

COMPANY CELLULARIZES THE MANUFACTURING PROCESS TO REDUCE COSTS, PRESERVE JOBS

ABOUT MICROMETL WEST. MicroMetl is a Sparks, Nevada-based manufacturer of heating and air conditioning equipment and accessories. With over 100 employees, the company also has offices in Indiana and Texas and distributes across the nation. MicroMetl operates in a very price-competitive industry and is always seeking ways to increase efficiency and keep high levels of product quality and consistency.

THE CHALLENGE. MicroMetl required assistance with several key tasks: reducing travel time during assembly, training employees, and streamlining their production process. Careful analysis of the plant's workflow revealed that a single heating and air conditioning part would travel 1.5 miles during assembly. The production process was a batch build, and the company had many employees in need of training in both English language proficiency and manufacturing.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Nevada Industry Excellence, a NIST MEP affiliate, worked with MicroMetl to cellularize the manufacturing process into a Lean manufacturing model implementing one piece flow. The heating and air conditioning part that used to travel 1.5 miles during assembly was soon assembled within an area of 100 feet. Nevada Industry Excellence also helped MicroMetl to secure state grant funding for training and consultation programs to implement Lean manufacturing processes. "In a classroom it is all pretty textbook-oriented," explained Quality Assurance Manager Bill Martin. "You don't get to see the outcomes immediately. Being on-site and training in that environment is the way to go."

MicroMetl also used the Lean principles taught by Nevada Industry Excellence to level the work load, provide point of use storage and create standard work. "We have seen that culture change," said Martin. "It used to be maybe an idea would get tossed out and people would say 'we have done it this way for 15 or 20 years, why should we change?' Now our workers have set up Lean manufacturing cellularized lines and let the employees design the lines and take ownership of it because it is theirs. When they can see what they put in place actually work and make us more money, they see it in bonus checks that they never saw before," added Martin. "They see the results and get rewarded."

"We need the grassroots and down and dirty training that you can't get at the university level or community college level. With what Nevada Industry Excellence provides, it would be hard for us to exist without them."

-Bill Martin, Quality Assurance Manager

RESULTS



Increased production capacity by **250%**



Saved **\$82,000** in direct costs in first 9 months



Decreased other costs by **38%** in the first 9 months after implementation



Retained **25** positions



Production efficiency improved by **34%**

CONTACT US



UNR Mail Stop 406
Reno, NV 89557-0406



(775)784-1935



www.nevadaie.com



NEVADA
Industry Excellence