

# CLIENT SUCCESS: CASPERS ICE CREAM INC

University of Utah MEP Center

*Our involvement with the MEP Utah has benefitted our company as well as our employees. Our company is now focused on continuous improvement. We plan to continue working with the MEP Utah on future projects that will impact our company for the better.*

Kyle Smith, Vice President,  
Casper Ice Cream

## Black Belts Give Casper's Extra Kick in Quality

Back in 1925, Casper Merrill took the milk and cream from the family milk cows and made the first, original Ice Cream Nut Sundae on a Stick. Soon after, Casper developed his original FatBoy® Ice Cream Sandwich, a much larger than usual ice cream novelty. Casper's Ice Cream, Inc. operates out of Richmond, Utah. Their mission statement is "make happy customers and employees by manufacturing the highest quality ice cream products." They accomplish this by focusing on their core values of employee and customer satisfaction, health & happiness, honesty, quality, and frugality. The company currently employs 50 people.

### Situation:

Since one of the company's core values is to focus on quality, Casper's has been interested in improving the quality of their product while decreasing costs where possible. In addition, Casper's is engaged in a very competitive marketplace. They felt that obtaining Six Sigma was essential to help them stay in business in the long term. They sought out assistance from MEP Utah, a NIST MEP affiliate, to obtain two Six Sigma black belts. A black belt is the highest ranking that can be achieved through the Six Sigma program and takes significant effort to accomplish.

### Solution:

MEP Utah's Engineer, Wayne Kirk, and Casper's Vice President, Kyle Smith, were responsible for guiding Casper's through the Six Sigma program and achieving their black belt status. To do so they first conducted two green belt projects followed by two black belt projects. A project of this magnitude requires gathering data, looking at the variations that are discovered, and then actually fixing the variations. In Casper's case, they found a discrepancy in the actual weight of the ice cream bars. This was caused by the variation in the ice cream freezers and the extrusion process. Many of the bars had extra ice cream in them. With the help of MEP and the Six Sigma Process they have been able to take out much of the variation in the process, which has resulted in a better and more consistent ice cream bar. They have also seen a reduction in the amount of ingredients used per bar, which has helped lower costs.

Through this process, the nitrogen area was also improved. Casper's uses nitrogen in their conveyor belt system to freeze the ice cream. In going through the black belt journey, they discovered that they were using too much nitrogen and their product was actually getting too cold. By cutting back on nitrogen, they were able to realize significant savings and at the same time, achieve a high quality product that tastes great.

### Results:

- \$60,000 in cost savings
- Reduced product overage
- Increased production

**\$60,000 in cost savings**