Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership

Ohio MEP supports Ohio’s small and medium-sized manufacturers by providing products, services and assistance to help drive their productivity, growth and global competitiveness. Small and medium-sized manufacturing companies are critical to Ohio, representing 90% of job growth for high-paying jobs. For every new manufacturing job that is created or retained, three to five supporting jobs are also created.

Managed by the Ohio Development Services Agency’s Office of Small Business and Entrepreneurship, Ohio MEP is a State and Federal initiative sponsored by the U.S. Department of Commerce National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST). To serve the diversity of Ohio’s industrial base, Ohio MEP manages a network of regional affiliate service organizations that are strategically selected and coordinated to serve as a statewide resource to meet the needs of key industry sectors and small manufacturers.

Ohio MEP has 6 regional offices throughout the state. 1. Center for Innovative Food Technology (CIFT, Toledo), 2. Manufacturing Advocacy and Growth Network (MAGNET, Cleveland), 3. Center for Design and Manufacturing Excellence (CDME, The Ohio State University, Columbus), 4. PolymerOhio (Westerville), 5. TechSolve (Cincinnati), 6. FASTLANE (The University of Dayton Research Institute, Dayton)

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ECONOMIC IMPACT

MEP Center impacts are based on clients surveyed in FY2017

- $675.6 Million Total Increased/Retained Sales
- 2,864 Total Increased/Retained Jobs
- $113.3 Million New Client Investments
- $59.5 Million Cost Savings
"We are very pleased with the support that CIFT has offered Wyandot. The CIFT member focus groups led to the launch of a $1,000,000 brand in the first six months of production. CIFT is always willing to help and consult based on their vast knowledge of food science and the snack business." Lisa Davis, Vice President, Technical Services

PARTNERSHIP LEVERAGES COMPANY’S OWN RESOURCES

 ABOUT. Wyandot makes tortilla chips, cheese puffs, popcorn and other salty snacks under private-labels, as well as for the retail food and food service sectors. Located in Marion, Ohio, it is one of the leading snack-food contract manufacturers in the United States, with an annual production capacity of one hundred million pounds. Its products are available worldwide. Wyandot was family-owned and managed until 1994, when the first non-family member to run the company was named president and CEO. Today the company has around 350 employees.

THE CHALLENGE. Since 1999, Wyandot has been a member of the Center for Innovative Food Technology (CIFT). CIFT is part of the Ohio Manufacturing Extension Partnership, which is part of the MEP National Network. The company has partnered with CIFT on a number of projects that have greatly benefited both Wyandot and its local economy.

MEP’S ROLE. CIFT’s “Advanced Technology Evaluation Program” helped Wyandot to leverage their own resources in pursuit of technologies that can improve the financial performance of their operations. In one project, Wyandot took advantage of CIFT’s technology program to explore the use of rapid detection technology to uncover pathogens in a dry processing environment. The program stimulates investment in technology by enabling Wyandot and other participating companies to evaluate potential improvements that can reduce costs or increase revenues.

By utilizing its network of technical resources, CIFT can also connect companies like Wyandot to world-class technical resources within Ohio. The relatively modest investment in the evaluation of new technologies has allowed Wyandot to stay at the forefront of its industry. Overall, the projects and events that Wyandot has partnered with CIFT on have helped the company improve productivity, reduce costs, remain competitive in its industry, and evaluate new technology-based initiatives, all of which help the company improve the financial performance of its operations.

RESULTS

Increased investment in plant/equipment and IT by $850,000
New products or processes increased by $250,000
Workforce practices increased by $100,000