THE ILLINOIS MANUFACTURING EXCELLENCE CENTER

IMEC is a team of improvement specialists and technicians dedicated to providing organizations in Illinois with the tools and techniques to create sustainable competitive futures. The experienced hands-on team at IMEC works closely with its clients to plan critical business improvements in the areas of Leadership, Strategy, Customer, Operations, and Workforce. With more than 50 full-time staff and partners positioned statewide, IMEC delivers the local expertise to not only plan and strategize, but to implement and evaluate the effectiveness of client improvements. In fact, IMEC assists more than 500 companies each year with successful business improvement projects. As a result, IMEC has demonstrated a return on investment that exceeds 19:1. This is made possible as organizations become more effective and efficient - and together with IMEC - excel toward enterprise excellence.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

MEP Center impacts are based on clients surveyed in FY2017

- **$545.8 Million**
  - Total Increased/Retained Sales

- **4,691**
  - Total Increased/Retained Jobs

- **$104.6 Million**
  - New Client Investments

- **$42.7 Million**
  - Cost Savings

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The MEP National Network™ is a unique public-private partnership that delivers comprehensive, proven solutions to U.S. manufacturers, fueling growth and advancing U.S. manufacturing.
COMPANY REDEFINES KEY STRATEGY, DRAMATICALLY INCREASES SALES

ABOUT NUDO PRODUCTS INC. Nudo Products, Inc. manufactures laminated panel systems used in a variety of agricultural, commercial, and institutional applications. Based in Springfield, Illinois, Nudo employs 177 people.

THE CHALLENGE. Nudo's existing organizational strategy and metrics were effectively measuring the company’s activity and daily emerging issues, but lacked a more sophisticated way to identify gaps in the processes and create an action plan for addressing larger challenges. Ready to define its new baseline for business management, including efficiency and productivity, the Nudo team engaged the Illinois Manufacturing Excellence Center (IMEC), a NIST MEP affiliate.

MEP CENTER’S ROLE. IMEC recommended the Promoting Business Excellence (PROBE) benchmark assessment for Nudo. The company assigned a small, cross-functional team of senior managers to complete the PROBE assessment and define next steps for the organization. Taking the assessment results back to the entire organization, it was important for Nudo to include the workforce and align expectations for improvement. Revising existing key performance indicators (KPIs) and honing in on the process and workforce changes were crucial steps.

“One primary target for us was to increase sales growth,” said Tom Titone, Nudo Products Quality and Engineering Manager. "But in order to meet that target we needed to bring in new processes and add more CNC capabilities, as well as engineering to support the sales growth." Nudo invested in plant upgrades and employee skills and brought on new manufacturing engineers to ensure its products and processes were in sync and meeting new metric expectations. The company saw a dramatic increase in sales. "We needed to be able to perform on an operations basis," continued Tom. "Those targets were very important to us, so the new metrics and meeting them was essential."

"In a small manufacturing community, it’s essential to build close relationships and leverage the experience of others. IMEC provided that for us and internally forced us to examine our network of resources, pulling in the right people and resources to get the job done."

-Tom Titone, Quality & Engineering Manager

RESULTS

$3.5M in new sales
15 jobs created, 5 jobs retained
$20,000 investment in plant/equipment/skills