



Perryville inmates work on a printing press.

Company Information:

Highest Ranking Official:

Bill Branson, General Manager

Contact Person:

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Type of work: (give overview)

12 ACI owned-and operated businesses offer more than a thousand diverse products, including baked goods, signage, clothing, park and recreational equipment, office and institutional furniture, agricultural products, bedding, printing and data fulfillment.

ACI is a unit of the Arizona Department of Corrections.

Workforce: (# of employees)

69 non-uniformed staff and 800 State prison inmates

Testimonial of Value of the AZ State Quality Awards Program

“Participating in the AQA Showcase Awards Program adds a new element of job qualification for Arizona Correctional Industries’ inmate work force. It’s one thing to say quality is important, but another to assign specific goals to achieving it. Quality-oriented training produces better goods and services for our customers, while strengthening work ethics and job skills for staff and inmates. The Showcase Program enabled us to set our sights on measurable improvement. While our workforce is somewhat unique, our customers demand the same quality expected from any other vendor. Just the goal-setting aspect makes participating in AQA programs worthwhile.”

*-Bill Branson, General Manager
Arizona Correctional Industries*

Highlights of Organizational Process:

Quality and performance results:

- ACI is a State entity that actually pays money into the State General Fund, up to \$7.5 million in the last six years.
- Annual sales revenues exceed \$25 million
- All shops and operations set measurable quality goals for the Customer Satisfaction System.
- Aggregate performance exceeded their goals
- Inmates participated in formulating and achieving work unit goals.
- Released offenders will now enter the work force understanding the value and importance of quality.
- 418 inmate workers and 18 staff earned certificates for participating in quality training and goal setting.
- Applying quality metrics benefits ACI customers because they will be able to compare our higher level of quality to what is available from other sources.

Processes:

- The ACI Customer Satisfaction System was devised to address opportunities for improvement in delivery, timely quotations on custom jobs and manufacturing quality.
- Processes are formulated within the parameters of the Department of Corrections' "Parallel Universe" culture in which offenders are prepared for re-entry into society through job skills, literacy and other education.
- Historically, inmate work programs were intended to combat idleness during incarceration rather than to produce long term benefits.
- Our mission includes creating opportunities for offenders to develop marketable job skills and good work habits.
- Among our values are prizing staff as our most valuable resource.
- Inmate workers are accountable individually and as a group for their quality.
- The Quality Initiative process comprises a series of three local meetings in which staff and inmates participate. At the first meeting, the Quality Officer presents an overview of quality in the economy and requires participants to identify a process for measurement. In meeting two, participants report benchmark numbers on production, obstacles to correct completion and set a goal for improvement. During the third meeting, results in goal achievement are reviewed.
- Each ACI shop benchmarks a process, sets a goal and measures success in achievement.
- Office workers establish goals for paperwork and other support activities.
- Business units are encouraged to set goals around their most important product or activity.
- Participants learn the value of carefully checking their own work
- Security staff is advised when meetings in which both staff and inmates participated are held at various ACI locations.
- Inmate workers are accountable individually and as a group for their quality. They are advised that when production demands increase, it is in customers', work force and ACI interest to do the task correctly the first time.
- Time and material expense for re-work are vital considerations.. Reducing individual inmate labor requirements from re-work also provides an incentive.
- With quantified data, staff and inmates are able to review potential challenges to accurate production and focus corrective actions. For instance, to alleviate delays in transmittal of sales orders to shops, staff and inmates eliminated input of partial orders into the system. Only complete orders are entered, enabling shops to schedule and order materials in an orderly manner.
- A Customer Satisfaction Survey is administered for orders received. This instrument tracks six dimensions of customer reaction, five of which can be quantified and one of which is qualitative. Findings of quality monitoring instruments are distributed throughout the organization. Results are shared through the *ACI Quality Times* newsletter