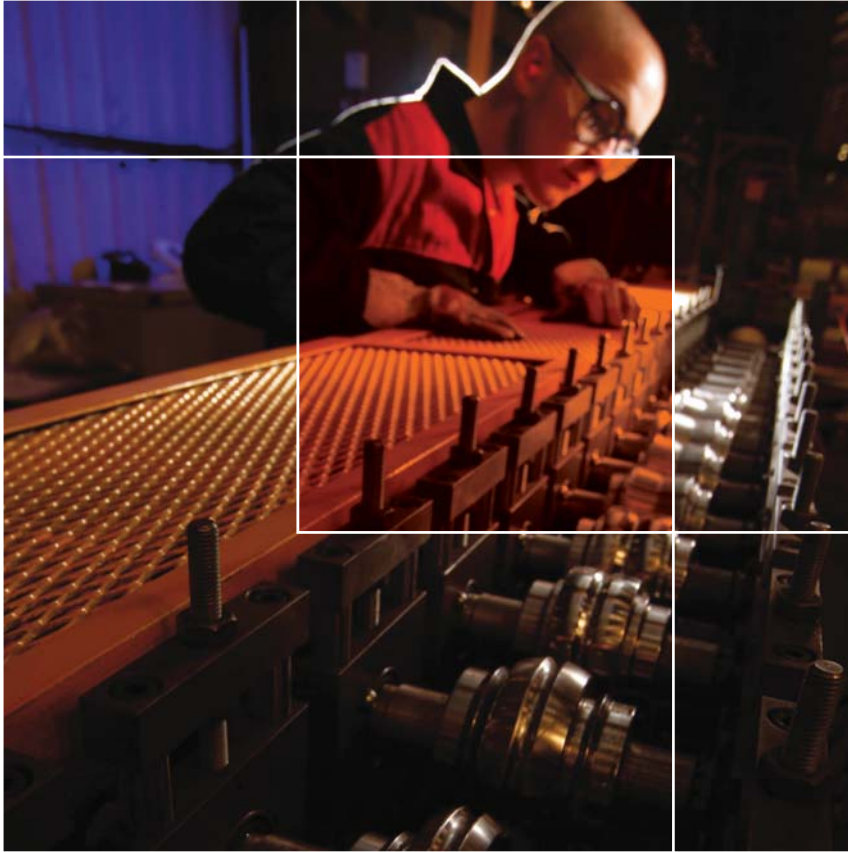


# CASE STUDY

GUTTRIDGE LIMITED



growth of around 24% over the last four years. "Growth has put pressure on the systems we have and we realised we needed to be more efficient with our manufacturing," Managing Director, Peter Guttridge, explains. "We want to push the whole concept of lean manufacturing as far and fast as we can."

## The Programme

Through Semta, the company accessed a package of 'lean' intervention and training funded by the Learning and Skills Council with support from the European Social Fund to improve its productivity and competitiveness. Employees from Guttridge first attended a one-day lean overview taster course offered through the Semta project by the Derby College/Rolls Royce Centre of Vocational Excellence, which led the company to pursue lean and the B-IT NVQ.

A Productivity and Competitiveness (PAC) analyst worked in the company to gather and analyse data on the seven measures of quality, cost and delivery which indicate business performance and explained these in a presentation to management. Based on the findings, he recommended actions to target specific improvements, some of which could be addressed by NVQ groups. He provided practical support to company teams in putting in corrective actions and collecting their own data, before delivering a second presentation to show the changes several months later.

"The company has experienced year-on-year growth of around 24% over the last four years. Growth has put pressure on the systems we have and we realised we needed to be more efficient with our manufacturing. We want to push the whole concept of lean manufacturing as far and as fast as we can."

**Peter Guttridge**  
Managing Director

An integrated approach to delivering lean manufacturing support and training employees in Business Improvement Techniques (B-IT) has helped an East Midlands company to manage growth and improve its performance. Implemented by Semta and its partners, the programme forms the basis of a service now available nationwide through the National Skills Academy for Manufacturing (the Skills Academy) to help companies boost their productivity and competitiveness.

## The Company

Guttridge Limited is a specialist manufacturer of bulk solids handling machinery, employing 100 people in Spalding, Lincolnshire. In addition the company operates a successful subcontract sheet metal work and fabrication service, offering its customers a range of latest-technology laser cutting, water jet cutting and fabrication processes. The company has experienced year-on-year

semta

The Sector Skills Council  
for Science, Engineering and  
Manufacturing Technologies

**Guttridge**  
Bulk Materials Handling

Alongside the PAC analyst's work, Guttridge received funding to help groups of employees gain the B-IT Level 2 NVQ, delivered and supported by experienced EEF staff. A B-IT expert gave a series of presentations on lean principles and assessed candidates' understanding. Linked to this training were on-the-job improvement projects where candidates were coached in the workplace and in recording their work as evidence for NVQ assessment.

### Partnership Working

To further boost PAC improvement activities in the company, the EEF was able to signpost Guttridge to the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS). The company engaged a MAS consultant who helped coach and mentor improvement teams. Funding support for 10 days at 50% and 20 days at 25% came from the East Midlands Development Agency and the DTI (now BIS). In addition, Semta funded five days of the consultant's time to develop the project PAC analyst, enabling him to qualify. This integrated approach not only benefited Guttridge but also increased the supply of qualified PAC analysts able to help other companies.

### The Outcomes

On completion of the project, up to 30 people, including the MD and another manager, will have gained the B-IT Level 2 NVQ. A range of improvements to processes, systems and procedures resulting from the work of NVQ candidates have brought about estimated annual savings of £129,720. Other improvements are ongoing, as the adoption of lean methods changes the way people work. "A key factor is an understanding of the need to measure, as without that we can't improve," says Peter Guttridge. "It's becoming a lot more accepted that you measure things so a lot of process measurement is happening now."

Initial reluctance and nervousness on the part of some employees was overcome by external support and coaching and by pacing the programme to suit. The company also realised greater benefits by including supervisors and managers in later cohorts.

### The Future

Motivated by incremental improvements the company has already experienced, Peter is committed to extending B-IT NVQ delivery to more employees beyond the duration of the funded project. "We've made a lot of progress and I want to keep the momentum going," he says. "There has been a lot of change and as I see some change happening, I see more that could happen. Although some improvements may be difficult to quantify at present, measurable bottom-line benefits will come when a critical mass of our workforce have gone through the programme and put what they've learnt into practice."

"The Level 2 B-IT NVQ programme is a key part of the process and it's really starting to have an impact. I'm very impressed with the standard of delivery. The requirement to do improvement projects in the workplace is making all the difference and giving employees a real sense of achievement."

**Peter Guttridge**  
Managing Director

