



# HY - LITES

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## Hytrol's Lean journey results in banner year.

Hytrol Conveyor Company experienced many emotions during 2008. Though the economy began its downhill slide, Hytrol managed a record-breaking year thanks in part to their implementation of the Lean process.

### Looking for Answers

Between the years 2000 and 2005, Hytrol Conveyor Company, Inc. experienced the gravity of a faltering economy. Jobs were cut as order rates fell, and the company's future was uncertain at best. Through all of this, however, Hytrol searched for a proactive solution – not just to turn their present state around, but also to set in motion a system that would propel them forward when the economy regained its strength.

The leadership at Hytrol began to investigate a solution, the Lean system, through Rockwell Automation. When Rockwell demonstrated their implementation of Lean, all were impressed and took note of the following observations:

- Structured plant layout
- Cellular manufacturing
- Clear work station instruction
- Performance metrics in each cell
- Orderly work flow (single piece)
- Terrific housekeeping
- Great employee attitude

In 2005, Hytrol began their Lean journey, establishing the Hytrol Power Lean System.



### The Journey Begins

After the Board of Directors at Hytrol finished their initial Lean training, the entire company was introduced to Lean concepts by completing a one-day class on the topic. Once the basic principles were communicated to everyone, 25 Power Lean Masters were selected and trained. Power Lean Masters took one week per month for six months to study more in-depth Lean principles and Kaizen events. Three classes of Power Lean Masters have completed their training (totaling 75 employees) with the 4th planned for 2009.

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The actual manufacturing processes were the first to be targeted. With an initial time estimate of 2-3 years, Hytrol began implementing the Lean strategies in the shop with two main objectives:

- A complete rearrangement and layout to consolidate processes and improve material flow.
- Identify and eliminate waste of all non-value-added work.

At the close of 2008, Hytrol realized major advancements due to Lean.

**“...wasteful practices will be identified and eliminated, ensuring that Hytrol maintains its goal of meeting and exceeding customer satisfaction.”**

### **Waste Elimination**

The elimination of waste is the essence of the Lean Process. Eliminating the amount of walking, searching for parts, and time training individuals to assemble conveyors has enabled Hytrol to increase both on-time shipments and quality levels over an extended period of time. Hytrol's working processes and material flow have been reduced at least 50% according to Lean Administrators Mark Suterfield and Tony Sartin.

From start to finish, the production of one conveyor could take between 8-10 hours. Now, due to Lean, a completed conveyor is produced every 4-6 hours.

## **External Quality Issues**

**Down 63% since 2005**

## **On-Time Shipping**

**Averaged 98% in 2008**

In addition to time, the elimination of scrap is also a noticeable factor. For example, between the years 2007 and 2008, waste in the roller and pulley production cell has been reduced 29%. Since the introduction of lasers in the fabrication process, waste totaling 23% - 25% has been reduced to 13% - 15%. These figures show amazing gains in the productivity of the manufacturing process.

