

SUCCESS STORY:

GOLDEN ARTIST COLORS USES ITS CREATIVITY TO IMPROVE ITS BUSINESS

"The training and support that was provided to Golden Artist Colors by AM&T was perfect. During the very first site visit I gained the confidence that they really cared about meeting our needs. AM&T provided us with the tools, resources and understanding of Lean with a model that keeps focus on sustaining our efforts and the continued development of our program. Thank you to the AM&T team for being so dedicated and mindful to our company and our needs."

- Matt Asma, Training & Development Specialist

RESULTS



Reduced cost per piece in the targeted cell by over 50%, and over 75% in another area.



Engaged employees at all levels.



Increased jobs by 33 over the first 12 months following the project, and 14 internal promotions (three of which were trainers in the Paint Making department).



Made an investment of \$40,000 in new equipment.

COMPANY

Golden Artist Colors, or simply GOLDEN, is an Employee Owned American manufacturing company that manufactures paints for the Art Materials market. GOLDEN was founded in 1980 and is based in New Berlin, New York. The company produces a line of acrylic colors that includes some recreations of historic pigments; manufactures the Williamsburg line of artists' oil paints; QoR watercolors; and decorative and architectural paints and mediums. Golden Artist Colors, Inc. became an employee owned company in 2002, and currently employs 234 people.

SITUATION

Golden Artist Colors, Inc. embarked on a project to improve production efficiencies and effectiveness, and requested AM&T provide training in Lean and Continuous Improvement to support the effort. They obtained a Workforce Development Institute (WDI) Grant to offset a portion of their costs.

SOLUTION

Golden Artist Colors and AM&T looked at their operations and determined what kind of Lean and Continuous Improvement training would best benefit them. As a result, the following training was provided:

- Lean Thinking and Tools Overview to provide an overview of Lean Thinking concepts, with a focus on Standard Work, 5S, and Visual Workplace for all operations employees.
- (2) Five-day Kaizen events in Paint Making and Filling to teach participants how to work as a team to design and implement improvements using Standard Work, 5S, and Visual Systems.
- Kaizen Event Training which provided them how to facilitate a Kaizen event, including; Planning & Preparation Activities and Conducting the event and follow-up activities.
- 8-Step Problem Solving Training: provided problem solving training to help them learn how to effectively solve and prevent problems that can help save the organization time, money, and resources.
- Created a sustainable Continuous Improvement program.

Workforce Development Institute (WDI) helped fund this project. Our grant partners are critical to our clients' success. Without their support, many clients would struggle to find the resources to fund important projects.



GOLDEN
ARTIST COLORS®

SUCCESS STORY: Golden Artist Colors Uses its Creativity to Improve its Business (More on p. 3)



WINTER 2019-2020



A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Wishing you good health, happiness, and success in the coming year.
Happy New Year!



People don't believe **what you say**. They believe **what you do**. But even if what you do matches what you say, you will eventually falter if your actions don't match your fundamental beliefs.

This is why we've invested the last several months in developing a new strategic plan.

Nothing kills credibility faster than not practicing what you preach. Leaders who stress discipline and timeliness, but show up late for meetings, or who assert people are our most important assets – then lay them off to boost profitability – quickly lose their standing.

People catch these disconnects. The result: loss of credibility and tarnished reputations.

The same goes for businesses and other institutions.

One of our goals at AM&T is to "practice what we preach" and serve as a good example. We aim to model the kind of behavior we expect our clients to adopt to help their own businesses thrive.

To that end, we have just completed our strategic planning for 2020-2023. It's been an exciting and challenging opportunity to work with AM&T's board, stakeholders, partners, and team to build on past successes, to translate these findings and recommendations into a clear and compelling new strategy to provide value to Southern Tier manufacturers and our region.

The plan will provide us with direction and clear measurable goals to chart our progress. It will guide our day-to-day decisions and help us be sure we are always moving forward.

All organizations, regardless of size or industry, can benefit from strategic planning. There are

many different approaches to how to do this. To learn more about one way, read the article "The Top 6 Steps of Strategic Planning" on page 1.

And if you have questions about how you can benefit from strategic planning, please contact us to learn more.

"The best way to predict the future is to create it." Abraham Lincoln

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THE TOP 6 STEPS OF STRATEGIC PLANNING

GEORGE DEEB, ENTREPRENEURS

The top six key components for building a killer strategic plan for your business.

