



Case Study: Direct Mail Printer: Gains through Lean Transformation

Client: Commercial printing and direct mail production company

The commercial printing company is in an industry that is shrinking at an annual rate of 5 percent. Furthermore, digital technology and customer marketing trends are requiring higher quality and greater responsiveness. The company president knew that the cultural transformation required to combat the current decline would be the biggest hurdle because of the company's 99-year-history of autocratic leadership style.

Lean Partners focused heavily on the basic tools of lean (5S and standard work) to create a solid foundation for improvements. In parallel, Lean Partners worked extensively with all managers, supervisors and team leaders to develop a new leadership style that would contribute to lean organization success.

Once standard work and 5S were in place, significant focus was placed on setup reduction to generate capacity for growth. Routing standardization was used to create flow, which is revolutionizing the industry. Business plan deployment was used to align lean efforts to drive business results. There is a 23% plant-wide productivity gain YTD for 2007.

Information is still being collected regarding cultural, interpersonal and leadership impact as well as what the printing and direct mail company can apply to other areas of their business.