

Sew What? Inc. Discovers Consulting Assistance Available to Manufacturers from CMTC

Megan Duckett, president of Sew What? Inc. reports on changes to control operations costs after working with CMTC.

Online PR News – 19-February-2014 –Constantly improving the way things are being done is critical to all businesses, but especially important for manufacturers today. Most struggle to stay on top, not only of new and emerging technologies, but a plethora of issues like supplier development, sustainability, process improvement and a changing workforce, to name a few.

Megan Duckett, founder of Sew What? Inc., [a textile manufacturer](#) of theater curtains and stage drapes based in Rancho Dominguez, California, is happy knowing that for California manufacturers like her, help is readily available. She turned to [CMTC](#), a private non-profit corporation, affiliated with the Manufacturing Extension Partnership Program, that offers consulting services to small and medium-sized manufacturers in Southern California.

CMTC was established in 1992 and offers industry experts who work closely with manufacturers to help them compete at a higher level in the changing global marketplace. Solutions are proposed for a company after talking with all levels from top management, all the way to the shop floor. Why would one look for advice from an outside consultant? Duckett says, "Often when you are in the thick of it and have done things a certain way the emotional side of "old behaviors" can get in the way of finding new ways to do things...Because you're also so busy just trying to run the business, bringing in outside assistance gave us a fresh new perspective. CMTC provided us access to affordable top-notch experts in areas of business where we are not ourselves experts."

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Duckett outlined the process. "Randy McKinley, a CMTC consultant, met with us at our facility last fall. Once we identified the goal, and the critical issues, we committed to solve these issues over a 12 month timeframe. We turned to Randy for inspiration, ideas, motivation and advice at each step of the way through the entire process," says Duckett.

Sew What?'s first goal was to improve internal processes. They felt this would allow them to maintain competitive pricing against other off-shore textile and drapery manufacturers, which in turn would help to grow business.



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They discovered that buyer behaviors had changed in the previous eighteen months. There was a need to provide product in ever-shorter timeframes, and to accept there would likely be further reductions in profit margins. Given all that, they saw it was time to look again at controllable costs and processes, namely those under their own roof.

Looking at their existing operations they found a ready-made solution. Says Duckett, "We outlined our challenge: to blend both rental and sales offerings within our facility to eliminate duplicity in shipping, receiving, and quality control. We believed that doing so would not only cut costs, but would ultimately provide clients with a better and simpler process as the end user."

They needed to streamline tasks and blend departments and change mindsets, from a "two companies under one roof" culture to a "one company offering two services" culture. It was done using a collaborative approach. They were completely in control of the timeframe for implementation.

The results after four months have been positive. Says Duckett, "We've implemented a number of these changes already for improved synergies within our two companies. We've seen greater client satisfaction with a more seamless experience. For staff it's brought together two teams with their strengths and capabilities for a stronger overall unit. On the corporate side, it opens the opportunity for us to start to grow again as a leaner more efficient business and hopefully to add more jobs."

"These results demonstrate that small and medium-sized manufacturers can affordably use outside resources to improve their business processes, creating opportunities for growth," stated Jim Watson, President and CEO of CMTC. "The Sew What? story is proof that small manufacturers in California can find ways to increase customer satisfaction, competitiveness and profitability," he continued.

About Sew What? Inc.

Sew What? Inc., located in Rancho Dominguez, California, is a well-known stage and theatrical drapery manufacturer known for its dramatic theatrical drapes and fabrics used in major rock concerts, top fashion shows and other artistic staged venues. Their drapes have dressed the stages of Sting, Elton John, Madonna, and Rod Stewart to name a few. The company has received numerous awards for innovation, including the Dell/NFIB Small Business Excellence Award, and was featured on the 1000th cover of Rolling Stone. For information, contact Sew What? Inc. at (310) 639-6000, or email inquiries@sewwhatinc.com.

About Rent What? Inc.

Committed to providing an ultimate experience in [drapery rental products](#) and customer service, Rent What? Inc. is proud to be woman-owned and operated. The firm, located in Rancho Dominguez, CA, has set the stage for artists including Beyonce, R Kelly, Nickelback and Demi Lovato. In addition to its large inventory of Inherently Flame Retardant stage drapes, traveler tracks and portable dressing rooms, the company is widely regarded for its basic pricing schedules, innovative damage waiver policy and fast and friendly service. For information, contact Rent What? Inc. at (310) 639-7000 or visit www.rentwhatinc.com.

About CMTC

A private, non-profit corporation established in 1992, CMTC is the Southern California affiliate of NIST MEP, under the Federal Hollings Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) program, a network of more than 60 centers across the country that provides assistance to small medium -sized manufacturers. CMTC serves Fresno to San Diego/Imperial County.