

## LEAN STRATEGIES SUPPORT CONTINUED GROWTH

**ABOUT WARREN PACKAGING INC.** A family-owned and operated company established in 2012, Warren Packaging manufactures custom labels and performs specialized paper-converting tasks, including producing corrugated packaging and folding cartons. Based in Ontario, California, with around 15 employees, the company serves a variety of industries, including food, health, beauty, gaming, and electronics.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Warren Packaging was going through a period of rapid change. The company increased facility space to keep up with growing demand, but began suffering from high lead times and poor customer satisfaction ratings. Issues with quality, workplace organization, and inventory control meant the company was losing orders to competitors. Without key performance indicators, it was difficult for Warren Packaging to ascertain which performance objectives needed to be met in order to resolve the problems.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** The San Bernardino County Workforce Development Department's Business Services Center introduced Warren Packaging to California Manufacturing Technology Consulting (CMTc), part of the MEP National Network. CMTc designed a Lean Manufacturing project to address the company's issues, focusing on four key areas: leadership and culture; information flow; material flow; and process efficiency.

First, specialists from CMTc helped the organization establish a vision and mission. Next, they engaged a team from Warren Packaging in process mapping, defining every step from order entry to payment. The team discovered dead ends and loops in the process and utilized the Japanese principle of Kaizen—changing for the better—to improve both information flow and material flow. With recommendations from shop floor personnel, the company designed a desired future state map, making changes to the physical plant where necessary. CMTc encouraged the team to apply the principles of 5S workplace organization (Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize, and Sustain) to improve process efficiency.

In addition, Warren Packaging established a daily morning meeting within each department to give employees the opportunity to report on achievements and challenges. Now, each member of the workforce has a clear understanding of the immediate tasks at hand, as well as overall goals. The changes boosted morale, and Warren Packaging increased sales, reduced lead times, and created six new positions at the plant to support continued growth.

**"With the support of the California MEP Center, Warren Packaging was able to implement a Lean Manufacturing rollout that resolved issues involving quality, inventory control, and customer satisfaction. CMTc helped transform the way we manufacture, and the way we think. The result for the company? Increased margins, improved communication, and better employee morale."**

-Mike Dittenber, Director, Operations

## RESULTS



Increased sales by **\$1.5M**



Added **6** new jobs



Increased margins and reduced lead times



Improved communication and morale

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