



How Manufacturers Will Thrive in the 21st Century

Inside:

Page 2

- Building Businesses in Turbulent Times

Page 3

- Building Businesses in Turbulent Times cont.

Page 4

- Tech Expo2009 Featuring Emerging Technologies
- Announcing NYSTAR Database
- Fall 2009 Jump-Start Program

Page 5

- Associates' Corner

Page 6

- Windows Auto-Run Makeover
- US Army Bans USB Drives
- Six Habits of Good Lean Leaders

Page 7

- Technology Transfer
- SBIR/STTR
- Funding Opportunities
- Women-Led Life Sciences Companies Exclusive Opportunity
- Around the Southern Tier

Making castings out of molten iron is about as "old school" as American manufacturing can get. Dotson Iron Castings has been doing it from the same location on the Minnesota River in downtown Mankato for 132 years. It is owned and operated by Denny Dotson, a third generation owner.

When Denny took over three decades ago, it was essentially the same business that had operated for a century. The plant was dirty and hot and decidedly low tech. The employees were doing the same strong-back jobs serving the same customers with essentially the same type of product that they always had produced since Rutherford B. Hayes was President of the United States.

As he took over the company, Denny gradually realized he could take one of two paths. No matter what he did, the company's good name and long-held business model could provide a decent living for his family and his employees for some time. It would be a comfortable "lifestyle" business. But he also knew that the market was changing rapidly, and that if he did not adapt to the changing environment, his company would not survive beyond his retirement.

He chose to adapt!

Denny introduced LEAN processes to his entire operation, from the foundry floor to his back office, which included a significant investment in technology. Today, the dayshift is operated by 60 fulltime employees who monitor and manage 110 PCs. That's not your grand-dad's foundry. Dotson is able to ship items within 12-36 hours of producing them; a period that once took as long as 12 weeks. Dotson made knowledge transfer a cornerstone of technological improvement, but also committed to it as a way to retain and motivate his existing workers.

Dotson never lost one wink of sleep over competition from China. He correctly anticipated that anyone doing business with his Chinese competitors, for the American market, would soon come home. And they have. And he was ready.

How did he know that? He knows his customers. He also knows that iron is easily commoditized and that the old contracts would disappear if they were granted solely on price. Denny gets to know his customers by providing value throughout the entire supply chain. He is a partner with his customers, not just a price-based supplier.

A very impressive side benefit of the way Dotson re-engineered and "leaned up" his company's manufacturing processes is seen in the dramatic

improvement of his environmental output. His foundry is no longer a dirty, sooty business. You can walk through the front door of this foundry wearing new white tennis shoes, tour through the plant and walk out the back door without a speck of soot or dust on your shoes. Like so many manufacturers, Dotson recognized that operational excellence through lean processes is a critical step in adapting green practices. And his plant in downtown Mankato doesn't put out any more pollution than the restaurant down the street.

Denny Dotson could have stood still and watched the market pass him by and nobody would have blamed him. Certainly this has happened to other foundries. Foundries are industrial relics, just like blacksmith's shops, right? How many blacksmiths are around today?

When Denny's great-grandfather started, more than 20,000 foundries produced iron products for American business. When Denny took over there were 2,000 American foundries. Today there are just 400. And that number continues to decline. But Dotson Iron Castings will not be numbered among the casualties.

Dotson accomplished all this through a culture of continuous improvement. The company aggressively reaches out to MNSCU and Enterprise Minnesota for ways to improve its vision, processes, technology, and training programs. And I don't mean that they host the occasional seminar. Continuous improvement is engrained in Dotson's culture and embraced by its employees – it is a journey. I think the key thematic revelation of the State of Manufacturing survey is that the truly engaged manufacturers, like Dotson, don't let the vagaries of the U.S. economy dictate how they operate and invest in their plants.

Dotson's experience is a model of what manufacturers must do. Instead of contemplating the end of his business, Dotson today owns a thriving \$30 million operation that provides quality, high-paying jobs for 160 employees who pour iron 24-hours each day, six days a week. And their outlook is for growth.

Like Dotson, the manufacturers that grow and thrive – or even survive – have to step up and meet these challenges head on. These companies will lead the economic recovery process. The companies that don't? Well, our current difficult business environment will decide their fate, everyone will soon know who they are.