1. ASSESS INDUSTRY, COMPETITOR & CUSTOMER TRENDS

The first step of any strategic planning starts with studying the overall market in which you are operating. How big is the industry? How quick is it growing? Who are the key competitors? How well funded are they? What moves are they making? What are pricing trends? What products or services are your customers asking for? Any macro-economic trends at play? Any government regulation issues? You cannot set an effective plan for your business unless you truly understand what you are up against from an industry and competition perspective. Think about this as an “external” evaluation of overall market trends that impact your business.

2. COMPLETE A SWOT ANALYSIS ON YOUR BUSINESS

A SWOT analysis critically evaluates your company’s Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats. Strengths in your staff, customer base, market position, financial resources, sales channels, products, profitability, growth, etc. Weaknesses in your staff, market position, margins, financial resources, competitive vulnerability, missing products, customer complaints, missing sales channels, etc. Opportunities to enter complimentary markets, form alliances, raise funds, launch new products, pursue M&A activity, exploit customer weaknesses, etc. And Threats around the economy, losing key staff, lack of financial resources, limited cash flow, disintermediation, falling prices, etc. Think about this as an “internal” evaluation of your business.

3. DEFINE YOUR MISSION AND VISION

Once the external and internal evaluation is done, you are in a good position to begin crafting your high-level mission statement and vision statement. Your mission statement speaks to “why do we exist?” Something like “our mission is to replace expensive offline market research with equal quality insights from social listening”. Your vision statement speaks to “what are we offering and where are we heading”. And all good vision statements should be quantifiable and timebound. Something like “We plan on driving \$50MM in revenues from our industry-leading social listening platform within 3 years”. These are the “North Star” statements that will guide all detailed decisions from there.

4. DEFINE YOUR CORPORATE BUSINESS GOALS

Once you know where you are heading, at the 30,000 foot view, and what you are up against from an industry and competition perspective, now you are in a position to start drilling down into specific business goals that will enable you to achieve that vision. Your goals are the specific outcomes you are trying to achieve. This could include things like changes to product offering, sales & marketing strategies, financial resources, operational efficiency, employee culture, financial targets and beyond. What high level things need to happen to make your vision a reality.

5. DRILL DOWN TO DEPARTMENT LEVEL OBJECTIVES

As we continue to “peel back the layers of the onion”, now we need to decide what specific objectives and initiatives do we need to implement to help the company achieve each of its business goals. This is typically done department-by-department within the company—setting specific objectives for the product team, sales & marketing, operations, technology, finance and human resources. For example, a business goal might be “improve company morale” and a specific objective of the HR department to support that goal might be “launch new employee benefits”. You should limit all department-level goals to the handful of items that the department can rally around in any one year. And, these objectives need to be made SMART—Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Results-Focused and Timebound.

6. DETERMINE STAFFING, BUDGET AND FINANCING NEEDS

Once all the departmental needs have been defined and quantified, now you are able to aggregate them up into one centralized corporate plan, organizational structure and budget. If you don’t have the full financial resources you need to achieve the plan, you have one of two choices: (i) lower your targets to a level you can more easily afford; or (ii) raise the capital required for you to achieve your full plan. Often times, it is helpful to engage an outside business coach or advisor to help facilitate these internal discussions between the managers building the plan. They can help keep the process organized and managers focused on the stuff that really matters. They can also help to break any ties or mediate any disputes between managers with different opinions. Because at the end of the day, if all managers are not 100% on-board with the resulting strategic plan, it will not be achieved.

Contact us at info@amt-mep.org if you are interested in learning more.

PARTNER PROFILE: NYSEG MAP GRANT

In this issue, we talk with Joe Rizzo and Kyle Banks, manager of economic development and lead analyst of economic development, respectively, at New York State Electric & Gas (NYSEG) and Rochester Gas & Electric (RG&E).



KYLE BANKS



JOE RIZZO

Last year, NYSEG and RG&E launched the Manufacturing Accelerator Program (MAP) to support manufacturers looking to implement productivity improvement projects, growth initiatives, and other transformative business ventures.

WHAT EXACTLY IS THE MANUFACTURING ACCELERATOR PROGRAM?

