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MAINE MEP RELEASES IMPRESSIVE ECONOMIC IMPACT NUMBERS
Numbers Confirm Maine MEP's Significant Impact on the State's Economy

AUGUSTA - The Maine Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Maine MEP) recently released the results of a seven-year economic impact study, further solidifying its reputation as a leader in manufacturing training and management technologies and a significant economic benefit to Maine.

Through an independent third party survey company, Maine MEP clients are surveyed to determine the economic impact resulting from their relationship with the MEP program.

In 2000 (Q1) through 2007 (Q2), as a result of their relationship with the Maine MEP, Maine-based manufacturing companies have:

- Created or retained 2,727 jobs that otherwise would not have existed
- Increased and retained \$127.7 million in sales
- Spent \$72 million on new investment
- Experienced \$43.5 million in cost savings

“Maine MEP provides a crucial service to manufacturing companies,” says John Richardson, Commissioner, Department of Economic Development. “Through training programs and seminars, Maine MEP is truly helping the manufacturing community in our state grow and stay competitive.”

The effects of this increased economic activity, however, extend beyond the client firms. With assistance from the Maine MEP, small- and medium-size manufacturing companies that increased or retained jobs or sales and/or increased investments are responsible for:

- Creating or retaining 6,189 jobs that paid a total of \$240.9 million in employee wages and benefits
- Increasing or retaining economic output worth \$816 million
- Contributing or retaining \$389.7 million of gross state product
- Generating or retaining \$107.9 million in additional tax and non-tax revenues at the federal, state, and local government levels, including \$28.5million at the state and local level

Through Maine MEP's assessment process of each company, manufacturers are often lead to participate in a variety of Time Wise Solutions®, such as Lean Awareness training, Value Stream Management and Kaizen training events. These, as well as other, performance-based training programs lead companies to develop their own internal continuous improvement programs that positively affect their bottom line.

“This training made us realize how many steps we could cut out of various processes, beginning in the front office,” said Tim Cook, President of Flotation Technologies, a world leader in the design and manufacture of syntactic foam and polyurethane elastomer deepwater buoyancy systems based in Biddeford. “We are now putting out twice the number of quotes in the same amount of time and through the Value Stream Map, we have reduced the engineering-to-sales processing cycle by 30 percent. The Maine MEP’s work with us has made a huge difference. Our sales doubled in 2006 and we are looking to double sales again by the end of this year as well.”

“We also were so happy with Maine MEP’s work that we will have on-going training programs to continue our progress and have put in measurement systems into practice to monitor our results,” added Colleen McCracken, CFO at Thomas Moser Cabinetmakers in Auburn. “Without the help of Maine MEP, we would not have been able to do a Lean training of such high magnitude in order to remain competitive in our industry.”

Not only does Maine MEP provide training to manufacturers in need of streamlining their production processes, they also provide scholarships to manufacturers who participate in trade missions.

“We want Maine companies to succeed at home as well as in international markets. Trade missions are imperative to strengthen relationships in other parts of the world. With help from Maine MEP, our small and medium-sized manufacturers are able to participate in trade missions which garner them global exposure in the marketplace,” said Janine Cary, executive director of the Maine International Trade Center.

“This is just another fine example of how much Maine MEP does to support manufacturers in the state, and I commend them. They help these companies develop new business practices that allow them to expand and become competitive and more profitable,” said Commissioner Richardson.

Bruce Pulkkinen, chair of the Maine MEP board of directors, is also a client of the organization. “Until I utilized their services inside my own company at Windham Millwork, I really did not have a good concept of how they can help transform a company from a good manufacturer to a world class manufacturer. It’s amazing how their programs can help a company really look inward to refocus and ultimately flourish better than ever before.”

“The Maine MEP project managers are experts in their field and they really leave their mark on the manufacturers they help,” said Rod Rodrigue, executive director of Maine MEP. “They pride themselves on being efficient, engaging and conscientious, and are a true testimony to the success of Maine MEP.”

About Maine MEP

Maine MEP is an affiliate of the NIST under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and

technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information on the Maine MEP program call 1-800-637-4634.

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