

AUTOMATION LEADS TO INCREASED EFFICIENCIES AND SALES

ABOUT A-1 INDUSTRIES. A-1 Industries, located in Fort Pierce, Florida, is more than just a manufacturer of wooden trusses. The company is a “technology” company that is constantly looking for ways to innovate and build value for its customers, employees, and society. Through the use of technological advances, the company provides state-of-the-art estimating, design, manufacturing, and engineering of their products to help change the way America builds its homes.

THE CHALLENGE. A-1 Industries has been seeing year-over-year growth, leading to increasing its market share for their products and services. The company faces challenges with the rising cost of raw materials, offsetting these rising costs through more efficient and safe operations, and finding and securing qualified people to employ. The management team at A-1 Industries reached out to the South Florida Manufacturers Association (SFMA), part of the FloridaMakes Network and the MEP National Network™, to help identify areas of opportunity for improvement.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. A-1 Industries is a member of the South Florida Manufacturers Association and was nominated to participate in the SFMA's Manufacturer of the Year Awards process in 2022. The company won the award for its group and received a written feedback assessment that detailed areas of opportunity, which included recommendations from the local FloridaMakes Business Advisor on the implementation of automation in several areas of the company that would help to improve operational efficiencies and reduce employee injuries on the job. Over the course of 2022 and 2023, the FloridaMakes Business Advisor worked with the management team at A-1 Industries to help identify automation solutions in specific target areas of production where it would benefit the company. A-1 entered into agreements with several technology companies to design, build, and install the necessary equipment to fit the company's needs.

"With a 48,000 sq ft expansion in 2024, we now have over a 130,000 sq ft production facility in FL and through our work with the Florida Makes Network have made strategic investments in forward-thinking initiatives designed to enhance production efficiencies and output but also to significantly improve safety within our facility. These initiatives include implementation of state-of-the-art robotic systems so that we can automate repetitive and labor intensive tasks. This not only accelerates output, but also maintains high-quality standards that our customers expect. A-1 is poised to lead the truss industry into a new era. Our investments in robotic technology reflects our dedication to innovation and our commitment to delivering the best products while prioritizing the safety and efficiency of our operations."

-Robert Chance, Vice President of Human Resources

RESULTS



65 new jobs and 65 retained jobs



\$2,000,000 invested in plant and equipment



5% increase in new sales and 20% in retained



3% reduction in overall costs with the implementation of new automation equipment

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