

Manufacturers Digest

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- ◆ Director's Message
- ◆ Workshops for Mfg.
- ◆ Better food options
- ◆ DIDI Update
- ◆ Increasing Efficiency with final assembly process
- ◆ Supply Chain Guide

Q1 2025

-Candice Pineau, QGM Grinding:

Candice Pineau – Chair of the Board



Members, I would like to thank those of you that have attended our past two events as well as the manufacturers roundtable with Senator Ortt. We like to think that good things come out of our members coming together. The team has been quite busy since my Q424 address.

Dream It Do It Western NY (DIDI) is officially up and running! In late February, the organization hosted its formal launch party for stakeholders and manufacturers at the New York Beer Project on Transit Road in Niagara County. Since then, the DIDI team has been hard at work organizing a series of outstanding events throughout the school year and summer. I encourage you to take a moment to explore their programs by visiting: <https://didiwny.com/events/>.

If you are a manufacturer and have not yet gotten involved, I strongly urge you to reach out to Todd Tranum at ttranum@mast-wny.com. This is a fantastic opportunity to engage with an initiative that is making a real impact on workforce development in our region.

The Strategic Planning Committee held multiple meetings throughout January and February, focusing on membership value and growth. One key topic of discussion has been the potential formation of a buying group. If this is of interest to you, we will be assessing the current gaps and identifying opportunities to provide additional value to our members.

To better understand your needs, we will be distributing a brief survey. This will help us determine what additional initiatives we should explore and what existing services you find most valuable. Your feedback is critical in shaping the future direction of BNMA, and we truly appreciate your input!

As we enjoy unseasonably warm March temperatures in the 70s, it's not hard to believe that golf season is just around the corner. We are excited to announce our annual golf outing, scheduled for June 9th at Diamond Hawk Golf Course.

To streamline the registration process and ensure that no one misses out, we have transitioned to a fully digital sign-up system this year. Hunter has enclosed the flyer with all the details. A special thanks to Peter, who worked closely with Diamond Hawk to secure lower pricing despite inflation. As a result, BNMA is able to reduce the cost per player, making this event even more accessible for our members. We look forward to seeing you on the course!

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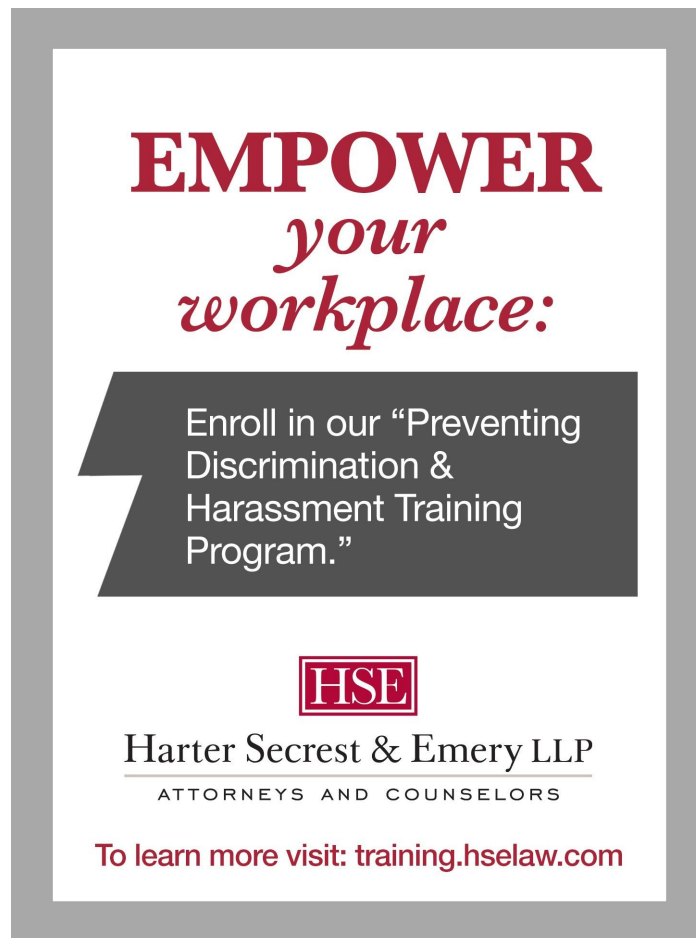


A BIG Round of applause for our 2025 Major Sponsors for their ongoing support of the BNMA. We do a lot of things behind the scenes in terms of advocacy, ongoing workforce development. Their support allows us to focus on what we do best, which is representing manufacturers in Western New York.