(from "the State of manufacturing 2009", Enterprise Minnesota)



Building Businesses in Turbulent Times

Battered by contracting markets and frozen credit, many businesses today are fighting for survival. Indeed, the current global financial crisis provides a mandate for restructuring. But survival is not the end goal, says Harvard Business School professor Lynda M. Applegate.

In fact, cost cutting and restructuring are simply the first steps in repositioning and leading your company and industry through the crisis and in defining how business will be conducted in the future. In this interview, Applegate explains how large and small companies can position themselves to survive—and thrive—in turbulent times.

Staff: Why is innovation important today?

Lynda Applegate: The global financial crisis we are experiencing provides a sobering reminder of what happens when innovation fails to drive economic growth.

For over a decade, money from around the world has poured into the United States. Despite massive investments, when adjusted for inflation, U.S. GDP grew slowly, with much of the growth from professional and business services — including real estate, financial services, and outsourcing — and from government. What's more, inflation-adjusted wages stalled for many, even as consumer spending increased. Where did the money for all this spending come from? Companies borrowed, governments borrowed, and families borrowed. Savings rates approached zero. Commercial lenders sold their loans to investment banks, where they were converted into securities and sold again and again.

We can't fix our current economic problems by simply spending more money to buy bad debt. Rather, we need real innovation that creates jobs and drives productive economic growth. Companies that survive the financial crisis by identifying and exploiting innovation will serve as economic growth engines in the future—and will be the industry leaders of tomorrow.

Q: Which industries offer the most opportunity?

A: Over the long run, opportunity exists in every sector. In the short term, I recommend that companies do what we always advise when searching for opportunity — look to the marketplace.

Think of the economic crisis as a disrupter to the status quo and look for areas of pain. For example, the financial services industry is in shambles, yet pockets of opportunity exist for specialists who provide leasing, payment, and foreclosure services. In health care, nursing services, community social services, mental health services, and home health-care services are on the rise. One executive recently told me that his firm's business training services were up over 400 percent since fall 2008. Government funding programs also present opportunities. And while oil prices continue to rise and fall, energy services firms are seeing rapid growth — especially those firms that provide

services to both traditional and emerging clean technology energy sectors.

When approaching change in these turbulent times, don't go searching for a change specialist.

In the IT industry, opportunities are arising to replace high-cost data centers and incompatible networks with lower-cost Web services platforms. As a result, we've seen renewed interest in "cloud computing" and unified communications. Recently, Amazon.com, AT&T, IBM, Microsoft, Cisco, and Google stepped up their efforts to meet these needs, even as they respond to revenue declines in traditional business sectors.

While many of these are short-term opportunities, they can build important foundations for longer-term productive economic growth.

Q: Can shrinking companies position themselves for a better future?

A: Opportunities are at an all-time high, but the question is how companies will pursue those opportunities. Cutting back and hunkering down may get you through the short-term crisis but will not position you to be a leader in the future. That's why you need a mindset that says: "I'm not just going to survive—I'm going to thrive." Obviously, you must be realistic about what you need to do to survive in the short term, but the trick is to do those things in a way that moves your strategy forward.

Even leaders who need to make very deep cuts can think strategically about where the business will be and how they might build for the future. A great example is Lou Gerstner (HBS MBA '65). When he took the helm at IBM, he had to take \$7 billion out of the company's cost structure in less than two years—not an easy task. He listened to customers who told him that their key area of pain was the difficulty of integrating the "islands of automation" throughout their global companies.

Continued on page 3

Building Businesses in Turbulent Times cont.

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Gerstner, himself a former IBM customer, immediately recognized the opportunity. He reversed the previous CEO's decision to break up IBM and announced a new strategy, which he called "One IBM." Having planted that stake in the ground, the company carefully chose what businesses to divest—its energy was then pointed toward the One IBM theme. Processes were streamlined, and layoffs were targeted to enable the company to go to market as One IBM. Not only is IBM surviving, it is thriving once again.

Q: Is a recession really the time for a company to make major changes?

A: Change is coming anyway, so leaders need to take control. At HBS, our motto is, "Never let a crisis go to waste." The major dislocations happening in industries around the world give companies a great opportunity to lay the foundation for the future. Because everyone acknowledges the current crisis, they often readily accept restructuring and changes that were not possible in the past—even if change has been needed for some time. When approaching change in these turbulent times, don't go searching for a change specialist. What you need are leaders with a strong plan for how the company is going to survive today and succeed in the future—leaders who can communicate the first few steps on the path forward and rally employees, customers, and partners to work together in making the tough decisions and taking the steps needed. Success will depend on leaders who are able to stabilize the company as they identify and exploit opportunities, find new market niches, create innovative new offerings, and restructure and reposition.

