

- Commitment to sustainability
- Certifications
- Rigid set-up boxes
- Continuous Improvement

GSS continues commitment to sustainability with key environmental certifications



Global Sourcing Solutions {GSS} has established an impressive track record of being an environmental leader in the packaging manufacturing industry, particularly at their primary plant in Monterrey, MX – GBOX. In addition to the extensive EHS program that continues to promote education, awareness and continuous improvement principles among its employees, suppliers and the local community– they were also the first printing and packaging manufacturer in Northern Mexico to achieve certified status within the Mexico Clean Industries program. This voluntary program certifies manufacturing operations are performed in compliance with strict environmental standards as outlined by the Mexican Federal Government.

GSS has continued this momentum with their recent achievement of two globally recognized environmental certifications - Forestry Stewardship Council certification (FSC) and ISO 14001.

FSC is an independent, non-gov-

ernmental, not-for-profit organization established to promote the responsible management of the world’s forests. FSC certification provides a credible link between responsible production and consumption of forest products, enabling consumers and businesses to make purchasing decisions that benefit people and the environment as well as providing ongoing business value.

Project leader Yazmin Catalan, who was responsible for leading the initiative, pointed out that the certification was a significant milestone and logical next step for the company. “Our leadership team and our global customer base hold our manufacturing team to high standards with regard to sustainability and environmental responsibility. The FSC program is yet another tool we can use to prove our sustainability commitment and standards are at world-class levels. Our plant is also very proud of this certification, as we are among a select few companies in our region who can claim this achievement.”



Certifications: It’s the right thing to do

G-BOX also became ISO 14001 certified in Q1 of this year. This Global set of standards specifies the requirements of an environmental management system (EMS) for business organizations, and requires a systemic approach to handling environmental issues within an organization.

GSS EHS engineer Magda Belmares comments “The steps we have taken to become certified within the Mexico Clean program positioned us well to expand the program to meet ISO requirements. Since ISO 14001 is the globally recognized benchmark for environmental responsibility, it really made sense for us to pursue certification.”

This environmental focus has been an ongoing journey for the GSS team for reasons that go well beyond the various certifications targeted. According to GSS CEO, Marcelo Belden, “ Each year our leadership team maps out the key focus items for our continued success. These are summarized within our annual objectives and strategies for GSS. Our commitment to the environment has been included as a key item here – not just because it makes good business sense – but because it’s the right thing to do.”



GSS expands platform with rigid set-up box manufacturing

A key component of recent GSS growth has been their ability to satisfy a wide variety of packaging needs in order to provide a "one-stop shop" to their customers. That ability was just enhanced with the recent announcement by GSS that Ray Products, a custom rigid set-up box plant in Parsons, Kansas had been added to the GSS family as an official manufacturing partner.

Ray Products has been in business since 1965, and has enjoyed a longstanding reputation for producing some of the finest quality and award winning rigid boxes in the United States. Their impressive customer base - including Hallmark, Kodak, and Laura Secord, among others - speaks to level of service, creativity and value they provide.

GSS COO, Doug Nagle, spoke about the addition of Ray Products into the GSS platform. "As a company, we are always looking at what else we can do to offer value to our customers. As a leader in the packaging industry, it is important that we are able to stay in tune with ever changing shifts in customer demands and trends. One definite trend we have seen is the call for more "high-end" consumer products packaged in a rigid style set-up box. We are incredibly selective when it comes to our strategic partnerships, but in this particular case, Ray Products seemed to be a very natural fit. They have unique product offering, a proven track record, and an advantageous central US location. Most importantly their manufacturing culture was a great fit with GSS as well."

Drawing on the expertise of Ray Products nearly one half century making rigid boxes, GSS also plans to add rigid manufacturing capabilities within their GBOX plant in Monterrey within 2012.

GSS now boasts a product line that includes folding carton, micro-corrugated, jumbo flute and Rigid set-up packaging. With a manufacturing footprint that includes both the U.S. and Mexico, they have established themselves a single source solution in the marketplace.

Equipment upgrade

Bolsters capacity and capabilities in fold/glue department



2011 marked a year of significant capital investments in equipment to keep up with the rapid growth GSS has experienced in recent years. Prepress, printing, window-patching, corrugating and large format die-cutting areas were all expanded with new and upgraded equipment in order to handle the ever-increasing growth/demands. These additions, especially the large format machines, have allowed GSS to achieve significant efficiency improvements over the last year as well as increased capabilities.

This year has started out with a focus in the finishing area - specifically folding/gluing. P2 saw installation completed of a Bobst VISIONFOLD 145. This new, state of the art folder/gluer is well known within the packaging manufacturing industry for its

speed, precision, and flexibility. This system also has the most advanced technology in laser detection for glue measurements. This has been a outstanding advancement in quality control since the system automatically rejects product with the slightest variation from adhesive settings.

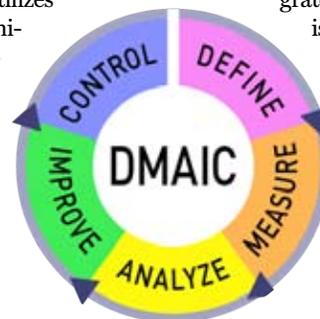
"We have had our eye on this particular piece of equipment for quite some time" says GBOX Plant Manager Arturo Munoz. "We have always prided ourselves on our manufacturing flexibility and capacity and the new Bobst will help us take that to the next level. Also, we are seeing increased design complexity, package size variation, and run lengths everyday - so this machine is really ideal for helping us handle that".

This latest investment is part of the GSS strategy of continuous improvement and increasing overall manufacturing efficiencies along with enhancement in responsiveness and adaptability for customer demand changes. GSS CEO, Marcelo Belden, comments " We are very excited about the addition of this equipment and what it will mean to our customers. The timing is perfect, as we are now fully taking advantage of the installs that were made last year to much of our front end processes."

Continuous Improvement

Program excels to higher levels

GSS has achieved great success by implementing a strategy that embraces and utilizes the "Continuous Improvement" philosophy within all aspects of its operations. The application of this philosophy can be found throughout all areas of the company - from manufacturing, to customer service, to purchasing - where KPI's are measured and tracked against targets across the board.



The latest initiative of the program

- headed by Continuous Improvement Manager, Roberto Hernandez - is the introduction of the Six Sigma problem solving methodology to key employees within manufacturing. While Six Sigma programs are nothing new, some companies are hesitant to heavily involve employees at the operator level due to the significant training commitments involved as well as a strong foundation in SPC. This has not deterred GSS, as Hernandez comments "Our goal is to ensure almost all of our manufacturing employees have some involvement in CI projects on a regular basis. It is a huge part of our philosophy here. They are also using detailed statistical process controls

{SPC} analysis on a daily basis as part of our Integrated Process Management program. This is just be another tool in their belt we can provide them to help improve overall processes. One of our main focuses in the company is to increase overall employee involvement, engagement and ownership by giving them the tools, teams and resources that allow them to make decisions that drive improvements in all areas."

GSS Chief Operations Officer, Doug Nagle (himself a Black Belt) is a big proponent of the initiative. "We are excited about this program" he said. "We have to be realistic about our aggressive targets and be sure to provide the proper support and training to achieve these goals. I have great deal of confidence in our people - the CI culture here at GSS is central to our management philosophy and the program has really exploded over the years. We know it will not be easy, but we would not continue down this path if we didn't feel our group was up to the challenge. We have had, and will continue to keep a 100% commitment to our continuous improvement programs. Its one of our key advantages that keeps us ahead of our competition!"