

Mountain Products Soaring High

MOUNTAIN PRODUCTS, L.P. produces high-quality screen-printing used by various industries for corporate identification and graphics. They provide graphic solutions for fleet & vehicle identification, point-of-purchase products, architectural decals & signs, and OEM labels & overlays in their 50,000-square foot facility located in Houston, Texas. As a full service company they handle any corporate graphics project, ranging from the very simple to the extremely complex and can take it all the way from the conception stage right through to installation. Excellence is a way of life at Mountain Products and they are dedicated to providing a top-quality product with the consistently high levels of service their customers look for.



THE DILEMMA

As part of their commitment to service, Mountain Products decided to purchase additional new machinery and needed to find a way to make room for it in their already crowded facility.

A few years ago, Perry Vienot, former Owner and current Consultant at Mountain Products had attended the Texas Manufacturing Assistance Center Gulf Coast's (TMAC) Breakfast Series that was directed at assisting Manufacturers to improve their processes. During these meetings he picked up several helpful ideas and has since used TMAC's services on and off.

Recently, when Mountain Products needed advice on how to accommodate new large-scale equipment, he again turned to TMAC for suggestions on ways to maximize the current plant layout and solve the dilemma.

TMAC GULF COAST RESPONDS

The newly appointed Director of TMAC Gulf Coast, Dr. Hamid Parsaei responded promptly to Mountain Products request and met with General Manager Susan Westrope and Perry Vienot to see what could be done to solve their problem. "By the pertinent questions he asked, it was apparent that he knows what he is talking about," stated Vienot.

Westrope agreed, "He [Dr. Parsaei] has real world experience and it was very refreshing. By working with our plant personnel and showing us different scenarios, the TMAC specialists helped us plan an efficient layout. As the process evolved, we discovered other factors that we needed to consider and had to change the parameters several times. TMAC was very receptive to our needs and incorporated those elements promptly and efficiently. The process was accomplished very quickly."

THE OUTCOME

The new layout suggested by the TMAC specialists not only solved the problem of where to put the new machinery, it also provided the added benefit of allowing the workflow to run much smoother. Now they can do more in-house work. By not outsourcing as much Mountain Products is saving about \$24,000 a year in transportation costs.

"One of the biggest benefits to come out of the process is what the employees learned. It gave us a new perspective. We now think very thoroughly about how we approach each plant layout and workflow project. I am pleased with the new layout suggested by TMAC and will continue to use their services as the need arises. In fact, I have recommended their services to others," said Westrope.

(This article was one of the only three client stories published during a two year period in the NIST Update, a newsletter distributed by the US Department of Commerce)