



## LEAN Manufacturing

### Saint Clair Systems



Since 1990 nearly 3,600 customers, from Fortune 500 giants to niche-market start-ups, have entrusted Saint Clair

trained to address the prioritized action items. The plan called for training in LEAN Champion, LEAN Office Champion,

Understanding LEAN Principles, Kaizen improvement, leadership team building and problem solving. All employees of SCS were briefed on the plan timeline and engaged in the actual implementation.



Before Lean Implementation



After Lean Implementation

Systems (SCS) with the design, production, installation, and service of their fluid-temperature and viscosity-control systems. Customers rely on SCS' expertise in temperature control for such applications as: automotive and industrial paint, sealer and adhesive dispensing, machine coolant, coil-coating and a variety of processes in the food and beverage industry. Through patented technologies and processes, SCS delivers improved performance across the board. Accurate temperature and viscosity control through all phases of fluid delivery, means that their customers see reductions in scrap, rejects, solvent adds, labor, and harmful volatile organic compound emissions.

Located in Washington Michigan, SCS was referred to the MMTC for assistance in adopting lean manufacturing principles in 2007. After discussion and input from MMTC staff, a training plan was developed. Robert Gladstone, President of SCS, along with partners Greg Kremer and Mike Bonner attended MMTC's LEAN Executive training as the first step in the plan. During the three day learning session, the SCS team developed an 18 month operational improvement plan and identified which employees should be

#### Impacts

- Dramatic employee culture shift with complete "buy-in"
- Manufacturing cycle time decreased from 20 to 8 days
- Metrics established annually and reviewed, quarterly
- Vendor on-time delivery increased from 59% to over 92%
- Customer on-time delivery increased from 89.2% to 95.5%
- Inventory turns increased from 6 to 10
- Value added per Full-time Equivalent has increased from an initial \$115K, to \$141K and is now over \$158K per recent MMTC Transformation Planner
- Increased confidence in our lower production costs has allowed SCS to aggressively pursue business against "low- cost countries" resulting in 48% of sales from outside North America in 2010
- Our improved manufacturing environment is a showcase of LEAN organization, cleanliness and metrics. When customers and potential customers see the SCS shop floor, it becomes a differentiator

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## SUCCESS STORY

**“Despite the economic down of 08-09, we’re a better company. Our increased confidence in our lower production costs has allowed SCS to aggressively pursue business against low-cost countries resulting in 48% of sales from outside North America in 2010.”** -- Rob Gladstone, President

Gladstone recently wrote the following about the impacts of MMTC training on his company. “I would say there were three critical roles MMTC played and each of them important at different stages:

**First, getting the executive team aligned:** Starting with the lean executive training was critical. We (the management team) were responsible for changing the culture and if we were not buying in, measuring the improvements and promoting the early progress and small victories, nothing much of value would have taken place. MMTC had tools and exercises that highlighted our lack of alignment and helped get us on track before undertaking any lean initiatives.

**Second, helping us see our company through eyes that have experience making the lean journey:** This may sound simple but they (MMTC) quickly identified where they knew we would fall short in an implementation. We had established a comfortable growth pattern, (doubling the business over a five-year period), but did not really change much in the way of personnel and processes. Much responsibility was flowing through one person and there was much “tribal knowledge.” Processes were documented and adequate for a company half of our size. It was very clear to the MMTC team, very quickly, that any undertaking was going to crush our existing resources. We either needed to upgrade talent through training, hire additional resources, realign existing resources or some combination of the three. I think that without their help, we would have underestimated what was required and failed in our implementation. Actually, I know we would have failed. It seems simple in hindsight but it was critical.

**And third, bringing the knowledge and experience:** Every company, (and we’re no different), likes to think that they are unique. And they are. However, there are many things we have in common with other companies. Having been through this before, the MMTC team was able to anticipate different stages of the lean implementation and prepare us for the questions, the resistance and the other intangibles of which we were only somewhat aware. Having that resource helped the management team stay on top of the knowledge base required for a successful implementation.”

Gladstone credits their successful LEAN journey to all SCS employees. “It certainly has been and continues to be a team effort. Our employees, at all levels, experienced the MMTC knowledge transfer and our Manufacturing Manager Jeff Makarewicz became really comfortable taking the lead on the implementation. Despite the economic down of 08-09, we’re a better company. Our increased confidence in our lower production costs has allowed SCS to aggressively pursue business against low-cost countries resulting in 48% of sales from outside North America in 2010.”