



Indiana Manufacturers Association
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MEDIA RELEASE

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Wabash National Corporation Wins U. S. Senate Productivity Award; Crown International and Digital Audio Disc Named Runners-Up

INDIANAPOLIS, Sept. 1, 2004 – In mid-August, members of the U.S. Senate Productivity Award judging committee met to make the final decision on a winner and runners-up for the 2003 awards. This year's winner is Wabash National Corporation, located in Lafayette, Indiana. Wabash is one of the world's largest manufacturers of truck trailers and a leading manufacturer of composite trailers. Runners-up in this year's competition were Crown International, located in Elkhart, Indiana and Digital Audio Disc Corporation (DADC), located in Terre Haute, Indiana. Crown is a world leader in the manufacture of amplifiers and microphones. DADC is a high-tech manufacturer and distributor of pre-recorded optical media.

As the winner, Wabash National Corporation will receive the U.S. Senate Productivity Award medallion from Senator Lugar's office. Crown International and Digital Audio Disc Corporation will be presented with runners-up plaques.

By using the best aspects of lean manufacturing, Wabash was able to achieve a 50- percent increase in productivity. In addition, Wabash held more than 275 formal continuous improvement events, yielding in excess of \$75 million of total consolidated savings to the company from all sources. At the very core of Wabash's strategy was the involvement and engagement of its total workforce, both hourly and salary. Cross-functional representation of the workforce was key in almost all improvement initiatives.

In early 2002, Wabash National effected a major turnaround, led by newly hired President and Chief Executive Officer Bill Greubel. He and his leadership team went to work and focused on four corporate goals: 1) achieve the num-

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bers; 2) achieve operational excellence; 3) focus on the customer; and 4) grow the business.

Crown International's journey toward productivity improvement began by using lean manufacturing also. Crown began by choosing reference materials and familiarizing itself with its processes. Next, Crown mapped its current state using value stream mapping, then mapped its goals for the future. Some of the items Crown tracked included lead times, efficiency, work-in-progress, inventory turns, warranty and scrap costs, first-yield pass rates and lost work days. Armed with this information, Crown cut fabrication aggregate lead time from 264 to 26 hours, board assembly aggregate times from 172 to 17.2 hours and increased line efficiency by 30 percent plant wide.

Digital Audio Disc Corporation increased its productivity using lean and six sigma principles. As a result, plant productivity measured as discs per person per year grew by 43 percent. Although DADC is a high-tech manufacturer, much of the credit for its success began with its employees. Numerous programs were implemented including team building, problem solving and the latest approach known as Kepner Tregoe. In addition, DADC achieved a cumulative cost savings of more than \$3 million in 2003 by improving packaging, logistics processes, printing, CD and DVD replication and mastering.

In October, IMA will hold a member/media forum which will allow each of these companies to present their successes to the public. Awards will be presented at that time.

The U.S. Senate Productivity Award is given annually and is sponsored by Senator Richard G. Lugar, the Indiana Manufacturers Association and the Association for Manufacturing Excellence. Congratulations to the winners and all those who participated in this year's competition. IMA is proud to serve and represent such an elite group of Indiana manufacturers.