The businesses serve demanding customers in automotive, aerospace, pharmaceutical, medical device, consumer goods, and office furniture manufacturing. The portfolio spans two very different operating worlds. The automation and tool and die companies are job shop and engineered-solutions businesses, with low-volume, high-mix work built around specific customers or applications. The precision plastics side, including injection molding and automated paint lines, is high-volume, process-oriented manufacturing. This role sits over both.

Huizenga has always taken a patient approach to ownership. They hold businesses for 10, 15, even 20 years, building great companies that drive value for customers, employees and ownership. The overall Huizenga portfolio runs with a lean corporate model and meaningful autonomy at the business unit level. Huizenga Group is also one of the most respected names in West Michigan manufacturing, with deep roots in the Grand Rapids community and a long-standing commitment to building lasting economic value in the region.

> *A patient, founder-led owner that builds and stewards manufacturing companies for the long term, creating enduring economic value across West Michigan.*

$400M
ANNUAL REVENUE

~15
MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

1985
ROOTS IN WEST MICHIGAN

40 Yrs
PATIENT OWNERSHIP

Huizenga Group Companies

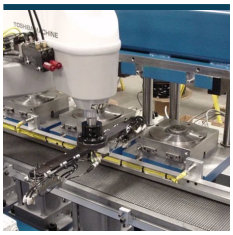
Huizenga Group provides management services to a diverse portfolio of operating companies in tool and die, pharmaceutical packaging, machined metal parts, electrical contracting, and highly engineered manufacturing. The current portfolio spans three core areas.

AUTOMATION



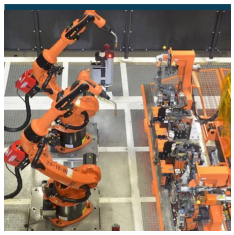
GSE Automation
Robotics and industrial automation

gseautomation.com



Churchill Technologies
Automated high-volume sub-assemblies

churchill-tech.com



Bulldog Factory Service
Flexible automotive production systems

santannatool.com



Adaptek Systems
Custom automated production equipment

adapteksystems.com



API Alliance
Custom electronics and controls

apialliance.com



Spectrum Automation
Parts feeding and material handling

spectrumautomation.com



Treva Automation
Turnkey automated solutions

trevaautomation.com

TOOL AND DIE



Competition Engineering
Production-ready tooling

competitionengineering.net



Datum Industries
Transfer and progressive dies

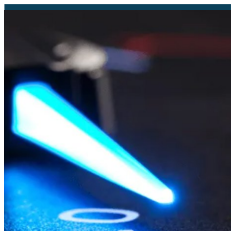
datumind.com



Pinnacle Tool
Advanced tool and die manufacturing

pinntool.com

OTHER INDUSTRIES



Lakeland Monroe Group
Precision and functional plastics

lakelandmonroegroup.com

The Opportunity

As the scale and complexity of the Huizenga Group portfolio has expanded, the need for senior operational leadership at the 'group' level has also increased. To address this, Chairman J.C. Huizenga and CEO Steve Klotz have determined that the organization should recruit and hire a Senior Vice President of Operations. The new SVP of Operations role is one of the most important leadership hires the firm has made in years. This person will sit at Huizenga Group, report to Steve Klotz, and work closely with J.C. Huizenga and CFO Chad Nyboer.

The mandate is straightforward: lead plant managers and business unit leaders across the portfolio, bring real operating discipline and accountability, and improve financial performance across the companies. A key part of the role will be building manufacturing plans that are tied to the economic and industry outlook, so the businesses are prepared for where the cycle is headed instead of reacting after the fact. Over time, this person will also help lead the firm's push to diversify beyond automotive into medical device, industrial, and other markets.

For the right person, this is a builder's role with unusual latitude. The organization is small, nimble, and not bogged down by layers. There is real room to make a difference, direct access to ownership, and meaningful upside tied to results. As J.C. and Steve continue to evolve their own roles, there is also room for this person to grow into something larger over time. The opportunity is to take a strong, decentralized portfolio and find the operational lift, while helping shape where the business goes next.