The BNMA remains the only nonprofit organization solely dedicated to supporting manufacturers in Western New York. I am proud to report that our advocacy efforts continue to yield meaningful results. Recently, BNMA played a key role in halting NYPA rate hikes, engaged with Governor Hochul's team to push for a reexamination of the CLCPA (including restrictions on gas stoves), and advocated for the elimination of COVID Sick Leave policies that burden businesses.

These efforts are only possible with a strong and growing membership base. A larger, more engaged BNMA makes us more influential in representing the interests of manufacturers. I ask each of you to take a moment to think about suppliers, manufacturers, or other industry partners who are not yet part of BNMA but should be. If you know of potential members, please connect them with Peter, Hunter, or a board member. We would love the opportunity to share the benefits of BNMA membership with them.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement!



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A Message from your Executive Director—Peter Ahrens



Members! I hope this 1Q25 newsletter finds you well. Over the past 18 months, we have been telling you about the opportunities that are coming down the pike. Well, the time is here.

We are pleased to announce an important opportunity for our members to engage with the BlueForge Alliance (BFA) and the Maritime Industrial Base (MIB). A key meeting will take place on May 14, 2025, bringing together current suppliers to the MIB, as well as new and potential suppliers. Senior representatives from BFA, the U.S. Navy, Electric Boat, and several of their suppliers will be in attendance. Two sessions will be held:

- Niagara County: 11:00 AM – 1:00 PM
- Hamburg: 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM

Stay tuned for further details. This is a great opportunity to connect, collaborate, and explore new business opportunities within the maritime industry.

BNMA, and Insyte Consulting, is actively engaged with the Supply Chain Group for the Tech Hub designation. As part of these efforts, a two-day educational session is scheduled for June 2025 to support manufacturers looking to expand their capabilities. We will share additional details as they become available.

By way of background, if you recall, Senator Schumer announced that Buffalo, Rochester, and Syracuse were awarded \$50 million to bolster the region's Tech Hub initiative. Now, the real work begins. This initiative presents a terrific opportunity to expand your business and become involved in the semiconductor supply chain, a rapidly growing sector with significant potential for manufacturers in our region.

Beginning the first week of April, Hunter and I will introduce a brief, two-minute video update to keep you informed about our activities and initiatives. (Hunter originally suggested a 60-second video, but for those of you who know me, you can appreciate that I can't even say my own name in that time!)

The BNMA Board suggested this initiative because they recognize all the work happening behind the scenes and want to ensure that our valued members—are aware of it, too. We hope you find these updates valuable and engaging.

Thank you for your continued support and engagement. We look forward to seeing you at these upcoming events and hearing your feedback on our new video updates.

Best regards,

Peter



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For more information contact Peter Ahrens, Executive Director.

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Tackle Your Break Room with Fresh, Local, Chef-Inspired Food from Strive!

When it comes to food, why outsource when you can keep it local? Former Buffalo Bill, Jon Corto and the Strive team are revolutionizing break room experiences with fresh, healthy, and locally made meals. Based in Orchard Park, Buffalo Strive Vending (Strive) is the go-to solution for businesses looking to elevate their workplace dining options.

No Cost to Employers – Just Better Food. Upgrading your break room has never been easier—or more affordable. Strive offers a seamless vending, micro market, and pantry service solution with **no cost to employers**. We bring chef-inspired, fresh meals and snacks directly to your workplace, ensuring your team gets the nourishment they need without sacrificing quality or taste.

Buffalo Born, Buffalo Strong. We know Buffalo. We know loyalty. And we know that when it comes to food, employees deserve better than mass-produced, out-of-state options. Strive is **local, women-owned, and dedicated to providing fresh, made-from-scratch meals** that fuel productivity and show your employees you care.

USDA-Certified Manufacturing for a New Era of Workplace Food. Strive is taking things to the next level with our **new USDA-certified commissary**. This expansion into food manufacturing means our meals meet the highest quality standards, offering businesses a **better, healthier, and more convenient food service**. Why settle for ordinary when you can have extraordinary?

