

## SUPER THIN SAWS SHARPENS THEIR CURRENT CONDITION AND PLANS FOR THEIR FUTURE WITH VALUE STREAM MAPPING

**ABOUT SUPER THIN SAWS.** Super Thin Saws (STS), located in Waterbury, VT, began as Schultz Tool Sharpening in 1976. In the 1980's, they were largely assisted by California Cedar Products Company, who had developed the special design STS uses today; this was accomplished in partnership with the Mechanical Engineering Dept. at Berkeley and California Saw & Knife Works.

What sets STS apart from others in their unique industry - designing and manufacturing thin circular saw blades for woodworking applications - is that the company's technology packs more stiffness into a thinner package allowing some types of woodworking operations to save money by making more product from less raw material therefore improving yield and productivity. Today, the company employs 21 full time.

**THE CHALLENGE.** STS had been working with a consultant on reducing their lead times and improving on-time delivery. This led to assessing how Value Stream Mapping (VSM) could allow STS opportunities for improvement as well as designing improved product and information flows in their shop and customer service areas. The company requested VMEC, part of the MEP National Network™, provide VSM Lead Facilitator services for their staff.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** VMEC's role was to coordinate a planning meeting and 2 day VSM facilitation including VSM overview training - current state, future state and project planning activities. Steps involved: first, classroom training and development of detailed VSMs; second, application of the VSM to one of STS product families (this included mapping current conditions, work-in-process inventories and identifying waste and obstacles to flow within the value stream); and third, developing an improved future state map, looking out 3 - 6 months. Upon completion of the VSMs STS identified the changes needed to move from the current state condition to the future state; this led to prioritizing improvement projects and establishing a project plan to achieve the future state.

"On top of all the obvious business benefits, it was a thoroughly enjoyable experience. This project helped us achieve better communication, better teamwork, organize our inventory and reorganize our grinding hall layout. The result was that soon after the project, our on-time-delivery number improved and our rework decreased."

-John Schultz, President

## RESULTS



**\$25,000** in increased sales



**\$10,000** in retained sales



**\$4,000** in workforce practices investment



**\$4,000** in new products/processes

## CONTACT US



VTC, 124 Admin Drive  
Old Dorm, Suite 126  
Randolph Center, VT 05061



(802)728-1432



[www.vmec.org](http://www.vmec.org)

