

# Leyman Lift Gates Becomes 100% Employee-Owned in Historic Transition

*Leyman Lift Gates transfers full ownership to workforce, bucking trend of private equity acquisitions in manufacturing sector*

CINCINNATI, OH, UNITED STATES, October 1, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Leyman Lift Gates](#), an 85-year-old Cincinnati-based manufacturer, has completed a full transition to employee ownership, making every employee an equity stakeholder in the company's future. The unprecedented move comes as manufacturing companies nationwide increasingly face pressure from private equity firms and foreign competitors.



The transition was made possible through the extraordinary generosity of the founding Leyman family and longtime leader John McHenry, who chose to transfer 100% ownership to the company's workforce rather than pursue a traditional sale to outside investors.

“

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*Robert Ayers, President*

**Manufacturing Legacy Meets Modern Employee Ownership Model**

Founded in 1940 and entering the specialized lift gate market in 1960, Leyman has built its reputation manufacturing [lift gates](#), which are the lifting platform systems mounted to trucks and trailers that enable efficient cargo handling without loading docks. The company's steel-constructed gates serve critical industries including foodservice, beverage distribution, last-mile delivery, and general freight operations.

The employee ownership structure addresses two key industry challenges: retaining

manufacturing talent in an increasingly competitive labor market and preserving manufacturing jobs against offshore competition.

"John McHenry didn't just give us a company. He gave us a responsibility," said Robert Ayers, new company President. "We've been entrusted with the Leyman legacy. Stewardship means protecting that name, growing it, and making sure it outlasts us. We're grateful, and we know we need to keep earning it."

#### Employee Ownership Trend Gains Momentum

This approach has proven effective at increasing worker engagement, reducing turnover, and keeping decision-making power within local communities.

Under the new ownership structure, every employee - from shop floor workers to management - holds an equity stake designed to reward performance and align individual success with company growth. The model ensures that Leyman's core values of hard work, accountability, and American manufacturing remain grounded in the workforce that embodies them daily.

#### Continuity and Growth Focus

Leyman will maintain its established standards of excellence while leveraging its employee ownership advantage to compete more aggressively in the commercial vehicle equipment market. The company continues serving customers nationwide with American-built hydraulic lift gate solutions.

The transition reflects broader questions facing family-owned manufacturers: how to preserve company culture, protect jobs, and maintain competitive advantages while planning for leadership succession.

#### About Leyman Lift Gates

Leyman Lift Gates is a leading U.S. manufacturer of hydraulic lift gates for trucks and trailers, serving commercial and industrial markets nationwide. Known for rugged, American-built reliability, Leyman has supplied high-performance industrial and cargo handling solutions for over 80 years. The company is now 100% employee-owned.

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