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# Dodging the effects of the downturn

By **AVERYLL LOFT**

A MARYBOROUGH metal manufacturing company has been able to charge through the economic downturn and remain competitive in an international market thanks to a workshop on world-class manufacturing practices.

Global Manufacturing Group, which makes “just about anything” from metal and outputs thousands of metal components every day, has been working with QMI Solutions, a not-for-profit organisation, to implement lean production processes which cut down on waste and streamline its workshop.

This has resulted in GMG being able to provide internationally competitive prices and, in turn, help its diverse customer base – passenger trains and mineral handling componentry each accounting for about 30 per cent

of GMG’s market – further down the supply chain to also remain competitive.

GMG directors Phil Dowling, Peter Wall and Richard Aylward were the first to undertake QMI Solutions’ five-day ProEdge Workshop.

“Using a top down approach, to date we have sent 16 key management staff to the program over the last five years and will continue to send employees to specific modules,” Mr Dowling said.

QMI helped change the layout of the factory into a more logical sequence streamlining the flow of material and information through the production process.

With the new layout successfully up and running, GMG implemented QMI’s 5S Housekeeping: sort, set in order, shine, standards and sustain.

Once team leaders had been through the 5S training, they felt

empowered to take ownership of what was happening in their own work centres, while still following a standardised factory-wide approach, resulting in further efficiencies.

Mr Dowling is an advocate for lean production and QMI Solutions and would recommend QMI to other Fraser Coast manufacturers who want to grow their business.

“We are even looking at ways of interlinking our methods with customers in the next step of the production chain. As a supplier, we can help streamline the whole production process and pass on that value to the final customer,” Mr Dowling said.

In the 2008/09 financial year, QMI Solutions was involved in helping Queensland industry win \$545 million worth of work, \$158 million of which went to regional Queensland companies.



**STAYING COMPETITIVE:** Maryborough company Global Manufacturing Group has kept ahead of the game thanks to a workshop on world-class manufacturing practices