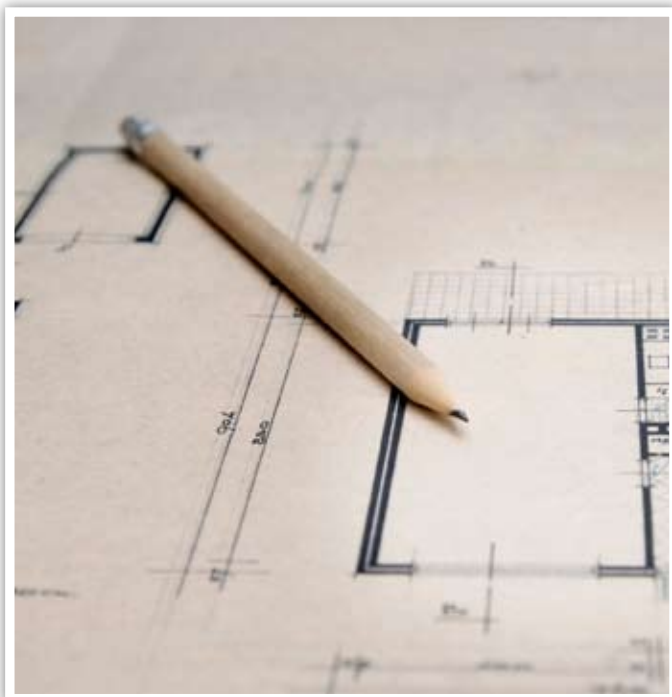


*Using lasers saves time, increases quality and decreases scrap.*

### **Tapered Roller Production**

Hytrol has taken another step toward reducing waste by adopting the ability to produce tapered tubes for their curved conveyor. With only two facilities in the U.S. producing tapered tubes, lead-time for this product could be 4-6 weeks, and possibly result in late shipments. By taking over this process, Hytrol is able to reduce the time and uncertainty of purchasing tapered tubes, while ensuring the quality that is expected from the company.





### **Lean in the Office**

Beginning in 2008 and continuing into the first half of 2009, Hytrol has begun implementing Lean processes in the front office. The main goal of this endeavor is to improve communication, and speed up and streamline office processes. The Power Lean Teams (made up of Power Lean Masters) organized the office into cells. These cells contain the operations necessary to process an order and send it to the shop. This creates an efficient flow of the order by enabling the cell to have complete ownership of the order.

### **Looking forward**

Through 2009 and beyond, Hytrol will be looking to expand Lean throughout every facet of the company. From administration to information systems, Hytrol's Stockyard to Marketing, wasteful practices will be identified and eliminated, ensuring that Hytrol maintains its goal of meeting and exceeding customer satisfaction.

For more information about Hytrol and Lean, contact:

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**Due to the "Hytrol Power Lean" system, Hytrol Conveyor Company, Inc. has established a World Class Manufacturing Company in Jonesboro, Arkansas.**



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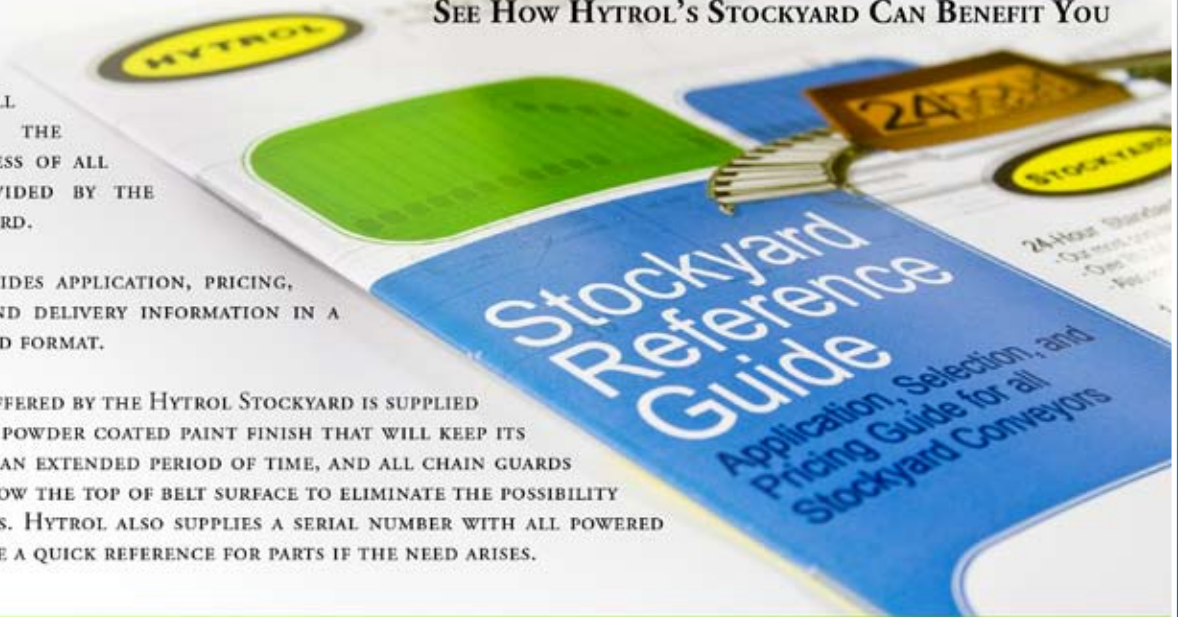
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