



Client Story: Brunson Instruments

Seeking a process to prioritize and implement ideas to fill new Lean-created capacity, Brunson turned to Eureka! Winning Ways®. Four months later they launched two new products that will deliver \$300k in sales. After reloading, the next ideas in development should bring in \$400k.

Client Profile

Brunson Instrument Company manufactures high-precision alignment products and accessories for large-scale, 3-dimensional measurement. Their customers work with large machinery that requires exacting measurement with very small tolerances. Their products include optical alignment scopes for individual applications, as well as manufacturer tripods and other accessories, including targets for high-tech measurement equipment for lasers, scanners, and articulating arms.

The Kansas City, Missouri-based company has been in business for 80 years, and has 42 employees and annual sales of \$9.5 million. Still family-owned by a third-generation president, the company had experienced 8-12% incremental growth for the last five years. A focus on making their internal manufacturing processes more lean to decrease lead times and improve on-time delivery led the company to realize more capacity than they once thought they had. And the source of their recent growth did not look like it could fill the additional capacity they had created.

The company had no shortage of ideas. As Brunson's Vice President Richard Powell explained, "We're all left-brained engineers with more ideas than we could implement. Eureka! Winning Ways brought a process to focus, prioritize, and get new things going and out the door."

Ideas Pursued

Brunson focused on two ideas to work on. Both, in fact, had been raised before in the company, but before Eureka! Winning Ways, the company had not known how to systematically explore and test them to move them out to the market. Now they did.

The first idea was for a low thermal expansion scale, one-meter bar to calibrate instruments. The second was for target holders for laser trackers that would be certified and serialized to be traceable. Discovery into the viability of both proved them to be promising, and six weeks after their initial Eureka! session the

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company had both in development. Ten weeks later, they were the featured items in the company's exhibit booth at the trade show of the Coordinate Measurement Society, which attracts attendees from the aerospace industry. Reaction from customers was overwhelmingly positive, with many saying "we've needed one of these for a long time and no one's been able to provide it." Pre-show sales coupled with requests for quotes at the show sent both products into quick demand.

Results

Based on early sales and customer interest, Brunson estimates conservatively that they will create \$200,000 in sales from the bars, and another \$100,000 from the target holders in the next year.

In addition, the company has reloaded their Eureka! process and is already looking into new projects—a 2.3 meter bar that collapses for easy transport, and a new marketing program for their alignment telescopes, a 30-year old product that has proven to be more accurate than the new technology that was thought to replace it.

These new efforts could bring in another \$400,000 in sales revenue.

Reaction to E!WW

"We want to keep the momentum going. Eureka! Winning Ways gave us a focus and the mechanism to move things forward. Our Growth Coach has done an excellent job at keeping us on track, and now we are ready and equipped to continue to improve and grow this company."

For More Information

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