

PILGRIM AEROSPACE FASTENERS CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MINDSET CULMINATES IN SUCCESSFUL SALE TO MEIDOH

ABOUT PILGRIM AEROSPACE FASTENERS A DIVISION OF PILGRIM SCREW CORPORATION. Pilgrim Screw Corporation d/b/a Pilgrim Aerospace Fasteners manufactures hundreds of varieties of screws, bolts, special fasteners and other unique hardware in Chandler, Arizona. It specializes in Military and Aerospace specifications AN/MS/NAS threaded fasteners. The company's continuous improvement mindset, growth potential and strong financial performance drew the attention of MEIDOH, a market leader in automotive fasteners. In January 2024, MEIDOH purchased Pilgrim to expand its business portfolio and US presence.

THE CHALLENGE. Arizona MEP, part of the MEP National Network™, began working with Pilgrim in 2018 on possible building expansion and continues to assist the company on several fronts - strengthening financial management, optimizing the manufacturing process, implementing an automation and robotics plan, and expanding global markets.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. For several years Arizona MEP's financial expert has advised and implemented improvements to financial and accounting processes that have resulted in improved company performance and understanding of using KPIs to manage finances to achieve its growth plan. Using this information Pilgrim could identify its ideal customer and let unprofitable customers go. Over time, the company has consolidated and reduced debt and improved cash flow. These financial "clean-up" activities and improvements in the financial management process were essential to the company's ability to grow, a key factor in the sale of the business to MEDOH. Pilgrim's commitment to continuous improvement and total customer satisfaction led the company to embark on several projects. Arizona MEP led Pilgrim through its first value stream mapping (VSM) project to reduce lead time on a critical bolt for the military. Team members from production, quality, operations, customer service and planning departments mapped the current process, which provided a high-level visual representation of the entire process from order taking to final shipment, including time spent waiting on suppliers and equipment. They documented the tasks and the cycle time it took to do each. Using the map, they could see where to reduce wait time and eliminate tasks that did not provide value to the customer. After receiving the VSM training, Pilgrim continues to use VSM to improve processes. Most recently, Arizona MEP led Pilgrim through a 6S project to promote an efficient working environment and sustain a culture of safety. Pilgrim participated in ExporTech to develop a targeted export plan to support its growth plans. As a result of participating in the program, Pilgrim has developed customer relationships in Mexico, Germany, France and Asia.

RESULTS



37 retained jobs



\$1,610,000 in new investments for equipment & software



\$650,000 in increased sales due to ExporTec trade missions



\$250,000 total cost savings from automation project

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"Arizona MEP cares so much about their clients. With their assistance, expertise and resources, we've implemented many projects that enabled our growth and expansion."

-Jason Grove, COO