MONTANA MANUFACTURING EXTENSION CENTER

The Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC) is a statewide manufacturing outreach and assistance center focused on growing Montana’s economy by helping manufacturers succeed in a nationally and globally competitive environment. Part of the NIST MEP National Network, we have access to an extensive network of resources throughout Montana and the U.S.

In today’s rapidly changing business environment, MMEC provides Montana manufacturers with hands-on assistance plus the knowledge and resources needed for growth, innovation and profit enhancement. Staffed by proven professionals with extensive manufacturing and business experience in a variety of industries, our team can help you achieve positive, measurable, and sustainable growth for your top and bottom line. Our areas of expertise include product and market development, strategic and exit planning, workforce/talent development, business financials, food safety and processes, quality management, lean manufacturing, supply chain optimization, and many others.

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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.
FULL SPEED AHEAD FOR RAILROAD TELEMETRY DEVICE MANUFACTURER

ABOUT DPS ELECTRONICS, INC. Based in Bozeman, Montana, DPS Electronics, Inc., is a 13-person design and manufacturing company that produces electronic systems and related test equipment. These innovation-driven entrepreneurs specialize in End of Train and Head of Train telemetry devices. They have developed technology that self-detects for any defects to minimize train down time. DPS Electronics also exports technology internationally to two countries, Mexico and Columbia, to create safer technologies for train systems.

THE CHALLENGE. DPS Electronics needed to find the most efficient way to get the right product out its doors on time to its customers. Product flow needed improvement and tracking inventory proved challenging, as employees sometimes classified things incorrectly, or recorded parts removed for experimental development of future products and updates inconsistently. DPS Electronics also aimed to improve its export processes to two Latin American countries, particularly regarding warranty repairs and returns. In addition, the company also sought guidance on achieving a higher operational value for its business.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC), part of the MEP National Network, worked with DPS Electronics to address its diverse challenges. The company initially worked on better inventory management and improved workplace layout to optimize flow using Lean Manufacturing concepts. This helped DPS become more mindful of process and flow, which in turn reduced costs and improved production in the plant.

Additionally, DPS participated in the ExporTech™ program offered by MMEC. The program educated company leaders on parts classification for customs purposes. It also connected them with a variety of export resources and helped them develop an action plan to address export challenges and create more opportunities. MMEC conducted an operational value assessment for the owners to evaluate the current company worth, identify high-impact opportunities for operational improvements and value creation, and generate an implementation plan to address value gaps through efficiency gains and risk reduction strategies. The company expects to increase sales and is adding and retaining jobs.

"MMEC is an invaluable partner, and they have brought new thought processes and knowledge to every level of our company. We are at a critical stage in our growth, and having MMEC’s assistance has helped us establish a more solid foundation and a clear path to profitability that will support and sustain our growth into the future."

-Susy Sands, Owner

RESULTS

- Increased/retained sales by $750,000
- 16 new/retained jobs
- New investment of $330,000