

OLIVER WIGHT

BIRD TRANSFORMS CUSTOMER DISSATISFACTION INTO AWARD-WINNING SUCCESS

Highlights:

Bird achieved dramatic results by taking the following steps:

- People at all levels in the organizations, including their President, began by taking Oliver Wight classes, the key education ingredient to success
- Managers and line workers set up the shop floor properly with work cells and implemented demand pull execution
- The company established a formal S&OP process, shifting from a reactive environment to a very proactive planning one
- The company has become aggressive about developing and marketing new products to help the company grow its sales an impressive 25%
- Bird Electronic improved on-time delivery from 67% to 98%
- Reorganizing shop floor practices cut lead times by 28-80%, and increased inventory turns by 45%
- Last year Bird Electronic achieved the most profitable year in their 45-year history.
- Bird Electronic achieved Class A in Chapters 3 and 5 of the Oliver Wight ABCD Checklist.

The Challenge

Bird Electronic, part of the Bird Technologies Group headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, services three major industries – wireless communications, semi-conductors, and broadcasting – with highly technical components such as power monitors and sensors, line testers, and monitoring equipment. It's a market segment that changes rapidly and demands the very highest quality.

Though Bird produced a high quality product, the company had difficulties getting those products out the door. Among other things, Bird Electronic lacked a coordinated effort in master scheduling. To complicate matters, Ed Bartos, the Director of Operations at Bird, indicated that, "The company had a poor planning process and there was a real breakdown between sales and operations in terms of what the company was going to do and how they were going to do it."

Dick Hannan, President of Bird Technologies Group agreed. "We could ship a product two weeks early, we could ship it two months late, but we didn't know how

to ship it on time. There wasn't consistency in practices and hand-offs between the departments, between functions, and we had low accountability."

Bird Follows The Proven Path

Oliver Wight consultants Jon Minerich and Richard Norman conducted a gap analysis at Bird that revealed a lack of consistency among departments and low accountability between functions. The consultants also found that the company lacked of structured process for new product development, something that posed serious challenges in such a rapidly evolving field.

Following the steps in the Proven Path and employing Chapters 3 and 5 in the Oliver Wight ABCD Checklist, Bird was able to institute MRP II and Sales & Operations Planning (S&OP) quickly. According to Dick Hannan, "Our process in the company has changed dramatically to include customer beta testing, early buy-in by all departments into the product goals, the use of cross-functional teams, and visibility. That's one thing you get from MRP II Class A: it illuminates the entire company and especially the weakest links."

S&OP also gave the company the ability to plan more accurately. As Hannan puts it, "We went from looking in the rearview mirror to looking ahead."

Both consultants' wealth of knowledge in implementing planning processes, coupled with their expertise in lean manufacturing enabled Bird Technologies to turn things around. Credit must also be given to the people at Bird who, through the Oliver Wight education process, absorbed new ideas and implemented them throughout the organization. Their focus on improvement and dedication to implementing best practices make them second to none!

For more information about Oliver Wight's consulting and educational services visit www.ollie.com.



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