



MEP GROWTH SERVICES
INCREASING MANUFACTURERS' TOP LINE



Buck Knives

A Eureka! session opened up new business segment opportunities for Buck Knives, which could grow their company by 400%. Says owner CJ Buck: "You'd be a fool not to do it."

Client Profile

Buck Knives, a 4th generation company located in Post Falls, Idaho, is a manufacturer of sports cutlery for hunting and fishing, outdoor recreation, daily use, collectibles and limited editions, and tactical security. In 1964, the company introduced its folding hunter lock-back knife, which put the company on the map. However, in the following years, the company consolidated its market from 20,000 small dealers to far fewer larger dealers, which has brought volatility and instability to its business.

Declining sales in the 90s lead the company to reevaluate its strategy, including relocating back to its original home in Idaho. Lean projects freed up capacity, yet the company sensed that its new product ideation process was not generating the kinds of ideas that made a difference. The Eureka! Winning Ways program provided an opportunity for the company to reignite its growth cycle.

MEP's Initial Growth Services Offering: Eureka! Winning Ways

Building upon our success in helping manufacturers reduce their bottom-line costs through process improvements, MEP is now focusing on growth in top-line sales for manufacturers. Eureka! Winning Ways is the first of the MEP Growth Services to be introduced. Developed in partnership with Doug Hall of Eureka! Ranch in Cincinnati, Ohio, the program is the first scientifically based process to guide companies to systematically and significantly grow their businesses. Specifically, the program provides a disciplined methodology and analytical tools to create new ideas, discovery market opportunities for these ideas and efficiently drive the best ideas into development.

New Ideas and Projected Results

Buck scouted two new ideas generated from their Eureka! session, including one from a board member that participated in the process. Both are proprietary ideas that will open up new markets for the company while finding new uses for its core capabilities in grinding, shaping, and heat-treating knives. President CJ Buck explained that the Eureka! process illuminated an important realization about new products: "From now on,

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we won't manufacture anything without a story, a rationale. If it's not exciting to us, we won't waste our time and money on it, or that of our customers."

The company projects that each of its new Eureka-generated ideas could easily double the size of their business. Yet before embarking on their development and deployment, Buck Knives is taking one year to resolve some core company issues, refocus and reinvigorate its brand message, and reattach the company to its core markets. In this way, the company hopes to build a strong brand platform from which to launch these new ideas in 2009.

Reaction to Eureka! Winning Ways and MEP Growth Services

"Our day-and-a-half investment in Eureka! resulted in enough new ideas to last a few decades. The rapid-fire process is successfully designed to bring out creativity, passion, and focus in the participants. And it's backed up by a discipline that forces you to think through and capture the meaning of your idea.

"Our local growth coach has been a real asset in the process. It's easy to step back into daily work and let the excitement and energy of the ideation process languish. You need someone from the outside to force the milestones and keep you on schedule while exploring your newly created ideas, and Gary really filled that need and kept us on task.

"I was amazed. The investment is nothing compared to the results you'll get. You'd be a fool not to do it."

For More Information

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