

Analox Sensor Technology Ltd

55 employees, £5m turnover, based in Stokesley, North Yorkshire

“With the support of MAS we took part in the Lean Consortium Programme, which resulted in our on-time delivery performance improving to nearly 100% and lead time for our main product range reducing by 30%.

Over the years MAS has played an integral role in helping us to expand and keep manufacturing in North Yorkshire. We've been impressed by the depth and breadth of support available from MAS. Andrew and his team have worked with us across a whole range of improvement activities. They're often our first port of call when we want to do something better.”

Linda Wells,
Operations Director



Background

The company first worked with MAS specialist Andrew Nicholson back in 2001. At this time, Analox had a turnover of £2.5m, employing 35 people spread across three light industrial units, which was far from an ideal situation.

With help from MAS, Analox moved to a new 16,000 sq ft purpose built headquarters at Stokesley, designed by MAS Specialist Andrew Nicholson. The radically improved process layout has proved such a success that the company is already working on an improved “Version 2” - a highly flexible “Lean Factory”.

Additional MAS support was then sought by recently appointed Managing Director, Mark Lewis, to assist his team in developing an ambitious five year growth strategy for the business.

Key Achievements

As a result of a 30 day strategic business growth project, Analox has achieved the following:

- Developed the “Analox 2012” plan to grow turnover from £5m to £15m over 5 years.
- Identified and exploited new product & market opportunities.
- Increased monthly output from £400,000 to £550,000.
- Sustained Lean Thinking and Continuous Improvement
- Implemented “Visual Management” - targets and problems can easily be seen.
- Reduced component travel by 15-25%.

Company Profile

Analox Sensor Technology, part of the Analox Group, was founded in 1981 and currently employs 55 people.

The company specialises in the design and manufacture of gas sensors and analysers. Its slogan ‘looking’ after the air you breathe’ is an excellent description of the products the company supplies to companies worldwide, including commercial and sports divers and the beverage and hospitality industry (monitors are a vital part of health and safety in confined spaces like pub cellars).

Making it Happen

A team of strategy consultants, led by MAS Specialist Andrew Nicholson, developed and ran a series of off-site strategy workshops with the company's directors and senior managers. Over the course of several months Mark led the management team in developing the "Analox 2012" strategy, designed to achieve controlled sales growth towards a turnover of £15m.

This strategy was used to create operational objectives and action plans for each department to be deployed through the business. The strategy was linked to personal objectives through the company's appraisal system and appropriate measures put in place to target and monitor progress against the strategic objectives.

MAS Specialist Andrew Nicholson and his team then worked with Operations Director Linda Wells to refine the company's manufacturing strategy through operational excellence. This programme aims to streamline and improve many of the company's core processes.

A cross-functional project team was set up and trained to apply a design for particular

product—the "Buddy" to improve efficiency and expand capacity.

In addition, key staff were trained to use Failure Mode & Effects Analysis for product and process design, and MAS also helped design, document and implement the systems to achieve this.

5S has been implemented and activities now problems can be spotted immediately - work areas are clean, tidy, well-organised and more efficient. MAS has been instrumental in helping to transfer skills and knowledge to employees in order to sustain long-term improvements.

Improved systems were developed to monitor factory performance against plan. Structured problem-solving identified the real root causes - sometimes in product design or process layout. As a result, performance is improving and "permanent cures" are being implemented.

MAS are now continuing to provide advice, training and support as Analox continues to grow. The company are now working on the new "Phase 2" factory layout, improving supply chain management and attempting to streamline the company's non-production and administrative processes. Watch this space!

What the team had to say...

"We moved into our new factory over the August Bank Holiday weekend without losing a single day of production. We think that our new layout and new methods of working will be about 20% more efficient than the old site. We've increased labour productivity by about 10%, reduced travelling distances by about 20% and reduced our Work-in-Process levels by 25-40% - and that's just Phase One!"

Linda Wells,
Operations Director

"I have worked for Analox for 22 years and can really see the improvements "Lean Thinking" has made to the way we work."

Julie Brady,
Instrument Technician

"Andrew and his team have a knack of making complex problems seem simple- very useful when we get bogged down!"

Ian Batchelor,
Group Finance Director

About MAS

In Yorkshire & Humber, the BERR Manufacturing Advisory Service is jointly funded by Yorkshire Forward and the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and is managed by YFM Business Development, providing 'hands on' advice and support to help improve your manufacturing performance.

For more information

If you feel your business could benefit from MAS, why not complete your details below and fax to us on 0113 368 5261. You can also contact: enquiries@mas-yh.co.uk or visit the website www.mas-yh.co.uk

Name: _____ Job Title: _____

Company Name: _____ Nature of Business: _____

Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____ Email: _____

I would like MAS to contact me to discuss : _____

I would like to join the Manufacturing Network and receive a free monthly e-newsletter about funding opportunities and events

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