Given that we don't know how long these economic problems will last, it's important to carefully manage risk when pursuing opportunities. Staging commitments to reduce uncertainty and risk, while paving the way for new business growth in the future, is critical. Indeed, innovation has always been about managing uncertainty and risk. The only difference today is that uncertainty and risk are not just tied to the business opportunity you are pursuing—you also must identify and manage risk that is tied to the global economy.

Q: How should today's economy change our view of innovation?

A: Some people think about innovation and new ventures as a side business to running the real business, but the economic downturn takes the need for innovation to a new level. In this environment, "business as usual" is not the answer.

Companies must work aggressively to innovate and make the kinds of changes that are critical to success today and in the years to come. They must consider cost cutting as one step on the journey to future success. In a sense, every business, large or small, needs to think of itself as a "new venture" right now. This is a time of unprecedented opportunity to rethink offerings, markets, business processes, and organizational structure—and to improve them to achieve growth.

Q: Are larger or smaller companies better positioned to make such changes?

A: Smaller companies are typically more nimble and can often make change happen more quickly, but they also may be more dependent on large firms for major sources of revenue. Interestingly, this can mean that small business owners may be the first ones to feel the economic squeeze, which increases their motivation to find new opportunities.

We see an interesting pattern in our Executive Education programs. Many small business owners who come to our programs tell us they are finding today's market to be the most fertile ground for innovation that they've ever seen, and they are impatient to build the skills needed to take advantage of the current opportunities. Executives from large companies are coming to our programs to jump-start the search for those innovative opportunities that will enable them to cut costs and restructure in a way that best positions them to lead their companies as well as their industries out of the crisis. Like IBM, they need to embark on cost cutting as one step in the process of renewal and growth. The rallying cry for turbulent times is, "Let's not just survive—let's thrive."

Applegate is head of Harvard Business School's Entrepreneurial Management Unit and faculty chair of the Executive Education Owner/President Management program, Building Ventures in Established Companies, and Launching New Ventures: Jump-Starting Innovation for Entrepreneurs and Business Owners.



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A NYSTAR Designated Regional Technology Development Center and a NIST MEP Center

June 2009 Newsletter

Tech Expo2009 Featuring Emerging Technologies

The Tech Garden in Syracuse, NY is presenting an opportunity to see and hear the latest in technology developments in Upstate New York. Meet 15-20 emerging technologists and businesses in fields varying from information management to collaboration software to consumer electronics and renewable energy. The Expo is also a networking, relationship-building and educational opportunity.

Early stage and emerging technologies in several disciplines from Central & Upstate NY, including: Research Universities, Centers of Excellence Partners, Entrepreneurs, Tech Incubators, Centers for Advanced Technology and more will be featured. The most investible and innova-

tive technology as selected by the attendees will receive \$1000.

For more information or to register go to: www.thetechgarden.com/techexpo/exhibiting.html.

Date: June 4, 2009

Time: 3:00 pm to 7:00 pm

Presented by: The Tech Garden, 235 Harrison St., Syracuse, NY 13202.

Sponsored by Verizon, Marjama Muldoon, Unity Lift, and the Business Journal of Central New York.

Announcing the NYSTAR Research Equipment & Facilities Database

- ✓ Identify equipment for research and prototyping
- ✓ Find technical expertise at universities and labs
- ✓ Leverage state-of-the art equipment and facilities
- ✓ Access multi-million dollar facilities at modest cost

NYSTAR has developed a searchable database of research equipment, labs and prototyping facilities at New York's colleges, universities and research centers to facilitate partnerships so companies and researchers can leverage these investments for research and product development. The database can be especially useful in cases where equipment or facilities are too expensive to purchase or develop on site.

Examples include Advanced Microscopy, Spectrometers, Shock Chambers, and Thermal Imaging Equipment.

Technologies covered include:

- Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology
- Environmental and Energy Systems
- Information Technology
- Life Sciences
- Microelectronics
- Imaging
- Sensors and MEMS

This database is continually being updated with new items and enhanced features. We welcome suggestions and the opportunity to help you identify facilities that meet your needs.

