

## THIRSTY FOR MORE: BEVERAGE COMPANY LEVERAGES MANUFACTURING PARTNERSHIP TO ATTAIN OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

**ABOUT PEPSI-COLA OF MISSOULA.** Established almost 70 years ago, Pepsi-Cola of Missoula & Kalispell are locally-owned beverage distribution companies that employ more than 120 employees in western Montana. They serve the Missoula Valley and surrounding areas with over 450 different products, including carbonated soft drinks, coffee, energy drinks, juice, protein drinks, sparkling water, sports drinks, tea and water.

**THE CHALLENGE.** With 450 different products - and large inventories of each - Jevon Staples, the general manager of Pepsi-Cola Western Montana, recognized the importance of increasing the efficiency of every process. For example, he was interested in expediting the distribution of products just past the “best-by” date, as well as improving product receiving and picking, facility maintenance, and product service.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** In 2018, Staples met with the Montana Manufacturing Extension Center (MMEC), part of the MEP National Network™, and learned of a new regional manufacturing group under development- the Western Montana Manufacturing Partnership (WMMP). He immediately saw the potential benefits of being involved in such a group and became a founding member. Later that year, Staples completed MMEC’s SME Lean Bronze certification training program and became a founding member of WMMP’s Manufacturing Excellence team. Inspired by recommendations from WMMP, Jevon began implementing lean strategies at Pepsi-Cola, including 5S visual management techniques. In fact, in 2019 the facility hosted a 5S Problem-Solving event in which multiple manufacturing companies from the area participated.

Shane Cantrell, MMEC’s Business Advisor who facilitated the event and worked with Pepsi on their lean transformation, is impressed by how Staples and his staff have embraced lean strategies, calling Pepsi “a poster child for 5S.” One of the company’s most impressive accomplishments? Reducing the average time for sort-through and pickup of past-date products from 45 minutes to 15. Service Manager Luke Marceau, who is now also SME Lean Bronze-certified, has implemented additional 5S improvements, such as a new staging area and improved ways to organize and label tools, racks and bins, which has increased efficiency in his service area.

**"I would like to thank and acknowledge the high level of professionalism and support we received and continue to receive from MMEC. They are first class and extremely knowledgeable and helpful."**

-Jevon Staples, Franchise General Manager

## RESULTS



Over **\$20,000** in cost savings and avoidance



Over **\$27,000** in new investments

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