

## SCALE AND BALANCE MANUFACTURER

A scales and bagging equipment manufacturer in Lenexa, Kan.

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### THE CHALLENGE

Express Scale Parts, Inc., a scale and bagging equipment manufacturer, has been receiving assistance from Mid-America TAAC since 2010. Initially the firm began as a parts supplier and over the years evolved into making sophisticated gross and net weight bagging scales; automatic bag hangers, bag closing and positioning and transfer conveyors; manual, automatic or semi-automatic palletizing equipment; and portable bagging. When foreign competition began to erode their market share, the company president met with a TAAC project manager and determined that the firm qualified for the program.



### THE SOLUTION

The firm was awarded \$75,000 in TAAF funding which they matched to total \$150,000 to implement the following strategic projects:

- ❖ Market research
- ❖ Trade show display materials
- ❖ Software upgrades
- ❖ Improved website

### RESULTS SINCE PROGRAM ENTRY

- An updated software program allowed for more efficient operations, increased productivity of ESP control specialist, and streamlined processes.
- Increased sales of \$1 million since entering the TAAF program.



## TEXTILES MANUFACTURER

A manufacturer of tents, awnings, canopies, tension structures, and exhibit components in Kansas City, Mo.

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### THE CHALLENGE

KC Tent & Awning Company, a tent and awning manufacturer in Kansas City, Mo., began receiving assistance from Mid-America TAAC in May 2011 to grow the capacity of the sales team, develop and implement a marketing strategy, complete a lead based process review or custom production system to develop more efficient process flow and create an employee development program.



### THE SOLUTION

The firm was awarded \$22,500 in TAAF funding which they matched to total \$30,000 to implement the following strategic projects:

- ❖ Extensively train personnel on a new phone technology that integrates their phone system with their computers
- ❖ Upgraded training for new programs on their CNC router table
- ❖ Monthly leadership training for their newly appointed operations manager (first time position in their company)
- ❖ Contracting with a facilitator that provides guidance to the company's strategic planning team

### RESULTS SINCE PROGRAM ENTRY

- The company more than doubled their revenue from \$5 million to \$10.7 million.
- The company increased employment from 40 to 64 employees.



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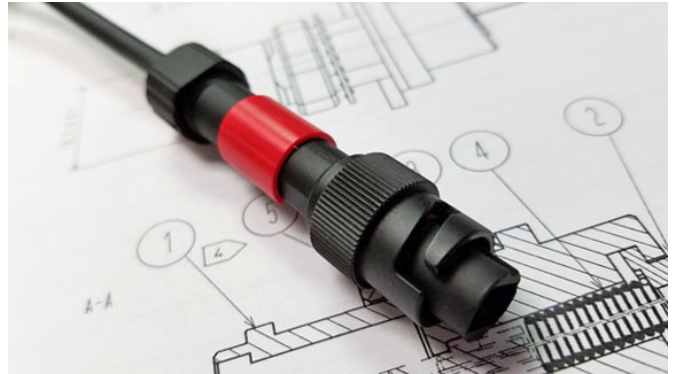
## DATA & COMMUNICATIONS MANUFACTURER

A leading manufacturer of custom, professional grade fiber optic and copper connectivity solutions in Jackson, Mo.

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### THE CHALLENGE

Major Custom Cable, Inc., one of the largest manufacturers of data and communication cables in the U.S., started receiving assistance from Mid-America TAAC in March 2012. Like many domestic manufacturers, this company was hit hard by import competition, especially from China. Chinese manufacturers began churning out cables of acceptable, but not great quality, for lower prices. The key, the owner felt, was rapid delivery, which is all but impossible for Chinese manufacturers.



### THE SOLUTION

The firm was awarded \$75,000 in TAAF funding which they matched to total \$150,000 to implement the following strategic projects:

- ❖ An upgrade to its development software to refine the company's IT systems
- ❖ Production equipment testing to advance the quality of the fiber optic product line and reduce the labor cost of testing
- ❖ Production equipment testing of new products
- ❖ Product certification

### RESULTS SINCE PROGRAM ENTRY

- Leveraging TAAF funds, the company was able to invest its own money on new equipment, halting a decline in sales and helping the company create a new line of import-proof products.
- The company was able to increase their annual revenues by more than \$1 million from the time they entered and then completed the TAAF program.



