

WIN and eCap Network Combine Services to Create “Lean & Green” Suite of Services for Industrial Clients.

Some of you may be familiar with WIN’s Operational Excellence Practice which helped our industrial clients apply “Lean Thinking” manufacturing practices to improve their operations. About a year ago WIN Partner John Werling, who had been WIN’s Operational Excellence practice director, took on the challenge of becoming the President of eCap Network.

As eCap Network’s business has grown, merging its energy efficiency models with WIN’s operations practice to offer ‘lean and green’ services to our industrial clients became a natural fit. According to Werling, “Lean is about taking a holistic approach to identify waste, improve efficiency and reduce costs in any operation. Although we may look at different things, the approach to energy efficiency is essentially the same.” Industrial companies are leading the charge for renewed economic growth. But recessionary price pressures, coupled with rising fuel costs make targeting utility expenses a priority. “Smaller manufacturers need to stretch their dollars more than ever. We help clients understand the business case for capital investments in efficiency or productive capacity,” says Werling, “and that includes investigating sources of funding like grants and subsidized financing.”

Irwin Automation, a precision machining and specialty metals processing company in Greensburg, had been investigating moving its operations to a new larger facility to accommodate expansion and expected growth. When finding just the right facility proved to be too difficult, the decision was made to rethink investing in their current site. Since WIN had done some lean training for Irwin Automation in the past, Larry Taylor, Irwin Automation President, approached us about assisting with improving the flow in the facility. Werling suggested the timing would be right to rethink the entire facility and look into energy efficiency upgrades as well, and Taylor agreed. According to Werling “the timing is perfect for investments in growth and costs reductions.” Low financing costs, rising energy and operating expenses, energy efficiency rebates and relatively low equipment costs make now the best time to invest for companies with the resources to do so. eCap Network has begun analyzing data for Irwin Automation to better understand its process flow and energy use patterns. The next step will be to work with the Irwin Automation team on master project planning to identify the optimal series of investments based on the total lifecycle costs of implementation and the companies operating and financial needs. Taylor commented, “This is exactly the way we need to be thinking to justify investments and fuel our growth.”