Success Story: Fizz Dispense Optimization Group

Creating Business Growth Out of Thin Air

After working in the industrial gas distribution business for a number of years, Derrick Gordy, Founder and Co-CEO, saw an opportunity to provide customers with a product that they didn't know they needed. In the past, tanks of nitrogen were produced in one location and then delivered to customers on trucks. However, this process could cause issues for companies when the old supply ran out before the new tank was delivered.

In 2004, Gordy started Fizz Dispense Optimization Group, to manufacture Nitrogen Generators, a machine that could be installed at a company and used to pull the naturally occurring nitrogen out of the air. This solved the problem of running out and also provided the environmental incentive of a reduced carbon footprint, by eliminating the need for delivery.

Since beginning their work with the GaMEP, Fizz Dispense Optimization Group has:

- Used the information gathered in the Value Stream Mapping Event, to double their production over the course of 2 years.
- Created a strategic plan to help their management team successfully guide the company's aggressive growth period.
- Cut the lead time for an integral component of their product from 16-18 weeks, to 2-4 weeks, allowing them to better respond to market demands.
- Improved the component's design, reducing the number of fasteners from 15 to just 2, significantly improving assembly time.
- On-shored the component, by finding manufacturers in Georgia who could produce the new design.

Situation

Over the years, Gordy and other Fizz Dispense Optimization Group team members had participated in a number of trainings and events hosted by the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech including the Northwest Georgia CEO Roundtable and the Manufacturing Growth Meeting Series in Acworth.

In 2015, Knowing that the company was preparing for a period of intense growth, Gordy reached out to Andy Helm, GaMEP project manager, for advice on how to grow in a healthy and sustainable way.

Solution

Helm recommended a Value Stream Map to help the company better understand their processes, material flow, and internal communication. Damon Nix, project manager, worked with the company over two days, to map out every step of their process from start to finish, noting and brainstorming solutions for bottlenecks or gaps in the flow of materials or information. This project helped the company redesign their operations to increase capacity and productivity.

The next step was to work with Helm to analyze the company's management structure. After first reviewing the team's goals and metrics, they discussed each member of the management team's role in the organization. This helped the company redefine their team's roles, shift team members into new roles when needed, and create a strategic plan to guide them over the next few years.

As production numbers increased, the company noted difficulties related to one particular sub-component of the Nitrogen Generator. Gordy reached out again and this time was connected to Bob Wray, project manager. Gordy and Wray discussed the issues which included a long lead time for the part in question (because their only supplier was in Europe) and difficulty in installation once it arrived.

Wray was able to work with Gordy to redesign the part and find multiple machine shops in Georgia that could produce it, cutting the lead time and cost significantly. Through several rounds of prototypes, the team was also able to improve the installation method, making it much faster to complete assembly.

"Working with GaMEP has helped us create innovative solutions over the years, no matter the issue. From the ideas and support I get from the CEO Roundtable events to process improvement and strategic planning to design assistance. GaMEP is a true partner and resource for our company."

– Derrick Gordy, Founder and Co-CEO

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