Make the Switch – Because Buffalo Supports Its Own. Many businesses already have a vending or micro market provider, but the question is—are they the best? Strive’s commitment to fresh, healthy food, paired with unmatched local service, sets us apart. We make change easy by providing **a superior product, better service, and the kind of local commitment that national vendors can’t match.**

Join the Winning Team! As Jon Corto says, *“Tackle your break room with chef-inspired, local fresh food from former Buffalo Bill, Jon Corto and the Strive team! Why farm out your team’s food needs across the country or to another state, when the best in business is right here in Buffalo? You DO root for your home team, right?”*

It’s time to elevate your workplace dining experience. Let’s talk about how Strive can bring **fresh, local, and quality-driven food service to your business.**

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Dream It Do It WNY: Calling on Manufacturers to Shape the Future

The future of advanced manufacturing in Western New York is brighter than ever, and Dream It Do It Western New York (DIDIWNY) is at the forefront of this transformation. With growing enrollment in the Dream It Do It Advanced Manufacturing Program (DIDIAMP) and an array of hands-on learning experiences, now is the perfect time for manufacturers to get involved and help develop the workforce of tomorrow.

Enrollment Growth Reflects Demand

Since the beginning of the school year, DIDIAMP enrollment has surged from 260 to an incredible 631 students. This growth highlights a strong demand for immersive, real-world manufacturing experiences that connect students with industry professionals. As we continue to expand our reach, manufacturer participation is crucial in providing valuable mentorship and learning opportunities.

Engaging Students Through Hands-On Experiences

Recent months have been packed with activities designed to expose students to the world of manufacturing. Facility tours have taken place at leading companies such as:

- Blackstone Advanced Technologies
- Confer Plastics
- Fancher Chair
- General Motors
- Rand Machine
- Renold

Moog

Additionally, Dream It Do It has hosted **Girls in Manufacturing Camps** and **TCAM Camps (Teacher, Counselor, Administrator, and Manufacturer)** at locations across Western New York. These programs introduce students and educators to manufacturing careers while fostering partnerships between schools and industry leaders.

Upcoming Events & Key Dates

Manufacturers are encouraged to participate in the following upcoming programs:

- **Girls in Manufacturing Days**
 - o March 22 | SUNY Niagara's Welding Lab, Sanborn
 - o April 5 | MTI@JCC, Jamestown
 - o **TCAM (Teacher, Counselor, Administrator, Manufacturer) Camp** | May 15 | Niagara Economic Development Center & Voss Manufacturing, Sanborn
 - **STEM Wars 2025** | May 21 | Northwest Arena, Jamestown
- DIDIWNY is also supporting major programs such as **Be Your Own Hero (April 8)** and **Tech Wars 2025 (May 20, Flickinger Center, Buffalo)**.

Partnering to Build the Next Generation of Talent

We're partnering with schools and manufacturers like you to build the next generation of manufacturing talent. The Dream It Do It Advanced Manufacturing Program (DIDIAMP) connects with local middle and high schools to fuel awareness, excitement, and exploration of career opportunities in manufacturing. Your partnership contributes to our collective success.

How You Can Get Involved:

Onboard with Tallo – Our digital partner connects manufacturers with students. [Request your complimentary account](#), and we'll schedule virtual onboarding to help you maximize Tallo's benefits. Showcase your company culture, products, and career opportunities directly to DIDIAMP students.

- **Endorse DIDIAMP** – Share a quote, video, article, or photo highlighting the importance of partnering with DIDIAMP. Post it on your social media or in the press—we will too!
- **Host a Technology Tour** – Introduce students and educators to your workplace, showcase your products and processes, and provide insight into career paths within your company.

Attend or Assist at DIDIAMP Events – Participate in our camps and programs where manufacturers, students, and educators come together to inspire and teach one another. [Click here to volunteer](#).

Invest – Make a tax-deductible contribution to DIDIAMP and be recognized as a key partner in building and energizing the manufacturing talent pipeline in Western New York.

Join us in shaping the future of manufacturing. Contact Dream It Do It WNY today and be part of this transformative initiative!

Connect with a Dream It Do It Western New York Director near you:

Cindy Aronson – DIDIWNY Director, Chautauqua County, caronson@didiwny.com

Stephanie Morris – DIDIWNY Director, Erie County, smorris@didiwy.com

Allyson Sharpe – DIDIWNY Director, Niagara County, asharpe@didiwny.com

Visit the Dream It Do It WNY Website and stay up to date on programming and opportunities to engage at www.didiwny.com.



Case Study: Hope's Windows, Inc. – Increasing Efficiency within Final Assembly Process

Hope's Windows is the preeminent designer and manufacturer of steel windows and doors in the US. Hope's Windows is a 100+ year old company focused on producing premium-quality custom windows and doors for residential and commercial new construction, retro fit, and historic preservation.

Insyte helped us see where the bottlenecks were in our current system and provided us with solutions to improve our flow of orders.