Search by keyword, region of the state, or institution name at: www.nystar.state.ny.us/ref/

Cornell JumpStart Applications due June 5, 2009

The JumpStart program of the Cornell Center for Material Research is accepting applications for the fall 2009 JumpStart program. The program is designed to help small NYS businesses solve specific materials related problems, through collaboration with university research centers. JumpStart provides for:

- a one-semester project
- collaboration with one of the 8 participating university centers
- up to \$5,000 in matching NYSTAR funding

Fill out the request for technical assistance at: www.ccmr.cornell.edu/industry/request/

CCMR will find the right expert for your company.

Contact Jim Cunningham

607-725-1225 or
jcunningham@amt-mep.org





PB INDUSTRIES

Fabricating, done right.

PB Industries, located in Vestal, NY, is a vertically integrated contract manufacturer, offering full-service sheet metal fabricating, machining and powder coat finishing. Formed in 1996, the company has grown significantly in capabilities, services, and employment. Together, PB Industries employees share the goal and responsibility to achieve the Company's mission of providing value-added service to help customers be more successful.

The company has expanded the definition of the traditional sheet metal fabricator by providing one-stop shopping for design, production, finishing, and inventory management. PB Industries is certified to ISO 9001-2000 and offers the following to industries in electronics, audio, transportation, capital goods, medical devices, HVAC/R and the military.

- Engineering and design
- Prototype production
- Full scale production
- Sheet metal fabrication
- Pipe and frame fabrication

AM&T Associate Since 5/2008

- Aluminum extrusion fabrication
- Powder coat finishing
- Welding
- Machining
- Mechanical assembly
- Sourcing of anodizing, electroplating, and wet paint finishing
- Inventory stocking and management using Kanban, JIT, and max/min and demand flow systems

The company's highly trained work force, capital investment, and aggressive efforts to increase productivity using the concepts of lean manufacturing and continuous improvement have enabled PB Industries to grow and become a cost-effective metal fabricating supply chain partner to its customers by assuring shorter lead time, quicker turnaround, and cost-effective products with the required quality.

www.pb-industries.com
607-729-1244



Founding Member

Courser Incorporated provides advanced contract CNC machining services, and is located in Elmira, NY. Courser produces customer's products to their specifications with special attention to on-time delivery and excellent quality. Our CNC machining services are enhanced by experienced and friendly customer service.

Courser utilizes military quality standards for our quality system and our measurement equipment calibrations. In-process and final inspections, supported by coordinate measuring machines (CMM) that utilize solid modeling inspection routines assure that all customer specifications are achieved.

Solid modeling systems are integrated into each phase of manufacturing, from providing quotations to CNC programming creation to final inspection routines. These capabilities reduce the lead time and cost of manufacturing both simple and complex products.

Courser can produce your products efficiently with our ever increasing array of new CNC vertical milling machines and CNC lathes.

With the recent addition of a new 5-axis high speed vertical machining center, Courser has 13 vertical machining

centers and 6 CNC lathes, along with a wide array of other equipment.

Some examples of the equipment that we produce are:

- Boeing 737, 747, 777, and Dreamliner 787 components
- United States Postal Service sorting and handling machine components
- Fiber optic manufacturing system components
- Raytheon Hawker 800 jet components
- Anti-submarine countermeasure system components
- Magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) system components
- Sikorsky Blackhawk helicopter components
- Road building industry testing equipment components
- Components for the electronic packaging industry
- A-10 Thunderbolt components
- Subway railcar components
- Power distribution system components

For more information contact Daniel Herman, General Manager, at 607-739-3861, dherman@courser.com, or visit www.courser.com



Windows AutoRun Gets a Makeover to Combat Malware

In direct response to Conficker, a fast-spreading computer worm and an increased wave of malware attacks targeting the Windows AutoRun mechanism, Microsoft has announced significant changes to the way the operating system operates when USB drives are used.

The changes, detailed on Redmond's Security Research & Defense blog, have been built into Windows 7, and will be backported to Windows Vista and Windows XP in the near future.

- AutoPlay will no longer support the AutoRun functionality for non removable optical media. In other words, AutoPlay will still work for CD/DVDs but it will no longer work for USB drives. For example, if an infected USB drive is inserted on a machine then the AutoRun task will not be displayed. This will block the increasing threat of someone inadvertently introducing malware into a computer. Before the change, the malware can leverage AutoRun to confuse the user. After the change, AutoRun will no longer work, so the AutoPlay options are safe.
- A dialog change was done to clarify that the program being executed is running from external media.

