

## CARDINAL SYSTEMS, INC.

Cardinal Systems, a manufacturer of custom outer shells for pools and spas, is a business with a solid reputation for quality products and superior service. In the past, Cardinal sold a great deal by word of mouth, but more recently they have found themselves facing a market with widespread consolidation and a rapidly shifting competitive landscape.

In response, the company partnered with MRC through a Business Growth Services project. Following an in-depth Market Assessment, MRC recommended that Cardinal put its core strengths to work in a new area. Expanding into a new industry enabled Cardinal to identify additional revenue possibilities and gave them opportunities to develop new strengths.

"As we move into new markets, we have to build a quality product and back it up with quality service," says one representative from Cardinal. "It's also important that we be able to market the new product. We're great manufacturers, but we needed to improve our marketing." Another member of the management team

agrees, saying Cardinal has learned to place more importance on marketing as part of its new strategy.

As the business grows, Cardinal has also drawn from its involvement in the Manufacturing Leadership Institute, a joint venture between the Iacocca Institute and MRC. That work, along with Lean projects, has enabled them to be much more agile, reducing inventory in some products by 30%. Another benefit is the development of an enhanced corporate culture, stressing participation and active involvement throughout all levels of the organization.

Cardinal says they are now working to grow the business rather than just run the business. That growth includes a number of additional projects with MRC: involvement in the CEO Forum and Business Innovation Growth Network (BIGNET), Value Stream Mapping, 5S, training courses, and a cost accounting project with the Delaware Valley IRC organization. Indeed, MRC is Cardinal's go-to coordinator for a wide variety of programs and a hands-on coach for marketing direction and implementation.

"If you have any need," Cardinal's Director of Operations John Barnetsky sums up, "they'll figure out a way to help you with it."

# Quality



Analysis  
Collaboration  
Competitiveness  
Culture  
Efficiency  
Growth  
Implementation  
Innovation  
Leadership  
Opportunities  
Planning  
Quality  
Results  
Strategy  
Vision