

REDUCING RETOOLING EFFORTS BY UP TO 50 %

SENATOR counts on Ingenics' production workshops

With dedication to the traditions of its founder, Friedrich Merz, and the demands of its dealers – the SENATOR Company has developed and refined high-quality writing utensils for over 90 years. And today, that same dedication has made SENATOR one of the leading manufacturers of exclusive, individualized products for professional offices. Currently for example, one third of all writing pens in Germany are produced by SENATOR. To further expand its leading market position, company managers decided to use long-term production workshops from Ingenics. And that decision was right on target: at its headquarters in Groß-Bieberau, Germany, retooling efforts in its production lines were cut by up to 50 %.



About SENATOR

The company was founded in 1920 and now belongs to the Merz Group. Today, SENATOR is one of the world's leading manufacturers of writing utensils, with subsidiaries in the USA, France, England, the Benelux and a branch office in Russia. Its exclusive office products are primarily "Made in Germany" and include drinking glasses, beverage containers, writing cases & pads as well as personal accessories. Its headquarters in Groß-Bieberau, Germany, also include the main production site and the company's entire value-added chain, including its key operations: design, construction, production, assembly, printing and logistics. As a result, SENATOR provides high-quality marketing merchandise which serves as an ideal communications platform for branding activities.

The city of Groß-Bieberau, in the German state of Hessen, is the traditional headquarters of SENATOR – and the company’s prime production site for high-quality plastic processing and finishing for most of its product spectrum. Here, the company is particularly proud that its entire value-added chain is found under one roof for its individualized plastic and metal pens, beverage containers and writing pads. These key operations include: construction, production, in-house tooling, assembly, printing and logistics.

Small lot sizes are a major challenge

Every day, SENATOR produces up to one million ball-point pens, and even small orders of 150 can also be individualized. “But especially these small lot sizes are a constant challenge for us. Because even with small lot sizes we want to ensure the highest quality at every production stage – from printing to final delivery,” explained Dr. Ulf Osmers, SENATOR’s VP for Global Operations. “And to master this challenge, we regularly turn to Ingenics’ experts.”

Here, Ingenics conducted 2 to 3 day workshops for the company’s production and printing operations, which have now also become a source of inspiration for the entire company. “Following Ingenics’ motto of “Designing Systems - Empowering People” these workshops were designed to improve the efficiency of processes and ensure SENATOR’s long-term competitiveness. Plus, our employees were encouraged to question their own work methods and develop a consciousness for continual improvements,” adds Andreas Grundnig, who was responsible for these workshops.

Initial orientation, basic training, advanced qualifications and coaching

A key part of the first workshops for initial orientation and basic training was: Retooling optimization. In addition, there was a review and explanation of the so called “5S System” for efficiency enhancements (e.g. Sorting out – Setting up clearly – Staying clean – Standardizing – Self Discipline).

In follow-on workshops for advanced qualifications, all participants got the chance to apply the concepts they had learned through practical realistic exercises. Finally during the coaching phase, Ingenics most experienced consultants served as trainers, such as Franz Brotzer. These experts are recognized not only for their unusually high technical experience, but also for their personal communications skills. “Regardless of whether someone is an employee or an executive - to reach company goals, we need to have everyone on board,” adds Franz Brotzer.

Implementing immediate actions with solid success

Thankfully, SENATOR’s original goals were quickly exceeded. Due to the outstanding motivation of the company’s staff and managers, many immediate actions proposed during Ingenics’ workshops could also be implemented. And the results were a solid success: Retooling efforts at SENATOR were reduced by up to 50% - which also led to significant improvement of overall production times.

“Other positive effects from these workshops were the stabilization of our quality quota at nearly 100%, and the successful transfer of our printing process enhancements to our cleaning and maintenance operations,” explained Dr. Ulf Osmers. “Added to all that, our long-term partnership with Ingenics will definitely continue - and additional workshops for other SENATOR operations will follow.” ■



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i Additional information and advice



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