Under worm attack, US Army bans USB Drives



Under sustained attack from what is described as a spreading network worm, the U.S. army has banned USB sticks, CDs, flash media cards, and a data storage devices, according to internal sources seen by Wired magazine's Noah Shachtm.

According to the article, service members have been ordered to "cease usage of all USB storage media until the USB devices are properly scanned and determined to be free of malware." Eventually, some government-approved drives will be allowed back under certain "mission-critical," but unclassified, circumstances. "Personally owned or non-authorized devices" are "prohibited" from here on out, according to the e-mails.

The USB device ban was handed down by the commander of U.S. Strategic Command and includes everything from external hard drives to "floppy disks". It takes effect immediately.

The threat from malware that spreads via removable media has been on a steady rise with some estimates showing a 10 percent increase in detections this year.

Six Habits of Good Lean Leaders

Lean leaders act as role models for the mindsets and behavior they wish to instill in their teams.

Habit	Example
1. A focus on operating processes: Senior managers use visible activities to demonstrate the importance of process and of making standardization a habit.	<i>The COO conducts regular shop floor visits and Q&As to review milling-machine operating processes and reinforce standards with workers.</i>
2. Root cause problem solving: Managers fight the instinct to provide immediate solutions to problems, instead using them as teaching opportunities.	<i>Responding to an unanticipated problem, a brewery plant manager first ensures that proper containment measures are taken, and then challenges the team to analyze causes - using the "five whys" method (examination of a problem to uncover the underlying cause).</i>
3. Clear performance expectations: Transparent performance dialogues take place at all levels of management.	<i>An insurance company's frontline employees meet for 10 minutes daily with their team leaders to track productivity and discuss improvement ideas. Productivity metrics are tracked visually and displayed prominently.</i>
4. Aligned leadership: Process improvements don't stop at functional boundaries.	<i>To create more open and collaborative environments, the COO ties half of the functional leaders' year-end bonuses to the key performance indicators (KPIs) of the entire management team.</i>
5. A sense of purpose: Connections between day-to-day work and compelling, long-term aspirations become tangible throughout the company.	<i>To make goals tangible in its quality-improvement program, a medical-products maker brings in health experts to show frontline workers how products are used in surgery - thus emphasizing the importance of meeting quality objectives.</i>
6. Support for people: Managers recognize and demonstrate that frontline workers are a source of customer value. These workers are empowered and encouraged to make important decisions.	<i>An area sales manager drives to the head office to pick up a replacement printer that frontline agents need to continue working efficiently.</i>

Technology Transfer

Technologies of the Week describe inventions offered for license and anonymous requests for technology, distributed through the yet2.com marketplace, that you and your organization may be able to fulfill. Responding to a Tech Need is the first step to gaining an introduction with a prospective seller or "buyer" for a technology solution.

A company is looking for technology to enable delivery of active compositions/components triggered at a specific time and/or in a specific place. The delivery mechanism could be triggered by a large range of conditions and can be comprised of a new chemistry formulation, modification of an existing delivery format, or a physical structural device or combination. The solution must be non-toxic, safe for consumer use, biodegradable, and environmentally friendly.

<http://link.abpi.net/l.php?20090129A5>

A company seeks printing technology that creates a physical 3D texture that is tactile and soft in nature, onto a flat or curved plastic surface made of polyethylene, polypropylene, or polyester material. The materials used for printing should be FDA food-safe, safe to come into contact with skin, and potentially hypoallergenic in nature. The materials should be durable and compatible with high-speed manufacturing operations.

<http://link.abpi.net/l.php?20090226A3>

A company seeks technology to replace wood fiber in paper with a bulk filler material having less mass. Materials and related manufacturing methods to develop these materials are wanted. Specifically, the company seeks to make small, micron-scale, low-density particles, and to acquire the related manufacturing technologies for making them. The most promising technology appears to be hollow plastic micro-spheres which are used for latex coatings.

<http://link.abpi.net/l.php?20090226A4>

A company seeks a North America-based drug dosage form and contract manufacturer for tablet-in-tablet prototypes for clinical

studies. A dosage form is the physical form that drugs take for delivery. The dosage form needed is a combination of two tablets, one inside the other. The task is compressing and enteric-coating the first tablet, and then compressing the second tablet completely around the first. The dosage form should be ready-for-manufacture.

