



Success Story: Dental Crafters

www.dentalcrafters.net

Profile

Location: Marshfield, Wisconsin
Years in Business: Founded in 1989; 2nd generation owners
No. of Employees: 66
Products: Crowns, bridges, cosmetic dentistry, implants, and dentures
NWMOC Projects: Lean with Legos, Value Stream Mapping

Situation

It was the Spring of 2008, and Dental Crafters' business was booming. The only problem was that some manufacturing issues and bottlenecks were preventing them from completing orders on time. It wasn't unusual for them to have 470 cases on the floor at once. When co-owner Bob Slominski saw a brochure for the NWMOC's upcoming *Manufacturing Advantage* Conference in May, his interest in Lean manufacturing was piqued. Bob attended the Conference and made contact with NWMOC Project Manager Ted Theyerl. After receiving numerous complimentary reports on Ted's work from other clients, Bob decided to enlist the services of the NWMOC.



Bob and Brad Slominski, Owners



Kanban controls ensure that parts are available when needed



An employee performs final quality inspections

"For the money we spent, I can't think of anything that's been more beneficial with immediate improvements on our bottom line." –

Bob Slominski, co-owner of Dental Crafters of Marshfield

Project

NWMOC Project Managers Ted Theyerl and Jerry Day met with Bob to gain an understanding of Dental Crafters' business and to walk through their facility. Their first project was Value Stream Mapping (VSM) with 10 of Dental Crafters' production staff, during which they mapped out their current state and then their desired "future state." Since then, every employee has participated in a Lean with Legos workshop. Now their entire staff "buys in" to their Lean initiatives and can not only talk the talk but also walk the walk. NWMOC project managers helped assess the workflow through the lab, reduce batch sizes, develop cycle times, and identify labor needs. Work in Process was reduced from 470 to 160 cases. The Lean training also proved valuable in determining what type of new computer system would best fit their needs. Current plans call for LCD screens to be added to workstations to track cases more easily. Chief Financial Officer Amy Nystrom said *"They [NWMOC] gave us the jump start we needed!"*

Results

Reduced remakes by 42%; saved \$30,000 in 5 months	Reduced Work-in-Process from 470 to 160 cases
Reduced quality calls by 87%	Reduced overtime hours; saved \$20,000 in 12 months
Reduced turnaround time by 33%	Improved employee morale
Increased ease of prioritizing and scheduling cases	Reinforced hiring of an Operations Manager