Joe: NYSEG and RG&E provide MAP grants to eligible applicants whose leadership make commitments of time and resources to productivity improvement projects such as lean manufacturing, lean office procedures, waste reduction, ISO quality programs, and other projects that lower costs, improve quality, and reduce lead times. In addition, MAP can provide matching grants to fund growth-targeted activities such as new product development, export initiatives, sales and marketing system improvements, and other projects designed to increase revenue.

WHAT OBJECTIVES ARE YOU HOPING TO MEET THROUGH MAP?

Joe: Our objectives include maximizing the use of our energy delivery assets, supporting the retention and expansion of existing businesses, attracting new businesses, and fostering a strong collaborative business relationship with our economic development partners at the local, regional, and state level. This overall effort helps our communities grow and prosper, creating a strong and healthy economy in New York.

DESCRIBE THE IDEAL MAP GRANTEE.

Kyle: The ideal manufacturing client is a small- to medium-sized manufacturing company within the RG&E or NYSEG service area that has a clear vision or strategy for its business needs in the short term as well as into the future. With that understanding, we work in partnership with organizations like AM&T to explore how our MAP can provide the most benefit to their business success.

HOW EXACTLY DO YOU WORK WITH AM&T TO THE BENEFIT OF THE PROGRAM AND PROGRAM PARTICIPANTS?

Joe: AM&T plays a vital role in this program. It is one of the high-tech organizations in New York helping to market the program to the manufacturing community in its respective region. AM&T works with manufacturers to identify their specific business needs and makes recommendations to NYSEG and RG&E on the level of grant assistance to achieve positive results. We work very closely with AM&T to ensure that the program and process from start to finish are as streamlined as possible to make positive impressions on our customers.

THE NUMBERS: Manufacturing Accelerator Program (MAP) NYSEG and RG&E will provide matching grants up to the lesser of \$15,000 or 40% of the costs incurred by eligible applicants for productivity improvement projects such as Lean manufacturing, Lean office procedures, waste reduction, ISO quality programs and other projects that lower costs, improve quality and reduce lead times. In addition, the MAP will provide matching grants up to the lesser of \$15,000 or 50% to fund growth-targeted activities such as new product development, export initiatives, sales and marketing system improvements, and other projects designed to increase revenue. Applicants who choose to commit time and resources to both productivity and growth initiatives will be eligible for grants of up to \$40,000 or 60% (whichever is less) of the costs incurred to implement such transformative programs.

Many projects qualify for NYSEG’s MAP grant, please contact Jeff DuBrava, AM&T’s Business Development Manger at jdubrava@amt-mep.org for additional information or register for one of our upcoming Lunch and Learn events at our website, www.amt-mep.org



HAPPY NEW YEAR

FROM ALL OF US AT AM&T TO YOU AND YOURS. ALL THE BEST IN 2020!

EVENTS FOR MORE DETAILS AND EVENT REGISTRATION VISIT: <https://www.amt-mep.org/events/>

LEAN SIX SIGMA GREEN BELT CLASS

February - May 2020
2/13, 2/20, 3/19, 4/8, 5/7
AM&T’s location in Binghamton

In this interactive course you will gain a solid base of knowledge of the theory, composition and implementation of a Lean Six Sigma initiative.

This instructor-led course is 40 hours long, and you will have access to your instructor between sessions to assist with application & project completion.

This training is partially funded by a grant through SUNY Broome, Out of pocket costs are estimated at \$200 to 400 per participant. Check our website for additional details.

LUNCH AND LEARN – NYSEG’S MAP GRANT

12:00-1:30 pm
2/5/20 – AM&T’s location in Binghamton;
2/6/20 – Hilton Garden in Horseheads

Join us for lunch to learn more about NYSEG’s Manufacturing Accelerator Program (MAP) grant.

AM&T will review the requirements, qualifying projects, and the simple application and reimbursement processes. Lunch will be served at noon.

The session is offered at no cost to Southern Tier manufacturers. Registration is required. Go to our website, www.amt-mep.org.



THE 2020 CALENDAR LOOKS AMAZING!

Thank you to all the companies that submitted photographs for the 2020 calendar competition!

It was difficult to select which pictures to include. (We’re sorry we couldn’t include everyone.)

If you’re a Southern Tier manufacturer and you’d like to receive a calendar, please contact us at info@amt-mep.org.