

VALUE STREAM MAPPING HELPS REDUCE LEAD TIME

ABOUT WEPKO PLASTICS INC. Wepco Plastics is a specialty provider of plastic injection molded parts and rapid aluminum tooling. Wally Parmelee launched the company in his basement during the early 1980s and it's been family owned and operated ever since. The family-run business has forged a culture that focuses on ensuring customer satisfaction.

Wepco is an integral part of the product design, development and production process, helping their customers bring new products to market. Through hard work, state-of-the-art machinery, and extensive experience the company delivers quality, cost-effective products, on-time and on-schedule. Wepco's expert molding technicians produce quality parts using quality tooling to finish the process and ensure a quick turnaround. In addition to their best-in-class molds, the tool room can also provide job shop machined metal parts, custom sinker EDM work, 3D printing services, SLAs and more.

THE CHALLENGE. A key strategic goal of Wepco Plastics is to increase market share and improve customer satisfaction. To help achieve this, the company resolved to decrease its overall lead time from eight to four weeks per average order. One of the key processes within the business is mold making which takes up 50% (or four weeks) of the overall lead time. By streamlining and simplifying processes within its mold making value stream, Wepco Plastics sought to reduce its average lead time. The company was also looking to streamline scheduling, resource allocation as well as collaboration through visual management. Wepco engaged the services of CONNSTEP to assist in reaching their stated goals.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Wepco Plastics management discussed their stated goals and intentions with CONNSTEP who recommended a Value Stream Mapping/Kaizen workshop to meet their needs. In advance of the workshop, CONNSTEP collaborated with Wepco to ensure all team members agreed on the specifics of the project and understood their role to enable its success.

Working with CONNSTEP, the Wepco team prepared a deployment plan designed to create the future state, initiate the implementation of identified short term solutions, track and collect additional data for longer term actions. A presentation was made to Wepco Plastics management to ensure alignment with their objectives and obtain approval of the plan.

With the support of Wepco's management team, lean principles were applied, and value stream mapping guided the simplification of processes and adoption of new procedures to decrease its overall lead time from eight weeks to four weeks per average order.

"After evaluating our mold making process and identifying improvement opportunities, we've significantly reduced our overall lead time and improved first pass yield. With our improved workflow, we're able to get jobs out quicker."

-David Parmelee, President

RESULTS



\$500,000 in new or retained sales



3 new or retained jobs



\$50,000 in cost savings



\$150,000 in new investment

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