> *A builder's mandate with direct access to ownership, real latitude to drive performance, and room to grow into something larger over time.*



The Role

The SVP of Operations will lead operating performance across the portfolio, bringing discipline and accountability to a decentralized group of manufacturing businesses while helping ownership plan for where the cycle is headed. Key responsibilities include:

KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

- Lead operational performance across the portfolio, working through plant managers and business unit leaders across automation, tool and die, precision plastics, electrical contracting, and other manufacturing environments.
- Partner with ownership and the CFO to build manufacturing plans tied to economic forecasts, helping the businesses navigate industry cycles and market shifts.
- Establish a consistent operating cadence, performance metrics, and accountability systems across the business units, giving ownership better visibility into results and trends.
- Assess and improve operational efficiency, capacity utilization, and margin performance across the portfolio without micromanaging autonomous business unit teams.
- Help lead the firm's thinking on diversification, including opportunities beyond automotive that position the portfolio well for the long term.
- Build and develop operational talent across the businesses, including assessing plant manager capability and identifying gaps in leadership depth.
- Serve as the bridge between the priorities of J.C. Huizenga and Steve Klotz and the day-to-day performance of the operating companies.
- Evaluate acquisitions through an operational lens, supporting diligence and integration as Huizenga Group continues to build the portfolio.

The Ideal Candidate

The right person is a business leader first and an operator second. They have grown up through manufacturing and operations leadership, ideally in a large, best-in-class diversified industrial company, and are ready to apply that experience at the portfolio level. They understand how financial results are built from the shop floor up, and they have the presence to lead plant managers across multiple sites and manufacturing operating models.

Business Leader First

A business leader first and an operator second, grown up through manufacturing and operations in a large, best-in-class diversified industrial company and ready to apply that experience at the portfolio level.

Credible Across Sites

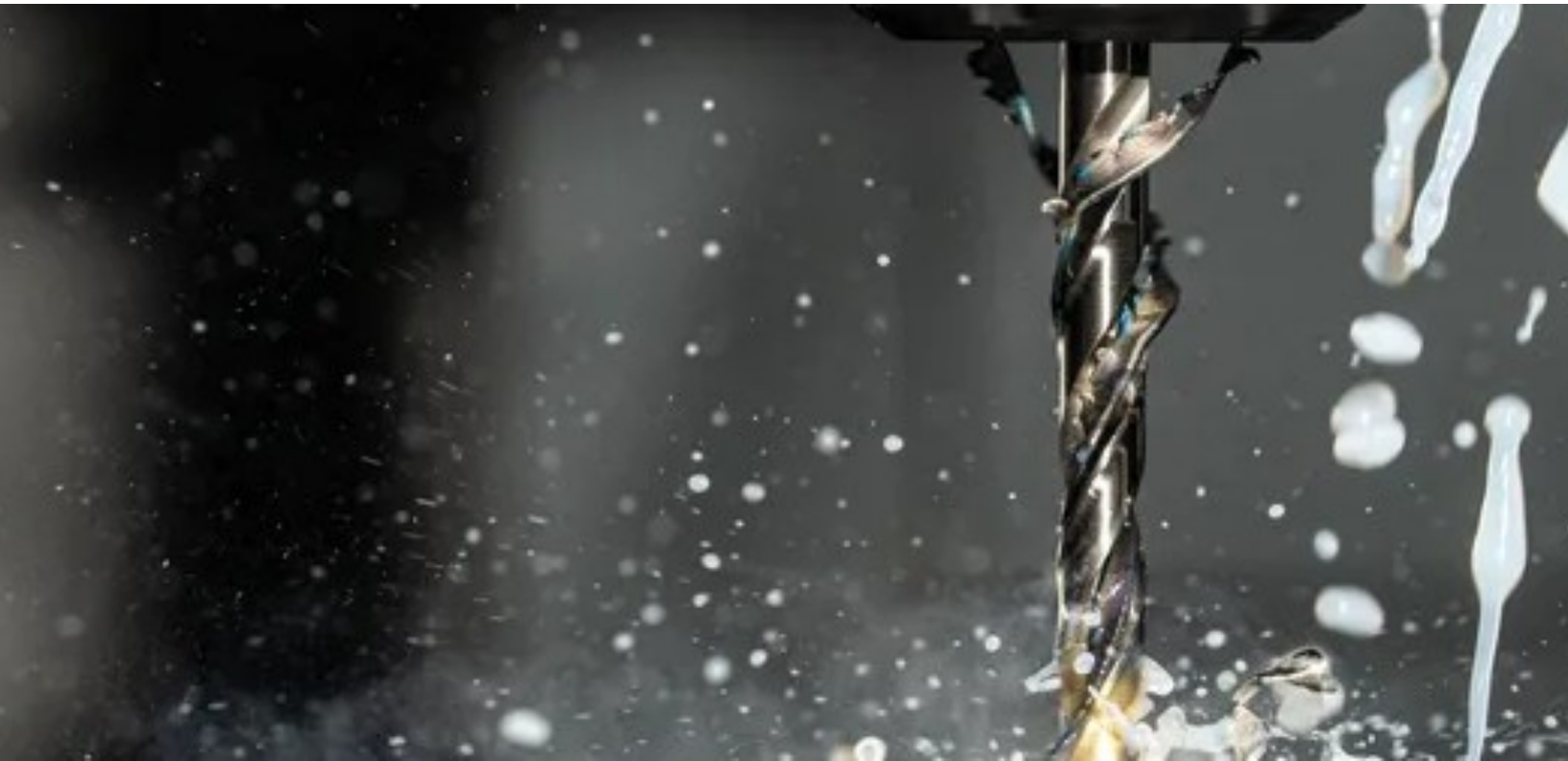
Understands plant operations at the ground level and has the presence to lead plant managers across multiple sites and operating models. Not a hands-on plant manager role, nor a lean quality role.

