

RESULTS

COMPANY PROFILE

For the last 42 years, Penmar Industries, Inc. has earned a reputation for excellence as a leading minority supplier of high quality labels, tapes and packaging supplies.

Headquartered in Norwalk, Connecticut, Penmar is committed to providing superb service and customer satisfaction in every product they design and manufacture. For more than four decades, clients have depended on Penmar's expertise to help them create custom solutions to meet their diverse product needs.

SITUATION

Back in 2003, Tony Soegaard, president of Penmar Industries, made the strategic business decision to become registered to ISO 9001:2000. Although achieving certification was not mandated by any particular client, reaching the quality standard became a primary goal since all customers would ultimately benefit from Penmar's commitment to quality.

The company's management team also wanted to advance the registration process before certification became required by clients. Penmar Industries was already known for providing great customer service but wanted to take a look at how to improve efficiency within the company. Their two major priorities were achieving ISO certification and focusing on Lean implementation.

SOLUTION

The responsibility was given to Rick Cipot, Operations and General Manager at Penmar Industries. Rick looked to CONNSTEP for assistance by contacting Ray Snyder, CONNSTEP's Team Leader of Quality Services, who assigned service provider Marty Millea to the task of preparing Penmar for ISO certification. The management team was initially apprehensive about adding demanding ISO requirements to the already complex daily responsibilities of meeting customer demands and operating the company, yet knew that achieving certification was critical to future success.

Early in the process, Marty examined Penmar Industries' documentation and practices to determine

Penmar Industries
Norwalk, Connecticut
16 employees

- Registration to ISO 9001:2000 Certification
- \$100,000 in new sales; \$500,000 in retained sales
- \$5,000 in cost savings
- 28% reduction in paper usage



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the degree of compliance to the current ISO9001:2000 standard. Penmar saw that Marty was dedicated to making ISO 9001:2000 approachable, accessible and an affordable solution for the company. He provided ISO-required training and orientation to engage every staff member in the process of improving safety, delivery and lead time through utilizing the tools of documenting, tracking and evaluating. Penmar Industries soon adopted the philosophy that every staff member is a vital part of the quality control team. This outlook was instrumental in empowering employees to realize that no one is impervious to error and all personnel must watch for mistakes to catch them early on.

CONNSTEP's service provider also assisted Penmar's management in the writing of all process documentation as well as the company's quality policy manual. As a result of Marty's assistance, Penmar successfully reached its goal of becoming ISO 9001:2000 certified, and CONNSTEP continues to play an instrumental role by conducting the company's internal quality auditing processes.

Realizing that ISO and Lean should go hand in hand, Penmar soon decided to complement their ISO certification with a renewed focus on implementing company wide Lean practices. They again turned to CONNSTEP to assist with their continuous improvement efforts in the office and on the shop floor. CONNSTEP's Lean Consultants, including Matin Karbassioon, organized a six week program to work with every employee on improving operating processes, employing a 5S system, and utilizing skills developed from a Kaizen Training and Process Improvement event. Although the initial stages were challenging, Penmar employees realized the benefits of having ISO in place, since there were less obstacles to applying Lean practices. Lean allowed them to become more organized in individual and collective roles, eliminate waste and provide outstanding service to clients.

RESULTS

As a result of becoming ISO 9001:2000 registered, Penmar Industries has become a more profitable and

efficient company than it was several years ago. The time they dedicated to ISO continues to result in cost cutting, profit building and time saving throughout the company.

With ISO 9001:2000 registration, they have retained clients and acquired new accounts; \$100,000 in new sales and \$500,000 in retained sales following their certification, estimating that for every dollar spent with CONNSTEP, they have earned twelve back. They have also seen \$5,000 in cost savings and have invested an additional \$10,000 in workforce practices.

“At Penmar Industries, we could not reach the goals we envisioned until CONNSTEP came in and helped.

Without CONNSTEP's assistance, these significant improvements would not have happened.”

Rick Cipot
Operations & General Manager
Penmar Industries

As a result of ISO certification and routine audits, Penmar has established a system for better documentation, traceability, and accountability in all areas of the production and delivery processes.

Through the enterprise-wide Lean training, Penmar Industries has improved workplace organization and significantly raised all of its 5S scores in less than three months. By applying Lean practices and investing in continuous improvement efforts, Penmar has been able to survive the recession

and become more efficient in their practices—realizing that change is hard, but absolutely worth it. By transforming the office into a Lean workspace, Penmar's office staff was able to effectively reduce paper load by 28%. Although the company still faces a multitude of challenges, they know that their improvement efforts will ensure them a successful future.

