MEP National Network™

CONNECTICUT SUCCESS STORY

IMPROVEMENT TO PROCESS FLOW INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY

ABOUT SONITEK CORPORATION. Founded in 1989 in Milford, Connecticut, Sonitek specializes in the manufacturing of heat staking machines, ultrasonic welders, and air presses, primarily for the automotive, medical, and consumer electronics markets. Sonitek heat staking presses custom tooling offer high speed, ergonomic, and repeatable solutions for thermal applications like riveting of plastic bosses, insertion, filter and membrane sealing, plus other plastic joining applications.
Sonitek is a past recipient of the Manufacturing Innovation Award from the Connecticut Business & Industry Association (CBIA). This award recognized the company's efforts to expand awareness of manufacturing as a career path while providing manufacturing opportunities for traditional high school students, acknowledging their partnership with Platt Tech High School in Milford.

THE CHALLENGE. Sonitek has worked with hundreds of manufacturers worldwide, providing design and application guidance for reliable and repeatable assembly processes. As a leading manufacturer of heat staking machines, ultrasonic welders, and air presses, Sonitek sought to improve productivity and customer satisfaction by implementing lean continuous improvement (CI) training for their workforce.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Company leadership selected CONNSTEP's Continuous Improvement Champion Certification (CICC) program.The CICC training program offered by CONNSTEP, part of the MEP National Network™, provides a comprehensive series of 10 module sessions essential to understanding the principles and practices of Lean continuous improvement. Participants are able to contribute to their organization by identifying areas of waste to eliminate and by making vast improvements in their lead and cycle times, WIP, and quality, which all lead to benefits including greater efficiencies, streamlined workflows, and cost savings.
To introduce and sustain a culture of continuous improvement at Sonitek, the employee who participated in CICC also implemented a mentored project at their facility with a CONNSTEP consultant which reinforced their classroom lessons. After conducting a current state value stream mapping exercise, it was evident to Sonitek that they could do more, faster, and with less work in the process of their kit preparation for their heat staking Spectrum Series.
A key step was a visual management system put in place for better inventory control that improved the speed and accuracy of their workflow process. Visual work cells were designed to interact with each other to meet the needs of production and delivery. As a result, typical lead time for one assembly line of multiple custom machines was 18-20 weeks and the Sonitek team was now able to complete two lines in 14 weeks.

"Areas down the line were exposed, we saw the hidden waste and inefficiencies, and were able to address them. In the process we fixed our ability to deliver a full complete kit."

-Tyler Webster, Supply Chain Supervisor

RESULTS

- **3** created or retained jobs
- **$300,000** in new or retained sales
- **$55,000** in cost savings
- **$47,400** in new investment

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