Multi-Business Operator

Has led multiple operating businesses, plants, or business units in a decentralized environment. The sweet spot is leadership at the group, segment, division, or regional level, driving accountability through other leaders.

Automotive Plus Beyond

Strong automotive fluency given where the portfolio sits today, along with exposure to medical device, industrial, automation, or other diversified manufacturing markets.



Experience, Competencies and Attributes

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS

- 15+ years of progressive manufacturing and operations leadership, including multi-site or multi-business-unit responsibility at the VP level or above.
- Track record of improving both financial and operational performance across diverse manufacturing environments, with direct P&L accountability.
- Meaningful automotive experience, including familiarity with OEM customer expectations, quality standards, and the realities of the automotive cycle.
- Strong financial and business acumen, with the ability to build operating plans tied to economic forecasts and hold business units accountable for results.
- Proven ability to lead through plant managers and business unit leaders, driving accountability without needing direct operational control over every site.
- Engineering or technical foundation strong enough to assess operations, spot improvement opportunities, and engage credibly in manufacturing and automation environments.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Experience across both high-volume production and job shop or engineered-solutions environments preferred.
- Background in or exposure to industrial automation, robotics, or systems integration preferred.
- Experience leading diversification or adjacent-market expansion in a manufacturing context preferred.
- Experience in a decentralized, privately held, or founder-led operating environment preferred.
- Located within driving distance of Grand Rapids, MI, or open to being there without relocation support.



The Search Team

Huizenga Group has retained CarterBaldwin Executive Search to lead this search. Nominations, expressions of interest, and applications will be treated with confidentiality. Candidates should submit a resume and a letter of interest to the search team.

David Clapp
MANAGING PARTNER

678.448.0009
dclapp@carterbaldwin.com

Mike Little
CONSULTANT

678.448.0014
mlittle@carterbaldwin.com

Confidential inquiries and questions concerning this search may be directed to the search team.

carterbaldwin
search done better™