– Rob DuBois, Vice President of Operations

SITUATION

Hope's Windows has multiple plants on their campus. Plant 1 houses the fabrication processes, which are then sent to Plant 3 for finishing operations (i.e. inspection, outside coating, prime, paint, final assembly, and packaging). An increase in sales volume led to some production issues that contributed to a negative effect on Hope's Windows' throughput and on-time delivery. The lead time increased from approximately 15 weeks to over 19 weeks.

SOLUTION

Hope's Windows engaged Insyte Consulting to assess the current state of the operations in Plant 3. A current state value stream map of the operations was created to help pinpoint the areas that were bottlenecks in moving material through the system.

Based on the assessment, Insyte provided the company with a series of recommendations. The recommendations included utilizing the concept of division of labor within the assembly cells, establishing and posting production expectations for each job, organizing work areas with visual cues, establishing a designated area for required components, and ensuring upstream processes were correct prior to reaching the assembly cells.

The Hope's Window' project team prioritized these recommendations and an action plan for implementation was created and executed to guide the workforce in implementing the improvements that will decrease lead time, increase on-time delivery, and increase throughput.

RESULTS

- Estimated 4-week reduction in lead time (20% decrease).
- Anticipated 30% increase in throughput as measured in hours / piece.
- Significant improvement in on-time delivery from 30% to >70%.

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Harter Secrest webinar:

Wednesday, April 30, 2025, 8:30 to 9:30 am

A Practical Overview of the International Mechanisms Available for Obtaining Foreign IP Protection

Intellectual Property Partner Rowland Richards will explore the critical aspects of safeguarding your intellectual property on a global scale. This session is designed to provide you with a comprehensive understanding of the key international treaties and systems that facilitate IP protection across borders, including the:

- International Copyright Protection Under the Berne Convention
- International Patent Protection Under the Patent Cooperation Treaty (PCT)
- International Design Protection Under the Hague System
- International Trademark Protection Under the Madrid Protocol

Attendees will gain insights into the essential IP procedures and techniques available for developing an international IP portfolio, and an understanding of the importance of securing IP rights in foreign jurisdictions and the market flexibility these rights provide, especially in times of cross-border uncertainty.

Don't miss this opportunity to enhance your knowledge and ensure your IP assets are well-protected worldwide.

More information and Registration:

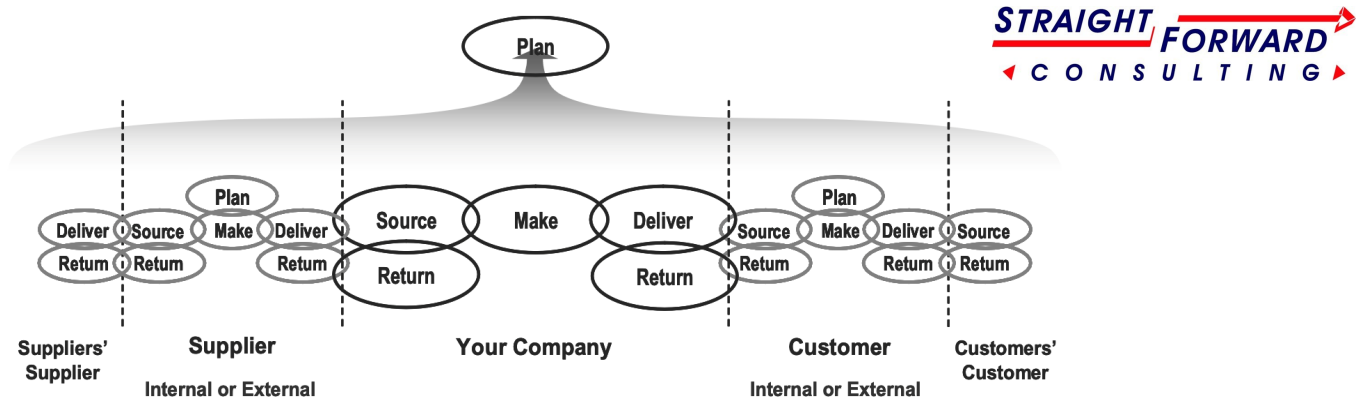


Stronger Supply Chains Start Here: A Guide for Manufacturers

In my travels, I have met with countless manufacturing companies. Despite the extensive literature on supply chain management, many companies still have varying perspectives on what constitutes their supply chain.

A common misconception is to define supply chain solely as materials management and logistics activities (planning, scheduling, purchasing, warehousing, transportation) while excluding manufacturing. This is an incomplete view. Manufacturing is an integral part of the supply chain, and anyone overseeing supply chain operations should also be responsible for manufacturing.

