

NORTH CAROLINA MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP (NCMEP)

The North Carolina Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NCMEP) provides manufacturing extension services that enhance the productivity, innovative capacity and technological performance of US-based manufacturing firms. It also works to strengthen the global competitiveness of small- and medium-sized manufacturers. NCMEP's team of professional regional extension agents and experienced technical specialists engage and provide solutions to hundreds of manufacturers across the state. NCMEP links its manufacturing partners to a network of national expertise and suppliers, creating an innovation hub and knowledge base for the state of North Carolina. NCMEP is administered by the NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions (IES) as a National Institute of Standards and Technology Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership center for the state.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

MEP Center impacts are based on clients surveyed in FY2023



\$250.9 Million

Total Increased/Retained Sales



2,472

Total Increased/Retained Jobs



\$360.8 Million

New Client Investments



\$18.8 Million

Cost Savings

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ABT METALS WITNESSES TRANSFORMATIVE GROWTH THROUGH ISO 9001:2015 CERTIFICATION

ABOUT ABT METALS MANUFACTURING, LLC. ABT Metals Manufacturing is a privately-owned, ISO 9001:2015-certified full-service job shop committed to exceptional customer service in Iredell County, North Carolina. With a focus on meeting challenging requirements, ABT Metals offers a comprehensive range of capabilities including fabrication, cutting, stamping, punching, machining, bending, and deep drawing. The organization specializes in building parts and assemblies used across diverse industries such as construction, sports equipment, automotive, medical, military, industrial, energy, furniture, and firearms. With their dedication to quality and versatility, ABT Metals stands ready to meet the manufacturing needs of its clients with precision and reliability.

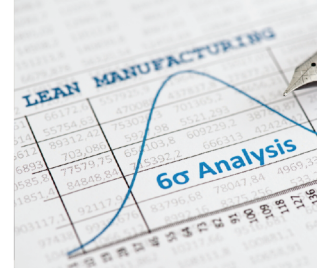
THE CHALLENGE. When it was time to look for an organization that could help them implement ISO 9001:2015, they were drawn to NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions, part of the MEP National Network™, because of their fair pricing and local support, which benefited the great state by utilizing an in-state company. "It's been a great experience working with NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions. The feedback and responses are always knowledgeable and timely," said Schultz.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Getting their certification took work. It took approximately two years due to losing the first two employees heading up the program. Schultz and ABT Metals persisted in knowing the ISO 9001:2015 certification would benefit the organization substantially in the long run. "Implementing change was a significant challenge for our team as many resisted the idea. The transition required additional training, documentation, and a commitment to consistent performance based on new procedures and policies, a departure from how the company operated previously." Shultz continued.

As the president, Schultz supported the program from the beginning, being the biggest advocate for making it happen. "As some employees threatened to quit due to the changes, I would not allow someone not on board to decide whether or not we could make this happen, and we lost employees in the process, which is never easy. Having the end goal vision is critical in continuously moving forward, simply looking at challenges as opportunities to improve our business," remarked Schultz. ABT Metals had to create every aspect required by the ISO standards, including but not limited to policies, procedures, flow charts, process diagrams, formal training, record keeping and verifications. Meetings were formalized and documented, quality check forms were created and KPI metrics were put in place to track every process.

"NC State University Industry Expansion Solutions did not create the program for us but guided us through the process from start to finish, holding our hand, smacking our hand and high-fiving us all the way, setting us up for success."

-Bryan Schultz, President



RESULTS



2 new or retained jobs



\$75,000 in new investment



\$75,000 in training

