

- CLIENT: **Scientific Instrument Manufacturer**
- PROJECT SCOPE: **Production Management**
- PROJECT TARGET: **Process improvement; Remove stock shortages; Reduce cycle-time**
- RESULTS:
- **Increased visibility of demand**
 - **Understanding of problem-solving techniques**
 - **Improved supplier forecast and delivery performance**
 - **Make-vs-Buy tools implemented to help purchasing decision making**

The client called us in for a number of reasons. Firstly, they had recently acquired a competitor and had not yet brought working practices in-line at each site. Secondly, they were building to forecast with a sporadic, low-volume, product mix. And finally, the problems in manufacturing were compounded by poor delivery performance from suppliers. Consequently they suffered from high WIP levels, frequent stock-outs, and major disruption in assembly.

We mapped the manufacturing process from order entry to shipment at both sites, resulting in some processes being changed and ownership of tasks re-allocated. Purchasing was given charts to assist them with make-vs-buy evaluations, which in turn helped them to see areas where they could cut down paperwork, inventory, and WIP.

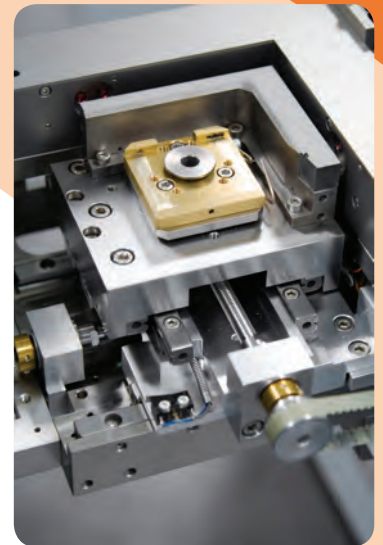
Metrics were devised to measure performance in various areas, particularly on the supply-side, and training in flow-production, 5S, and six-sigma given to key staff. In order to break away from the reliance on (poor) forecasting, the sales forecast process was revised - in many cases removed as their internal lead-times were inside the customer expectation; hence they could build-to-order (they thought there was an advantage in building batches but this common error was leaving them with excess stock of some products and no stock of items that were ordered).

The staff were shown how to identify and remove variability and how 5S systems would save time by improving housekeeping. A simple database was designed to give planning a much easier time of managing capacity, and, with new visual indicators being posted, the whole company could now see job status at any time.

“It soon became clear that we needed more of your expertise in the area of production and project management than we had thought initially.”

Bob Kenhard

Managing Director, Scientific Instrument Manufacturer



Weald Technology Ltd has won awards for engineering and innovation in low-carbon and sustainable transport. Our collaborative design and engineering projects are used to generate industry-relevant STEM activities that inspire the UK's next generation of engineers and scientists.

For further information please call

Phil Edwards on 01825 761890 email: info@weald-tech.co.uk