

ACCURATE DIAL & NAMEPLATE: Showing 'Signs' of Success



As a smart business owner, you know how important it is for customers to remember your name. This can't happen unless you have signage materials such as nameplates and decals to remind them of

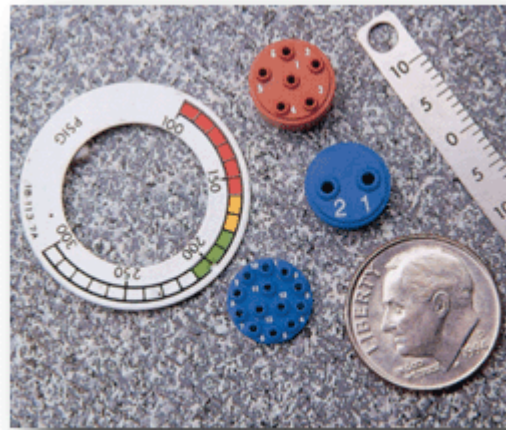
who you are. That's why companies turn to Accurate Dial & Nameplate, Inc., a Glendale, CA manufacturer which has been serving its loyal base of clients since 1958.

In addition to custom nameplates, plaques and asset tags, the organization produces dials, panels, overlays and other commercial and industrial products. Its customers range from Fortune 500 companies requiring specialized services to entrepreneurs looking to develop their first prototypes. While the company can service any industry, the 20-employee business has earned a reputation for manufacturing products for the aerospace and defense field.

Although Accurate Dial has always maintained strong relationships with their clients, a significant challenge arose that threatened their ability to serve their customers. Erin Dyer, Quality Control Manager for Accurate Dial, dates the beginning of this challenge back to 2002. "An organization had called us up and asked us to obtain ISO9001/AS9100 certification," she recounts. ISO9001/AS9100 is a quality management standard for the aerospace industry.

While Accurate Dial wanted to obtain ISO9001/AS9100 certification, the company knew that the process was very complex, labor and time intensive and costly to acquire. "We realized that the certification required a lot of

management time to implement all of the necessary metrics. For a small shop like ours, we felt that it would be too difficult."



Unfortunately, this challenge became more prominent over the subsequent years. More and more of their clients were being forced by their customers to only work with ISO9001/AS9100 compliant organizations throughout their supply chain. "We were at a crossroads of losing aerospace and defense industry clients," says Dyer. These challenges additionally made Accurate Dial understand the importance of developing new sales and marketing initiatives. Furthermore, the organization also realized it was in need of a more comprehensive organizational action plan in order to expand and succeed.

In 2008, Accurate Dial received a letter from the City of Glendale recommending that they work with California Manufacturing Technology Consulting® (CMTC). CMTC Consultant Peter Athanas and city representatives worked with Accurate Dial to outline a new strategy to address their challenges. This included

obtaining ISO9001/AS9100 certification, implementing a team building and action plan and employing a new sales diversification initiative. CMTC was able to secure funding for the projects from stimulus dollars through a Layoff Aversion Program with the Verdugo Workforce Investment Board.



CMTC met with leadership to assess the complex guidelines for certification obtainment. "CMTC assisted us with a GAP analysis, flow charts, training for management and employees, an internal audit and management review meetings," says Dyer. Additionally, CMTC helped implement a questionnaire to assist leadership outline team strengths. This improved internal communication for the organization, increasing efficiencies. A consultant also worked to identify a new target audience, state and federal bureaus, for Accurate Dial. "This helped us develop a clear plan to break into that industry," says Dyer.

As a result of the projects, Accurate Dial was recommended for ISO9001/AS9100 certification by January 2011 and will be officially recognized

as certified by the end of 2011. "We already had a company give us a call and say, 'the minute you become certified, you will be open to the contracts for eight different programs'," says Dyer. Additionally, the organization also obtained a contract from a new customer in May 2011 which was partly dependent on the certification. Furthermore, two of Accurate Dial's existing clients specifically referenced the certification as reasons for new projects. "These projects are huge for an organization like us," says Dyer.

Because of this improvement process, Accurate Dial was able to retain 20 jobs and create three new positions, an incredible accomplishment for a small organization. In addition to creating and saving jobs, the organization retained \$560,000 in sales and increased new sales by \$525,000. "We are thrilled to have taken the leap of faith with CMTC and the Verdugo WIB. Without their assistance, we would not have been prepared for the changes in our industry," says Dyer.

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*Erin Dyer,
Quality Control Manager*

FEATURED CUSTOMER

Accurate Dial & Nameplate, Inc.

329 Mira Loma Avenue
Glendale, CA 91204

Tel: (323) 245-9181 | (800) 400-4455 (CA Only) | Fax: (818) 243-6793

Email: sales@accuratedial.com | Web: www.accuratedial.com