

Great Lakes Electronics Distributing, Inc.

Firm Benefits

- Obtained ISO 9000 registration
- Reaffirmed preferred position with existing customers
- Methodology for continuous improvement of existing systems
- Clearly defined internal processes
- Access to new markets

ISO 9001 Certification

Great Lakes Electronics Distributing, Inc. (GLED) is a manufacturer of custom PCs for business, educational institutions and commercial companies. The corporation was established in 1985 as a distributor of computers and related equipment, but has evolved to include customized assembly operations in addition to distribution services.

The company employs approximately 60 people. Operations are conducted in a modern 28,000 square foot facility in Buffalo, NY. Presently, between 1,200-1,500 units are being shipped on a monthly basis. GLED had been realizing annual growth, in spite of the steady decline within the technical sales industry. Although business has diminished somewhat, the overall base appears solid. The company's sales are split between private contract/educational business and its traditional commercial volume.



Bob Englehart completes a custom PC Assembly.

Situation

GLED had a need to become ISO 9000 registered based on feedback from key customers, as well as the desire to achieve internal operational improvement. They saw this as an important initiative from both an internal business and customer demand perspective.

Solution

GLED entered into a relationship with Insyte Consulting in order to obtain assistance in becoming ISO 9000 certified to the year 2000 standard. A joint GLED/Insyte Consulting team was established to drive the implementation of a quality management system compliant with ISO 9000:2000. A review of the existing

"I found all the staff from Insyte Consulting to be very easy to work with. They analyzed the entire project and were very thorough at breaking down the elements into manageable segments."

Barry Dimmer, Vice President

processes and documentation was performed with GLED personnel to determine where the existing system either needed improvement or lacked appropriate processes. The steps necessary to obtain ISO certification were identified and required tasks assigned to members of the team.

Next, an overview of the ISO 9000 standards was presented to senior management. This was followed by a company-wide orientation to familiarize everyone with the ISO standard and how certification would improve their daily processes.

The existing quality manual was reviewed and updated by the management team with help from Insyte Consulting in order to meet the requirements of the latest revision of the standard. A new quality policy was developed to provide the proper vision for successful development of the system.

Key personnel were then involved in defining processes and generating procedures. Insyte Consulting staff continually reviewed documentation to ensure compliance with the standard. Process owners verified that the procedures were compatible with their current systems. As procedures were approved, appropriate personnel were trained in their application.

In conjunction with the development of procedures, Insyte Consulting assisted in scheduling training sessions for a select group of employees. An internal audit schedule was developed and plans made to complete an audit cycle.

Implementation of the system was aided by initiating periodic review meetings to keep the proper attention on quality system development, communication and progress.

Prior to the registration audit, additional Insyte Consulting personnel conducted a mock audit to verify the system compliance with the standard. A number of issues were raised and addressed before the system was fully implemented.

At this point, an international registrar was contracted to conduct the registration audit. Results of the March 2003 audit were successful. In April 2003, GLED received their ISO 9000 registration certificate.

The project resulted in a quality management system that held up under the scrutiny of an ISO 9000 audit. This allowed GLED to reaffirm their position as a preferred supplier with one of their key customers and provided access to new markets. In addition, the quality management system provided a methodology for continuous improvement, improved communication and clearly defined internal processes throughout the company.