



Customer **SHOWCASE** Program

Case Study

Mid-Atlantic Professional Services

BUSINESS PROBLEM

Markets change. And what was once a thriving business can fade away in the face of new competitors and new approaches. Suppliers to those declining businesses are faced with the same challenge: adapt to the new realities or become obsolete. When a company's customers are driven out of business by new market forces, Suppliers must find a way to apply their expertise and capabilities where they can prosper.

Mid-Atlantic Professional Services (Wilmington, DE) was a major Supplier of branded and unbranded hardware and consumer items to independent stores and home centers throughout the U.S. The company designed the products, established the brand and marketing, designed packaging and marketing programs, and distributed the products to its retail outlet customers. The company also imported some goods for the likes of Wal-Mart, K-Mart and regional stores like the former Hechinger chain, so they had some experience with sourcing in the Far East. When the 'big box' stores drove many of Mid-Atlantic's customers out of business, Mid-Atlantic had to re-invent itself by finding another way to apply its expertise and capabilities.

"MFG.com brings together a consortium of people who can supply a variety of products, goods and services under one roof."

*-Larry Zimmerman, PhD
President, Mid-Atlantic
Professional Services*

SOLUTION

To stem the bleeding, Mid-Atlantic was forced to down-size and chose to sell off its brands, then it went into a sort of hibernation during which time management re-evaluated its prospects. What emerged from this re-evaluation was a streamlined company dedicated to design, branding, packaging and advertising. "We no longer manufacture anything," says company president Larry Zimmerman, PhD. "and we have had to find new markets, since our traditional customer set is no more. We realized that our real value lies in brand identification, public relations, marketing, and business planning. We are good at helping smaller companies develop and market new products." Those products range from consumer goods and hardware to some electronics and soft goods.

Zimmerman says that the MFG.com online marketplace operates similarly to how he operated his own business. "MFG.com brings together a consortium of people who can supply a variety of products, goods and services under one roof." In addition to the design, branding and marketing, Mid-Atlantic brokers some products for some of their larger accounts. It is that part of





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the business that brought Mid-Atlantic to MFG.com. Zimmerman first heard about the online market from a partner in the machining business. "I was really tired of the problems I'd been having trying to source parts and products from local machine shops," he says. "This partner told me about MFG.com and I decided to give it a try. We put out a couple requests for quotes and the response was huge. We quickly found some very good Suppliers. Some of them are companies that we continue to doing business with again and again. We have been very happy with the Suppliers we've worked with through MFG.com."

You would think that most consumer goods would be almost automatically sourced from China or other low-wage areas; not so for Mid-Atlantic. "We are all too familiar with the challenges of sourcing goods from the Far East," Zimmerman says, "customs, the time required to get product and quality issues... we try to keep as much of our sourcing

domestic as we can. And MFG.com is a great resource for doing that."

In the first 90 days of working with MFG.com, Mid-Atlantic submitted about 15 Requests for Proposal and "the response was great." Zimmerman admits to trying another online marketplace and being quite disappointed in the results. "It was cumbersome to use," he says, "and the response was very difficult to work with. It was a nightmare." By contrast, working with the MFG.com site "makes my life easy."

He also has high praise for the customer service at MFG.com: "The response is great. Back-up is great. Ease of use is tremendous. They are all very professional." Explaining that he had some questions early-on about how to use the site, Zimmerman was very pleased with the help and support that got him "up and running" quickly and painlessly.

Mid-Atlantic has obviously faced some very difficult challenges. A thorough analysis of their capabilities helped them re-focus their efforts and define a new approach that targets their talent and experience in a new way to offer real value to a new set of clients. Part of that new approach includes new partners in bringing products and services to clients – partners like MFG.com and the cadre of Suppliers that have responded to Mid-Atlantic's requests for proposals with high quality parts and products, good service, and attractive pricing.

ABOUT MID-ATLANTIC

Mid-Atlantic Professional Services specializes in the design, branding, marketing, and business planning for consumer goods and house wares products for local and regional retailers. The company also brokers selected products for regional retail outlets. Now directed to the "Energy Conservation and "Green" Markets Mid-Atlantic Professional Services" (MAPS) networks with it's suppliers and offers Electric Savings solutions through their website at www.mapsprofessionals.com

BENEFITS

- Easily and quickly identify affordable sources for domestically-produced parts and products
- Easy-to-use web-based marketplace that delivers multiple Suppliers capable of delivering the requested parts as needed