The Supply Chain Operations Reference (SCOR®) Model, developed in the 1990s by manufacturers, IT providers, consultants, and government agencies, provides a comprehensive framework. Widely adopted, it is featured in college textbooks and embedded in leading ERP systems like SAP. Initially managed by the Supply Chain Council, the model is now under the Association for Supply Chain Management (ASCM).



The SCOR model illustrates:

Planning Function: Positioned above the transaction layer, this encompasses annual planning, budgeting, and Sales and Operations Planning (S&OP). It operates at a higher level, separate from day-to-day transactions.

Source, Make, and Deliver Activities: These interconnected activities span not only the activities within your four walls, but also your suppliers, customers, and even Tier II suppliers and customers. Within your company, procurement feeds manufacturing with parts and materials, which are then converted to finished goods and delivered to customers.

Upstream and Downstream Partners: Your supply chain is intrinsically linked to your suppliers and customers. Procurement (the 'source' bubble) interacts with suppliers' sales teams (the 'deliver' bubble), and your warehouse interacts with your suppliers' logistics teams to set delivery appointments, while your sales and logistics teams (your 'deliver' bubble) coordinate with customers' procurement and receiving teams for the same things.

Return Function: Increasingly critical in the e-commerce era, this function manages product returns from your customers and to your suppliers due to overstock, incorrect orders, or defective parts.

Beyond this graphic, the SCOR model offers standardized business processes and metrics, eliminating the need to reinvent the wheel when designing future state maps or implementing best practices.

The model encourages a 'sideways' view of supply chain processes, extending beyond internal departments to include suppliers' suppliers and customers' customers. Imagine the transformation if all trading partners aligned their business processes and metrics.

As Straight Forward Consulting is the official supply chain partner of the BNMA, I am here to help you navigate and optimize your supply chain. Let's work together to enhance your supply chain operations and drive your business forward!

The Problem with Work-from-Home

By William DiLorenzo – Published on Tue, Feb 16, 2025



During and after the pandemic it became common practice for employers to include some form of remote work into their employee's schedules. Spurred by necessity, companies gave employees a better work-life balance, streamlined meetings and file sharing, and (theoretically) reduced overhead. Especially for employees fulfilling accounting functions, working at home has become an expected "perk" at this point. Unfortunately, in the last year many businesses have begun noticing significant drawbacks to the practice.

Firstly, there was an immediate reduction in document "quality control". Managers lost the ability to see what their subordinates were working on, and therefore couldn't offer any correction. If a bookkeeper started organizing a vendor's invoices under a buildings and grounds account when they should have been designated as production, the company could end up paying thousands in sales tax erroneously. Issues like this could go on for months without being noticed.

The second of these drawbacks to make itself apparent was the predictable decrease in, and quality of, communication. Being secluded allowed employees to retreat into their own functions and seldom communicate outside of necessity. This might not seem like a huge deal but some of the most important discoveries happen during "water cooler conversations". This infrequent communication led to missed opportunities and process slowdowns.

The move to remote work made accessing and transferring physical documents nearly impossible. Businesses had already been slowly adopting digital invoicing and record keeping, but now they kicked that process into high gear. All at once bookkeepers and CFOs alike had to learn completely new systems from what they were used to. Hasty process changes led to invoices being mislabeled, paid twice or lost. Sometimes entire vendors would go missing and turn up months later, having never made the switch to digital invoicing.

Finally, the part no one wants to admit; being at home makes (most) employees get a bit lazy. Why double check invoices when the digital system should handle their organization? Why attend a meeting that could improve our tax compliance when there's a dozen distractions on the same screen? Why file that exemption certificate quickly when there is no one checking if it's done? Being at home with comfort and distraction only serves to exacerbate all other problems with remote work.

It's almost poetic; in an attempt to keep their companies running managers set up systems for online communication, only for those systems to become blockades within the company. While some employers have tried rolling back commitments on total or majority work-from-home environments the home office is surely here to stay, if even in a limited capacity. Controllers, Finance VPs and CFOs will continue struggling to ensure that they keep the same standards despite an unavoidable decrease in oversight and communication. To combat this increased turmoil, it may be necessary for leaders to include third party reviews in their future planning. Yearly audits might be the only way to both correct mistakes and incentivize employee efforts without sacrificing the work-from-home dynamic.

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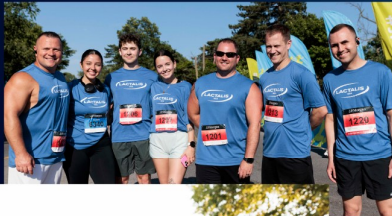
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