

PRINTING COMPANY DRIVES ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY  
THROUGH EFFICIENCY

**ABOUT ALLIED PRINTING SERVICES INC.** Family-owned and operated since its founding in 1949 by John F. Sommers, Allied Printing Services Inc. began in a small 150-square-foot building in Manchester, Connecticut. Seventy-five years later, carrying on a legacy of customer focus instilled by his father and grandfather, third-generation President and CEO John Sommers guides a team of over 400 employees at Allied's now 30-acre campus. The Sommers family takes pride in treating employees and customers like family. These customers cover a wide range of industries, including education, pharmaceuticals, manufacturing, healthcare, travel and leisure, and automotive. They believe that 'no detail is too small' when it comes to their range of printing services, including prepress, offset web and sheetfed printing, digital printing, finishing equipment, and fulfillment solutions. The company's dedication to quality, environmental sustainability, client collaboration, and technological innovation fuels its success.

**THE CHALLENGE.** A leader in sustainable printing, Allied Printing is ISO 14001:2015 certified and recognized by People's Action for Clean Energy for its Going Green initiative. The company reduces its environmental impact and improves efficiency through eco-friendly practices such as extensive recycling, a large solar array, energy-efficient lighting, an on-site fuel cell that contributes to a near-zero carbon footprint, and the exclusive use of vegetable- and soy-based inks.

To enhance operational and financial performance while reinforcing sustainability initiatives, Allied's leadership sought support to tackle slow machine changeovers, downtime, print defects, and production inefficiencies in their digital printing department.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** Allied's leadership contracted with CONNSTEP for this initiative. A PRIME (Process Re-engineering for Increased Manufacturing Efficiency) Lean Manufacturing Event was recommended for the company, funded through the Connecticut Energy Efficiency Fund and administered by Eversource Energy.

The PRIME project assisted Allied in identifying, recommending, and implementing workflow and efficiency improvements in its Xeikon digital printing area, which accounted for roughly 22% of the department's energy consumption. To achieve a 20% increase in productivity by boosting the current printing output of 1,824 linear feet per hour on its six digital web printing presses, CONNSTEP Continuous Improvement Consultant Carissa Roman was brought in to facilitate the project.

Carissa collaborated with Allied's leadership to assemble a Lean project team, facilitate Lean training, perform Value Stream Mapping to uncover improvement opportunities, establish goals for the Xeikon printing area, and set implementation priorities. A 3.5-day CONNSTEP analysis of Allied's Xeikon printing area revealed opportunities for improvement, including cross-shift communication and refined procedures for job changeovers.

A future state Value Stream Map was developed, which led to the implementation of Standard Operating Procedures for uniformity, including scheduling similar-color print jobs to eliminate cleaning downtime. More frequent preventative maintenance and reorganized changeover carts reduced changeover time by over 50%.

Visual aids enhanced job communication, reducing preproduction time and job

## RESULTS



\$50,000 in increased/retained sales



\$12,500 in cost savings



1 increased/retained job

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bag errors while clarifying requirements. Centralized, controlled wire storage prevented contamination and print defects. 5S improvements, such as removing excess supplies and decluttering, eliminated wasted time spent searching for supplies.

The successful PRIME project, an outcome of these efficiencies, boosted digital printing output by 21% (exceeding the 20% goal), increased sales, reduced waste and overtime with new, more efficient machines, and yielded measurable energy savings, further supporting Allied's sustainability efforts.

**"We had a great experience working with CONNSTEP. We chose them for their proven track record in helping businesses improve efficiency, and their expertise certainly delivered. Their work not only made us significantly more efficient and adaptable to change but also strengthened our team. Thanks to their support, we're now even more flexible in responding to our customers' needs."**

-Chris Gouveia and Ben Fournier, Senior Vice President and Digital Print Manager