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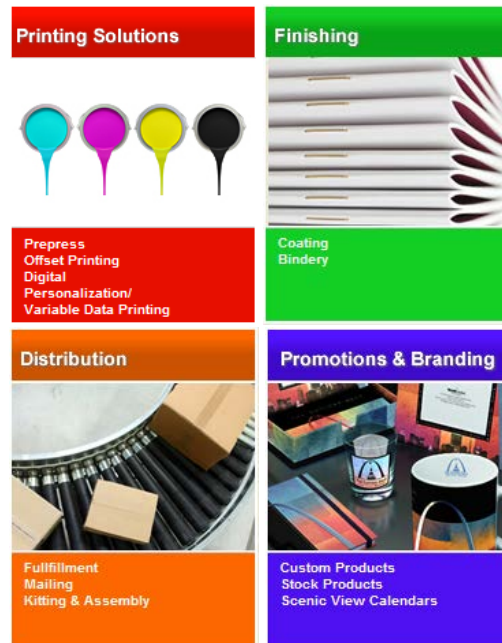
## PRINTING MANUFACTURER

A digital printing material manufacturer customizing promotional products including calendars, catalogs, mailers and flyers in Wichita, Kan.

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### THE CHALLENGE

McCormick Armstrong Co., Inc., a Kansas manufacturer, offers a world of printing solutions from domestic commercial sheet fed and web printing, digital printing, bindery, mailing and fulfillment to a vast array of international production solutions. Revenue across the board decreased in the American print industry due to the increasing levels of imports as well as a shift in the industry from providing just the printed material to becoming a full service fulfillment center to their clients. This company has been working with Mid-America TAAC since 2011.



### THE SOLUTION

The firm was awarded \$75,000 in TAAF funding which they matched to total \$150,000 to implement the following strategic projects:

- ❖ Sales team training
- ❖ MIS software conversion to improve operation efficiencies and project data management
- ❖ IT infrastructure upgrades to more efficiently process data and improve customer relationship management
- ❖ Production related software updates to improve printing capabilities, reduce errors and enhance color output

### RESULTS SINCE PROGRAM ENTRY

- Employment increased from 58 to 65.
- Sales increased from \$8.5 million to \$10.5 million.



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# COMMUNICATIONS MANUFACTURER

A cellular tower manufacturer in Fenton, Mo.

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## THE CHALLENGE

Mercury Communications & Construction, Inc., a cellular tower manufacturer in Fenton, Mo., has been receiving assistance from Mid-America TAAC since June 2013 to improve training, marketing and advertising. The firm is certified as a Woman Business Enterprise and was started in the basement of one owner's home. The company's fortunes had soared building cellular towers during the tech boom of the early millennium, but nosedived when wireless communications companies halted construction after 9/11.



## THE SOLUTION

The firm was awarded \$75,000 in TAAF funding which they matched to total \$150,000 to implement the following strategic projects:

- ❖ Designing advertisements for trade shows to showcase a new tower design
- ❖ Improve functionality of online design tool to allow customers to design custom products

## RESULTS SINCE PROGRAM ENTRY

- Business revenue was \$6.8 million when entering the TAAF program. Sales reached \$8.5 million within two years.
- Company had a record year in sales and profit in 2015, adding 20 new employees in about a year.
- The company has opened a separate division to manufacture the new pole, innocuous-looking enough to be disguised as a light pole, flag pole or telephone pole.



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## LIGHT BULB MANUFACTURER

A fluorescent & LED lighting systems manufacturer in Wichita, Kan.

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### THE CHALLENGE

PWI, Inc., a Kansas manufacturer, pioneered aviation interior lighting in 1972 with custom-made fluorescent lights and more recently has become the resident expert in LED lighting. The company recently developed and patented an extremely energy efficient power converter for lighting systems that runs both AC and DC currents. The aviation industry accounts for approximately 66 percent of the company's core business and import sales for aerospace products and parts have continued to increase. This firm began working with the Mid-America TAAC program in 2011.



### THE SOLUTION

The firm was awarded \$75,000 in TAAF funding which they matched to total \$150,000 to implement the following strategic projects:

- ❖ Leadership development to create goals, objectives and strategies
- ❖ Market research to expand customer base
- ❖ Production improvements to obtain cGMP/ISP 13485 certification
- ❖ MIS upgrades to improve data flow

### RESULTS SINCE PROGRAM ENTRY

- cGMP/ISO 13485 certification.
- Sales increased from \$842,025 to \$1,585,098.



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