

## TRAINING STREAMLINES PRODUCTION, INCREASES SALES

**ABOUT FOOD MAKERS BAKERY EQUIPMENT INC.** Food Makers Bakery Equipment is a family-owned business that has been serving the baking industry for more than 30 years. The company manufactures a variety of fabricated goods and equipment parts to support both wholesale and retail bakers. Located in Irwindale, California, Food Makers Bakery Equipment has close to 50 employees.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Food Makers Bakery Equipment was experiencing productivity challenges. Delays in the production process, particularly for their popular baker racks and tables, were impacting client retention efforts, and the company needed to decrease lead times and reduce operational costs to improve competitiveness. For example, the lead time between the order placement and delivery of their baking racks and tables was between four and six weeks. Based on client feedback, the company realized it would be more competitive with lead times shorter than four weeks. Food Makers Bakery Equipment wanted to adopt Lean tools to improve efficiencies, and connected with California Manufacturing Technology Consulting (CMTc), part of the MEP National Network™, for assistance.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** After an initial evaluation of needs, CMTc recommended a Lean Transformation Program for the company, beginning with a Lean 101 Awareness Training session that introduced key managers and employees to Lean principles. Next, CMTc helped Food Makers Bakery Equipment to produce a Value Stream Map (VSM), creating a visual representation of the company's state of production, as well as an plan for the desired future state. As part of the improvement plan, CMTc conducted a Kaizen event on the production lines for baker racks and tables, identifying and eliminating excess costs and delays during the production process. A 5S workplace organization training followed the principles of Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain to help employees reduce clutter and establish a more efficient production process. By reorganizing equipment on the production floor, Food Makers Bakery Equipment improved the flow of operations and eliminated unnecessary equipment and supplies.

The company decreased delays on the production line for baking racks and tables, and reduced lead times to four weeks or less. The elimination of excess costs and waste on the production floor helped Food Makers Bakery Equipment generate cost savings, which the company used to invest in new equipment, IT, and advertising. The improvements and increased advertising positioned Food Makers Bakery Equipment to become more competitive in the market, leading to better jobs retention and increased sales.

"CMTc's Lean Enterprise Program empowered us to become more efficient and productive. Our improved operational performance resulted in a 10 percent increase in new sales and a 3 percent decrease in expenses."

-Tom and Linda Fowler, Owners

## RESULTS



Increased sales by **10%**



Retained sales by **5%**



Cost savings impact of **3%**



Retained **5** jobs



**\$237k** in capital investments

## CONTACT US



690 Knox Street  
Suite 200  
Torrance, CA 90502



(310)263-3060



[www.cmtc.com](http://www.cmtc.com)

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