



Success Story: Ankerpak

Strategic Planning Allows Small Manufacturer to Continue to Grow

In 2003, John Anker started Ankerpak, a manufacturing, packaging, and distribution company in Columbus, Georgia. The company evolved over the years as they took on various product lines and services to provide solutions for their clients. They now make and process a wide variety of products from markers to peanut butter.

The business, which now employs over 70 people, is proud to be an important part of the local economy as well as part of the on-shoring of many products that otherwise would be manufactured overseas.



Since beginning their work with the GaMEP, Ankerpak has:

- *Focused on 3 specific key metrics designed to help them increase net income by up to 12%.*
- *Reduced labor cost in one division of the company by \$25,000 per year, a savings of 4.5%.*
- *Efficiently expanded into an additional 79,000 sq. ft. facility.*
- *Created a Lockout/Tagout program, installed additional machine guards, and updated signage for safety.*

»» Situation

Eight years ago, the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech started the Manufacturing CEO Roundtable in Columbus, in the hopes that manufacturing leaders could join together to support each other and learn from each other's experiences. Led by GaMEP project manager Ed Murphy, Anker was part of the inaugural group that began meeting monthly to discuss day-to-day operations, share successes, and review issues in their plants to help them find solutions.

At these meetings, he began working with Derek Woodham, West Georgia Region Manager, who quickly became a trusted partner that Anker felt not only understood manufacturing but also the Columbus community and the unique challenges and opportunities associated with operating in West Georgia.

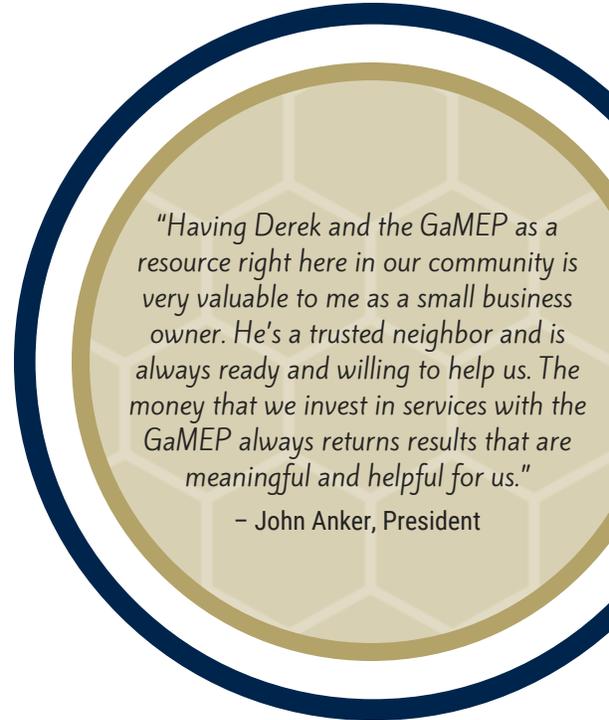
In 2014, Woodham suggested that Ankerpak develop a new strategic plan. With so many different product lines, they both felt that the planning process would help the company evaluate their current business and focus on tactics to help them increase both their sales and profit margin.

»» Solution

GaMEP led Ankerpak's team on a series of strategic planning sessions. Anker said, "The GaMEP facilitator that we worked with was just a great fit for our company. He listened to us, motivated us, and really helped guide us to find the vision that was already in our minds, but needed to be communicated to the entire company."

The team collected and analyzed data from the entire plant to find the best opportunities to make improvements. They focused in on three core metrics that they thought would work together to help them significantly raise their net income.

In addition to the metrics, Ankerpak found some additional projects that needed to be done, but that they didn't have capacity to complete with existing staff. They worked with the GaMEP to find resources for those projects including OSHA training and implementation and a plant layout design that helped them better utilize a new facility.



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