



ARIZONA MANUFACTURING EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP (ARIZONA MEP)

Arizona Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Arizona's MEP) was created through a partnership between the Arizona Commerce Authority (ACA) and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) whose goal is to become the central resource for technical assistance and all things manufacturing for Arizona's existing community of small and medium-sized manufacturers.

Arizona MEP offers products and services that match the needs of manufacturing companies in Arizona and provides focused, concrete advice, training and hands-on assistance in growing businesses and improving profitability.

ECONOMIC IMPACT

MEP Center impacts are based on clients surveyed in FY2024



\$54.7 Million

Total Increased/Retained Sales



1,030

Total Increased/Retained Jobs



\$28.5 Million

New Client Investments



\$12.1 Million

Cost Savings

CONTACT US



100 N. 7th Avenue
Suite 400
Phoenix, AZ 85007-2770



(602) 845-1200



www.azcommerce.com/programs/arizona-mep



davidg@azcommerce.com

ARIZONA
MANUFACTURING
EXTENSION PARTNERSHIP

HOW ARIZONA MEP HELPED AGM CONTAINER CONTROLS INCREASE EFFICIENCY TO MEET SALES DEMAND

ABOUT AGM CONTAINER CONTROLS, INC.. AGM Container Controls is a Tucson, Arizona-based company known for designing and manufacturing devices to control and monitor pressure, moisture and humidity in containers used to ship and store equipment for defense and aerospace applications. Precision Machining is AGM's in-house machine shop, providing custom fabrication and machining services for AGM's manufacturing needs and some outside customers. The Ascension division offers portable and permanent ADA-compliant wheelchair lift solutions for commercial spaces, including arenas, stadiums, theatres and schools.

THE CHALLENGE. Ascension Wheelchair lift sales were growing, but there was a bottleneck in the production process delaying shipments to customers. AGM turned to Arizona MEP, part of the MEP National Network™, for help.

MEP CENTER'S ROLE. Working with Arizona MEP's Senior Client Advisor Kyle Randels, AGM conducted a Kaizen workshop to help the team map the wheelchair lift manufacturing process. "The Kaizen process helped us identify key bottlenecks, especially in our welding area," explained AGM's Industrial Automation and Process Improvement Specialist Estevan Gregory. "By focusing on small, manageable changes, we saw immediate improvements—our production capacity grew, and the quality of our lifts improved significantly."

In the past, the welder would weld all the subcomponents for a section of a lift in batches, then assemble the batches and weld the remaining pieces. After the workshop, the team began welding the subcomponents in one complete piece instead of using batch processing and found that building one piece reduced manufacturing time from six days to four. AGM also standardized the welding process and set up quality checks to control quality earlier in the production process, significantly reducing costly defects and delays. The team implemented visual management boards, which tracked progress and helped maintain focus on critical improvements. These improvements allowed AGM to scale production while improving standards, directly contributing to the company's growth and profitability.

Before the Kaizen workshop, AGM produced seven wheelchair lifts per month. After the workshop, AGM and Arizona MEP set a goal to produce 15 wheelchair lifts per month, and they hit that target within just three months. The improvements made through kaizen have positioned AGM to produce up to 20 wheelchair lifts per month if needed, a substantial increase in production capacity and efficiency.

"With the Ascension lift project, we've seen firsthand how lean tools and kaizen can drive real improvements in our processes and efficiency. Before engaging with Arizona MEP, we didn't really have a great resource for lean training in Tucson, we would drive to Phoenix. As we work more with Arizona MEP, we see an opportunity to hold their training events at our facility, which supports our initiatives and is also a benefit to smaller manufacturers in town."

-Estevan Gregory, Industrial Automation and Process Improvement Specialist

