Re-Starting Manufacturing and the “Next Normal”

This edition is dedicated to the topic of restarting manufacturing and the “next normal” as economies and businesses reopen. Manufacturers are facing new challenges as they look to restart or maintain operations during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As preparations are made for the “next normal”, manufacturers must consider additional dimensions of employee safety, including the establishment of production environments and workflows that address physical distancing and protection requirements.

Please contact me your thoughts. They are all welcome!
- Jay Gorajia (jay.gorajia@siemens.com)

From the President’s Desk

First of all, we hope everyone is healthy and our hearts are with you if you’re under the weather for whatever reason.

I attended an online seminar Tuesday morning. There was a survey with the first 2 questions being asked of the manufacturing industry:

Is your company considering changes to your supply chain in light of COVID-19?

- Yes, we are considering changes (19%)
- No, no changes are anticipated (35%)
- I don't know (46%)

In the context of COVID-19...

- I am working from home (23%)
- I am working at my company office / production floor (54%)
- Both (at home and at the company) (23%)

I understand LA County is still in Phase 2 with many business still closed and Orange County is in Phase 3, but may go back to face masks. We’ll see what the powers do next.

I was trying to find news articles that were positive about our industry. I guess if you believe the glass is half-full, you can be positive about anything. Jay has a very good article on the industry and I’ll leave it at that.

As you know per our website, we are dark June-August. The temporary plan is to have our first get together meeting in September, but we will have to see what the state and county health care agencies are saying at that time. We will be dark again in October and will hopefully have our LA/OC Expo on November 12th with social distancing probably still included.

Last but not least, we are seeking a replacement for our Treasurer. Ron had to bow out because of personal reasons. He was our Treasurer for 10 years and served on the board for 2 years prior to that commitment. If you are a SMTA member and have financial experience (QuickBooks a plus), we would like to talk with you prior to elections at the end of the year.

The monthly commitment is around 0-2 hours per month, depending on monthly chapter events.

Duties of the Treasurer:

- Receives all monies paid into the Chapter and pays out funds as authorized by the officers. Submits quarterly financial reports to Headquarters. Performs the duties of the President in the event of the absence, illness, resignation, or incapacity of the three other officers.

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Upcoming Webinars!

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Did you Know?

**State-Level Labor Income:** The electronics manufacturing sector supports over $5 billion in total labor income in each of 15 states. In California, electronics manufacturing supports $97.6 billion in labor income each year, followed by Texas ($28.6 billion), Massachusetts ($15.8 billion), New York ($14.2 billion) and Minnesota ($11.1 billion).

Restarting Manufacturing and the “New Normal”

Manufacturers are facing new challenges as they look to restart or maintain operations during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. As preparations are made for the “next normal”, manufacturers must consider additional dimensions of employee safety, including the establishment of production environments and workflows that address physical distancing and protection requirements. What is clear; not manufacturing is costing the companies billions!

So, how do we get back so that companies can protect their employees, and themselves? We know manufacturing is complicated enough. For example, about 30,000 parts go into manufacturing a vehicle, and there are about 1,500 workers on a typical shift, according to Kristin Dziczek with the Center for Automotive Research. So, as factories reopen, companies are going to have to take special precautions to keep employees apart. Dziczek says that might mean changing the way two workers install seat belts. “They may redesign that job, so that somebody is installing the right seat belt anchor inside the car while someone else is doing something on the left side of the vehicle, on the outside,” she said. State and Federal regulations are being published, in real-time. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) published guidelines, and continue to publish revisions. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) also continues to publish guidance. All this while employers try to adhere to guidance from Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). It is not an easy time for anyone.

A McKinsey and Company whitepaper tries to provide guidance on three areas of focus that can help plant leaders navigate the transition from initial crisis response to the “next normal”:

- **Protect the workforce:** Formalize and standardize operating procedures, processes, and tools that help keep staff safe.
- **Manage risks to ensure business continuity:** Anticipate potential changes and model the way the plant should react well ahead of the fluctuations to enable rapid, fact-based actions.
- **Drive productivity at a distance:** Continue to effectively manage performance at the plant while physical distancing and remote working policies remain in place.

In regards to operationalizing some of the worker safety , the CDC published guidelines, that are summarized as follows:

- If an employee was present at the job site within 48 hours of testing positive, employers should follow the CDC’s cleaning and disinfecting guidelines.
- For electronics—such as tablets, touchscreens, keyboards, remote controls and ATMs—consider using wipeable covers. If there are no manufacturer’s instructions for cleaning and disinfecting electronics, use alcohol-based wipes or sprays containing at least 70% alcohol and dry the surfaces thoroughly.
- Employers should develop policies for worker protection and provide training to all cleaning staff on-site before assigning cleaning tasks.
- Include training in when to use PPE; what PPE is necessary; how to properly put it on, use it and take it off; and train them in how to dispose of PPE the right way.
- Ensure workers are trained on the hazards of the cleaning chemicals being used in the workplace per OSHA’s Hazard Communication Standards.
- Require employees to practice social distancing at work. This can include staying at least six feet apart, limiting the number of occupants in offices and/or elevators, requiring office doors to remain closed when occupied, closing lunch and break areas, and restricting occupancy and spacing.
- Staggered arrival and departure times and/or work hours.
- Closing certain stalls/urinals in the restroom to create adequate distance between individuals.
- Limit one person to a vehicle, if possible.
- Install high-efficiency filters and increase ventilation rates in the workplace.
- Designate one person to clock employees in and out of work, or to record their arrival and departure times if clocking in would otherwise require employees to be in close contact with each other or to touch the same equipment.
- Forbid the sharing of headsets, refrigerators, microwaves, computers, tools and other equipment.
- Prop open doors to reduce touching of handles.
- Install glass or plexiglass barriers where people have to meet to talk and exchange documents or materials, including at secretarial workstations and customer service desks.

Although we will have to deal with all that, we will persevere. We will figure it out. We always have.
Bytes from the Editor

We need to get back to work. The economy needs it, we as individual need it, and most of all, the companies we work for or own are part of an intricate dependency. However, we need to ensure we do this safely. Being respectful of others such that the safety of everyone around us is part of our individual actions, and company operational strategy. Those areas around the country that restarted early, but too quickly and unsafely, are now paying the price with accelerated hospitalization rates, and mortality rates. We can do better.

The business landscape has changed.

In a Fortune 500 Magazine CEO survey, find the near future is not completely bleak. Most companies have not laid off employees. Although many have been furloughed, a large percentage of those are expected to return.

Software companies and hardware vendors are working closer together, than ever before, to provide ways for their clients solutions to some of the challenges outlined in Page 3 of this newsletter. For example, in a recent article in Businesswire magazine describes how Siemens combined asset monitoring hardware with real-time monitoring to ensure individuals are alerted when distance isn’t maintained. Also, combining this technology with manufacturing simulation for production planners can ensure production is scheduled, planned and operating documentation for work orders are safely manufactured.

(Disclosure: editor works for Siemens)

Restarting the economy needs to happen, but needs to happen safely and carefully. In a 16-country region of Western Europe with nearly identical population as the U.S. they have been able to restart their economy and maintain a downward trend on deaths. (source: John Hopkins University)

We can do this, and do this right! Stay safe out there.

Please contact me with ideas and topics for articles, fun puzzle ideas, Webinar ideas, or just to debate something I wrote. It’s all welcome!

- Jay Gorajia (jay.gorajia@siemens.com)