<http://link.abpi.net/l.php?20090305A3>

An easy, inexpensive technology manufactures a high-performance piezoelectric element from an aluminum nitride thin film that exhibits no hillocks or cracks, and which does not peel off. The aluminum nitride thin film also exhibits high c-axis orientation. The technology enables the production of high-temperature vibration and acoustic sensors for gas turbines, jet engines, IC engines, nuclear power plants, and other applications requiring reliability and resistance to high temperatures and vibration.

<http://link.abpi.net/l.php?20090317A5>

A company seeks innovative binder solutions for the manufacture of molds and cores used in the production of metal castings. The molding and core making processes demand robust, environmentally acceptable binder systems with easy breakdown and removal after casting. The solution could be either a controllable self-setting system, or a system that could achieve almost instantaneous cure through the application of a low-hazard gaseous hardener/catalyst. The solution must have high strength development at low (<5 percent) addition levels.

<http://link.abpi.net/l.php?20090326A3>

For licensing opportunities through Binghamton University research: <http://research.binghamton.edu/TT/LicensingOpps.htm>
For licensing opportunities through Cornell University research: <http://www.cctec.cornell.edu/technology/>

SBIR/STTR INFORMATION: <http://www.sbir.gov/solicitations/index.htm>

Funding Opportunities: <http://www.nystar.state.ny.us/fon/funding.htm>

Women-Led Life Science Companies Exclusive Opportunity

Applications are now open for AllThingsLifeSciences 2009, a venture capital forum program featuring early and later stage biotech, medical device, health care products & services and other Life Science companies led by women. This program includes screening, training and coaching with participation from a

diverse group of life science experts. Companies qualified through our three-round screening process will have the opportunity to present to investors and strategic partners at several regional locations around the country. Application deadline is June 1, 2009. <http://www.springboardenterprises.org/>

Around the Southern Tier - call number or visit www.amt-mep.org/events.htm for details

- May 21** Business After Business Reception — Chemung Chamber — www.chemungchamber.org
- May 26** Business Roundtable - Not for Profits — Corning Area Chamber — 607-936-4686
- June 2** Strategic Marketing for Small Businesses — Tioga Chamber — 607-687-8260
- June 4** Tech Expo 2009 — Tech Garden Syracuse — <http://thetechgarden.com/techexpo/exhibiting.html>
- June 9** Business Roundtable - Financial Institutions — Corning Area Chamber — 607-936-4686
- June 11** Business After Business Reception — Chemung Chamber — www.chemungchamber.org
- June 21** Fall 2009 Jumpstart Application Deadline — www.ccmr.cornell.edu/industry/request
- June 23** Business Roundtable - Service/Utility Businesses — Corning Area Chamber — 607-936-4686
- June 30** Business Roundtable - Professional Partnerships — Corning Area Chamber — 607-936-4686
- July 16** Business After Business Reception — Chemung Chamber — www.chemungchamber.org
- Aug 13** 23rd Annual Golf Classic — Otsego County Chamber — 607-432-4500



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...helping manufacturers and high-tech start-ups achieve and sustain growth, profitability and world-class performance

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- ✓ **Lean Enterprise Services**
- ✓ **Complete ISO Quality Services**
- ✓ **TWI (Training Within Industry)**
- ✓ **Project Management**
- ✓ **SEA (Supplier Excellence Alliance)**
- ✓ **Management Operations Improvements**
- ✓ **Process Analysis & Improvements**
- ✓ **MRP/ERP Selection**
- ✓ **Failure Mode & Effects Analysis**
- ✓ **High-tech Start-up Assistance**
- ✓ **Grant Assistance**

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Please add mailbot@amt-mep.org to your address book or safe list to receive AM&T e-News.

To subscribe to the AM&T newsletter or to update your mailing address visit:
<http://amt-mep.org/newsletter.htm>

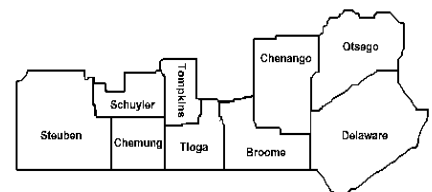


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Southern Tier Region of NY