



CASE STUDY

Facing Tariffs and Capacity Constraints. How This Outdoor Equipment Company Found a Smarter Way to Win.

Overview

- Power and lawn equipment company, leader in outdoor power equipment
- The company faced high tariff costs from China, rising consumer demand and limited injection molding capacity leading to low schedule attainment
- Overall, they saved millions by leveraging automation, maintenance, and data-driven process improvements



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About TBM

Speed wins every time.

TBM specializes in operations and supply chain consulting for manufacturers and distributors. We accelerate operational performance to make you more agile and help you accelerate business performance 3–5x faster than your peers.

Challenge

- High customer demand and constrained injection molding capacity drove schedule shortfalls, with OEE at 50% and uptime at 60%.
- Mower assembly line relying heavily on temp worker; needed to reduce operating costs; supply chain challenges increasing cost of materials.
- High tariff costs on lawn equipment motors coming from China.
- Lack of problem solving and issue resolution.

Solution

- Focused on enhancing productivity through optimized use of existing automation, preventive maintenance, faster changeovers, and the adoption of advanced technologies like robotic tooling, torque guns, automated feeders, tow motors, and palletizers.
- Used visual management and KPIs to track and improve OEE drivers like scrap, rework, and minor downtime.
- Use line balancing technology to rebalance the line and reduce staffing.
- Implemented a daily management system to improve injection molding line productivity.

Results

Automation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced labor by 18% from 54 FTEs to 44 • Improved productivity per hour by 11%
Line Balancing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieved \$429,000 in annual labor savings by optimizing the line and reducing headcount by 9. • Increased annual sales by \$27.5 million by boosting output by 275 units per shift.

