

DATA PAPERS, INC. EXPANDS PRODUCT OFFERINGS WITH IMC'S INNOVATION ENGINEERING SERVICES

ABOUT DATA PAPERS, INC. Data Papers, Inc. began in 1969 and can provide virtually any product or service imaginable to communicate with your clients, employees, stockholders, or vendors. They are a manufacturer of various print materials such as business forms, catalogues, manuals, digital plotting files, etc. with headquarters in Muncy, PA.

THE CHALLENGE. Data Papers (DPI) realized many of their traditional products and services had become commoditized and as a result DPI had lost pricing leverage and profitability was suffering. Consistent with those realities, the industry was going through cost-cutting and consolidations. The highly experienced DPI Leadership Team recognized that if DPI was going to rise above these industry trends, they needed to develop new products and services that are both meaningful enough to customers to generate interest and unique enough to demand a healthy profit. As a result, they began working with IMC on a systematic "innovation how-to" from strategy to idea generation, to idea development and delivery that would leverage DPI's strengths by focusing a portion of the organization's time and energy specifically on innovation.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. IMC utilized Innovation Engineering (IE) tools and techniques that guided DPI through a series of steps with the aim of identifying strategic directions for innovation focus; generating ideas that support these strategic directions, educating and training a core group of DPI employees on IE tools, concepts, roles, responsibilities and how-to's; and assisting DPI on initial creation of their own "DPI Innovation System". Under IMC coaching, the team identified two projects to move through a development phase. One of the projects was a new business that leveraged DPI's considerable data management capabilities to be able to offer non-profits a suite of data management services that many non-profits currently do in-house. The realization was that DPI could perform these services much more efficiently and effectively and that in turn would allow DPI to provide improved print materials for the non-profits that could provide donors with more specific and more timely information about how their donations are being applied. During the Innovation Engineering project DPI added a second customer for this service and, using the IE tools and methods, DPI has turned this into a formal business offering. Per DPI's objective, this business service offers higher value to customers (meaningful) and fewer companies can provide this service (unique). That higher value has provided significantly better pricing leverage and this service is providing margins well-above DPI's traditional products and services.

"Russ Lawrence, our contact at IMC, took our innovation team to places we never imagined we could go. His deep knowledge of manufacturing and process development helped him to speak our language and guide us to simplify and improve. I only wish we could add Russ to our fulltime staff."

-Jerry Wertz, President & CEO

RESULTS



\$150,000 in
increased/retained sales



53 new or retained jobs



\$100,000 in cost savings



\$200,000 in new markets

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