

AGRICULTURE MANUFACTURER SEES OPPORTUNITY THROUGH CUSTOMER DIVERSIFICATION

ABOUT POLY TECH INDUSTRIES, INC. Poly Tech Industries, in Monticello, Georgia was founded in 1975 and is a second generation, family-owned manufacturing business committed to providing innovative and long-lasting solutions to the agricultural industry. Their core business consists of plastic components that protect and enhance agricultural equipment performance. They hold multiple patents, including the industry's first combine skid, and one for their proprietary "living hinge" design used on tens of thousands of grain headers worldwide.

THE CHALLENGE. Poly Tech Industries' business is largely seasonal, just like the industry it serves - agriculture. Jimmy Rabitsch, chief executive officer, knew he needed to expand outside of their niche market and even out revenue throughout the year. He contacted the Georgia Manufacturing Extension Partnership (GaMEP) at Georgia Tech, part of the MEP National Network™. GaMEP was already helping Rabitsch and his team implement an ISO 9001 quality management system. Bill Nusbaum, GaMEP's northeast region manager, suggested a machine shop assessment for a fresh perspective.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Nusbaum and Bob Wray, GAMEP project manager, provided Poly Tech with a SWOT analysis on the company's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. The first step toward offsetting Poly Tech's months of heavy production and capitalizing on their excess capacity for the remainder of the year was connecting Poly Tech with the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in Georgia to identify new, non-competitive companies that could use their products. Focusing on Southern Hemisphere companies with the opposite offseason could provide Poly Tech a new client base.

Next, the team recognized an opportunity to improve shipping accuracy. Poly Tech created a process in their management plan to increase shipment accuracy and completion. Before any products are packed each piece is photographed laid out on a table, giving Poly Tech proof of items shipped. They can now keep up with corrective actions to evaluate errors, reduce the time to resolve delivery issues, and keep clients' trust intact.

Finally, Poly Tech enrolled in GaMEP's first virtual total productive maintenance cohort (TPM), a 12-week program to address equipment breakdowns. The training covers the steps to implement TPM for a select piece of equipment, such as Poly Tech's water jet machine, which cuts stainless steel to support their patented plastic parts. Poly Tech can now determine the true cost of running this machine and better plan for maintenance downtime, thus producing a cost savings for customers.

"Ever since I started working with the GaMEP they have impressed me. Their accessibility, time spent on projects, and response to requests have always been timely and professional. We have felt very supported and appreciate that they have given us the tools to become a more competitive manufacturer."

-Jimmy Rabitsch, Chief Executive Officer of Poly Tech Industries

RESULTS



Over **\$750,000** in increased or retained sales due to ISO 9001 certification



\$5,000 in cost savings due to improved understanding of water jet machine operational costs



Reduced shipping errors by creating a maintaining a corrective action on delivery accuracy



Attended TPM cohort and applied best practices, reducing quality problems due to equipment issues

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