

INVESTMENT IN LEAN TRAINING PAYS DIVIDENDS FOR
LONETREE DESIGNS

ABOUT LONE TREE DESIGNS. LoneTree Designs was founded by Eric and Corrine Aasmundstad in 2011. A family-owned company located in Devils Lake, North Dakota, LoneTree serves customers nationwide. They manufacture standard, as well as custom, yard and garden art products such as planters, collegiate, metal flowers, personalized signs, wildlife sculptures, fire pits, and home and cabin accents. Their products are handmade, with the finest materials and they pride themselves by paying attention to detail on every product. With in-house design capabilities the company has been very responsive to customers who desire unique designs for use in and around their homes, farms, and businesses. Their competition includes SWEN Products and Thomas Metal Art (North Dakota), big box stores such as Lowe's and Hobby Lobby and online through Amazon, Etsy. LoneTree Designs, however, distinguishes themselves by offering quality products and customization.

THE CHALLENGE. Confronted with the need to increase production capacity the company reached out to Impact Dakota, part of the MEP National Network™. After an on-site visit and assessment of the manufacturing facility, Impact Dakota suggested a number of improvement measures and proposed a short course in lean concepts followed by an on-site visit.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. The lean tools and systems covered in Impact Dakota's Lean Enterprise for High Performance Manufacturing training were customized to meet the time and other resource constraints that the company had. The training focused on how best making use of various resources and included 5S, plant layout and cellular manufacturing, pull/kanban system, and setup reduction methodology. During the training feedback was solicited as how different lean tools and systems relate to company's situation and if implemented, how they can help with increased productivity. After the training a follow-up site visit was conducted to receive feedback and observe changes that were made to help with improving capacity. The visit also included a discussion and analysis of outsourcing some operations and focusing on product and processes that can help with the goal of improved capacity while enhancing the revenue stream. Emphasis was put on product portfolio and the need to reduce product variety and focusing on reducing and/or eliminating products that consume too much of capacity and not generating good revenue.

"The training provided by Impact Dakota has been very helpful in improving the operations of our facility. The time spent to date will pay dividends for years to come. I would recommend Impact Dakota to anyone!"

-Eric Aamundstad, Owner

RESULTS



15-20% in overall productivity gain from better use of space, improved layout and product staging



1,050 - 1,400 hours saved annually



\$68,250 - \$91,000 in cost savings annually



15% estimated increase in sales annually

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