SOUTH DAKOTA MANUFACTURING AND TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

The South Dakota Manufacturing and Technology Solutions' mission is “To provide solutions which will assist all of South Dakota manufacturers to prosper and grow”. We support industry and business in the workplace—whether that’s in the office, on the factory floor, at a hospital, in a bank, or on the job site. With our manufacturing experts and network of industry resources, we provide the change that makes the significant difference between surviving and thriving. Our tailored solutions, university and community connections, and engineering know-how can help your company stay abreast of the latest technologies and best practices in engineering and business management. Ultimately, our aim is to help you increase productivity, efficiency, safety and quality. As a result, your profits rise and your business thrives. Our vision is “To be the first choice of South Dakota manufacturers, as a trusted partner, to advance their economic prosperity and become best in their markets”. Backed by National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST), South Dakota Manufacturing and Technology Solutions has access to a vast number of both public and private resources and certified trainers with experience in business and industry.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

MEP Center impacts are based on clients surveyed in FY2017

- $77.7 Million Total Increased/Retained Sales
- 337 Total Increased/Retained Jobs
- $52.3 Million New Client Investments
- $12.6 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.
DEVELOPING LEADERS FOR GROWTH

ABOUT SHOWPLACE WOOD PRODUCTS, INC. For a company that has only been in business for about 18 years, Showplace Wood Products has an impressive history. The cabinet-making company, which started from scratch in 1999, now operates three manufacturing plants: two in Harrisburg, South Dakota, and one in nearby Beresford. Showplace has around 350 employees and a sales network that includes more than 600 approved dealers. The company does business in all 50 states and parts of Canada.

THE CHALLENGE. The cabinet industry was hit hard nationally by the Great Recession, which officially lasted from December 2007 to June 2009. Showplace was affected too, but the employee-owned company managed to ride out the downturn without laying off any workers. A desire to take care of people, regardless of whether they are customers, dealers or employees, has been a big part of company's success. The drive to constantly improve is evident in the company's willingness to invest in employees. Since 2014, 25 Showplace employees have participated in leadership-development classes offered by South Dakota Manufacturing & Technology Solutions (MTS), a NIST MEP affiliate.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Vice President Bill Allen was the first Showplace employee to participate in a MTS leadership-development class. He started taking classes from Precision in 2014 at the suggestion of Paul Sova, president and chief operating officer at Showplace. Sova got the idea for Allen to take a leadership-development course through his participation in the CEO Peer Council, another service offered by MTS. CEO Peer Council meetings give top-level executives from various companies the opportunity to get together on a regular basis to discuss common challenges that confront their companies. Allen participated in leadership-development classes at an off-site location with executives from a half-dozen other companies. The course included eight off-site sessions during a 12-week period. The classes for Showplace were facilitated by Lisa Te Slaa of the Precision Leadership Group Inc., one of MTS's service partners.

"I liked a lot of the basic principles the class taught us. In a lot of ways, what the class taught was common sense," Allen said. "They're things we all know we should do, but we may not have a structured way to get them done." Areas of focus included setting goals, managing time and delegating duties. Today, "business is good," said Scott Korsten, director of marketing. The training classes helped Showplace leaders to staff another plant with a new product line, and this year, Showplace expects to top its pre-recession high in sales.

"Classes required a significant financial investment, but it was an expense that should pay off in the long run. One solid business call per person could recover the cost of the class."

-Bill Allen, Vice President