

PARTNERSHIP READIES HOOSIER SPRING TO GROW AEROSPACE, MILITARY SALES

For more than a half-century, Hoosier Spring Co. in South Bend has made precision springs for major aerospace companies and defense industry contractors, along with medical device suppliers and NASCAR vehicles.

With 90 employees, Hoosier Spring generates 60% of its business from the aerospace industry and major players such as Boeing, General Electric, Parker-Hannifin, Woodward, Pratt & Whitney, Honeywell and others.

To remain competitive with other aerospace industry suppliers and to grow its business worldwide, executives knew Hoosier Spring needed to upgrade its quality management system to the AS9100C standard.

This was no small task for Hoosier Spring, which needed training support to make this step successfully. The stakes also were high for the company founded by Jim Suth in 1954 and now led by his grandson, Greg: Practically every U.S. aircraft today has a Hoosier Spring-made product in its landing gear and fuel controls.

With strong sales in the 2010 third and fourth quarters, Hoosier Spring bolstered its Quality Department and other units, adding 20 new employees. Formal training for the Quality Department team was next.

Enter Purdue. Through the university's training expertise in risk management, root-cause analysis, internal auditing and Six Sigma, Hoosier Spring implemented product quality and production measures to identify and remove the cause of defects and minimize variability in its manufacturing.

Quality Department team members Nick Przygoda (Engineer), Bernard Taylor, Massimo Cataldo and QA Manager Greg Lynch participated in several workshops offered statewide by Purdue's Manufacturing Extension Partnership and its Technical Assistance Program.

ABOUT TAP/MEP

Purdue's Technical Assistance Program/Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) served more than 500 Indiana companies with workforce training and production needs from July 2010 to June 2011. Purdue MEP programs assist Indiana companies with advanced manufacturing efforts and continuous improvement principles as core workforce training and production strategies. Purdue's TAP is a NIST MEP network affiliate.

A Risk Management Committee was formed to include that team as well as Jeff Bozman, Nick Burton and Tim Andedo. Meeting weekly for seven months, the team brainstormed processes, ideas and solutions with one goal in mind: achieve AS9100C status.

The process worked. In August 2011, Hoosier Spring passed the audit in remarkable fashion to officially become an AS9100C registered manufacturer. Other benefits also have been apparent:

- The improved method of production from one Six Sigma project will save more than 14 million seconds per year, providing a total annual savings of \$313,739.
- The training is paying big dividends as employees isolate areas of risk and implement corrective measures that reduce and/or eliminate the risk. The steps have streamlined production and reduced the amount of scrap and cost of poor quality (COPQ) numbers.
- The investment and commitment by the management team sent a strong signal to all employees, having a significant positive effect on morale.

"Purdue is taking the approach that really allows Indiana businesses to improve. I'm speaking from experience since we just lived it here at Hoosier Spring. We treat the AS9100C certification as our license to continue doing business in the aerospace Industry. Through Purdue and its expertise in risk management and quality improvement, we are better positioned to compete."

Greg Lynch, Quality Assurance Manager
Hoosier Spring Co.



Greg Lynch



CONTACT US:

PURDUE MEP: www.mep.purdue.edu / 800-877-5182

PURDUE TAP: www.tap.purdue.edu / 765-494-6258



GREG SUTH
PRESIDENT
HOOSIER SPRING CO.

“Purdue is clearly helping our company reach its goals. Purdue TAP/MEP is a professionally managed organization with top-notch trainers and a wonderful staff. Hoosier Spring has benefited from this partnership with Purdue, and we will continue to build that relationship in the future.”

MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

HOOSIER SPRING CO., SOUTH BEND, IND.



SPRINGING TO NEW LEVELS OF QUALITY, PRODUCTION

“THANKS TO THIS TRAINING PARTNERSHIP WITH PURDUE, WE HAVE NEW TOOLS AND A RENEWED ENTHUSIASM TO GROW OUR COMPANY AND SUPPLY THE BEST QUALITY PRODUCT ON TIME AND AT A COMPETITIVE PRICE.”

GREG LYNCH
QUALITY ASSURANCE MANAGER
HOOSIER SPRING CO.