



Issue 63 - Minneapolis Edition



# The international standard that answers clients' questions



Docunet is a small business of 12 employees delivering digitally based, on-demand printing. Their core business comes from printing information or construction manuals and reprographics.

Most of Docunet's customers are in the medical field, an industry that demands 100% quality and accuracy. Pre-ISO Standard, Docunet was self-sufficient; Mr. Wilinski had his own customized quality management system in place, but there were holes in it. Customers grilled Docunet with audits and dictated what Docunet needed to do to be compliant. Over the course of time Mr. Wilinski realized how close Docunet were to being ISO 9001 certified. They had all of the systems in place but not the documentation that ISO required to officialize their conformities.

Mr. Wilinski met with their local IMSM Area Manager, who listened to their needs and consulted Docunet on what was best for the company in their professional opinion. "IMSM really presented themselves well, and the work that they did with Docunet was invaluable."

ISO 9001 certification took 6 months; it is a 12 person organization with very streamlined processes. Mr. Wilinski opted to prepare and write it all himself;

seeing it as a career opportunity and learning curve. IMSM answered specific questions about certain clauses and advised where Mr. Wilinski needed to focus his work.

*"The ISO has made a difference to the company and is very important, politically of all things. We now have these stripes on our arms. It's a very important credential to a lot of organizations we work with. Just by showing the certificate answers a lot of questions; it shows that we're a quality driven organization."*

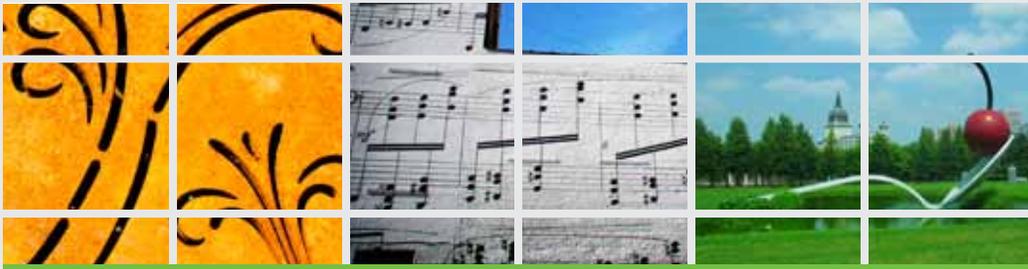
Recently American federal bodies came down on a lot of large medical providers, as they were not properly auditing their suppliers. "By sheer luck we were already in the process of getting our ISO certification when that happened. Immediately the big medical providers started grilling suppliers on their systems. They saw our ISO construction site and were very pleased with it."

"ISO 9001 has opened up more business, I can't say enough about it. It was a very good thing for us to do, in the last audit of Docunet taken out by one of our customers, we hit 100% - that has never happened in 7 years of being audited by this particular customer."

Mr. Wilinski sent out marketing mailers informing customers and prospects of their ISO 9001; business shot up by 40% as a result, firmly rooting them within the organizations they work with. Mr. Wilinski comments "We are making it extremely difficult for our customers to ever want to pull away from our service, even if we were to put our prices up, because of our track record, and recognition within companies such as Metronics, who awarded us their Gold Standard which is extremely hard to get - they don't just give that out".

Last year Docunet were 99.6% accurate on their work, less than 1% waste, and employees operated at 98.9% accuracy internally. Commenting on their work rate, Mr. Wilinski says, "Really the figures are staggering, it's excellent."





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## Improve Quality and work with larger clients

Anderson Dahlen are contract manufacturers, specializing in the machining, welding, fabricating and assembly of stainless steel. 80% of their business is related to the food processing industry, providing stainless steel equipment.

Anderson Dahlen had considered the ISO standard for a long time; previously there had not been much requirement for it. With the growth that Anderson Dahlen has experienced over the years, they now work with larger companies. A prerequisite set by these larger companies is to have the ISO standards.

It took Anderson Dahlen 8 months to become certified; Mr. Steve Head, Business Improvement Director, comments "It has done a lot of good for us. We had many of the procedures in place; we just didn't have the documentation or enough consistency in the way that we were operating. So this put it all together for us, gave us a way to keep everything up to date and keep all our procedures on track." Through being more organized internally, they are more efficient, helping them to win larger customers.

"Our IMSM Assessor did a really good job, helping to organize what we had here." Mr. Head continues, "We have a system in place now and we continually follow up on everything."

For Mr. Head, the locality of the IMSM consultant was a real plus for Anderson Dahlen, "To have someone local to us meant communication was easy, it was a big factor for us."

"IMSM did a great job working with us and they made it a lot easier for us; we really appreciate how IMSM helped us to organize the company." Mr. Head concludes, "It has been a great success for us, keeping us on track, improving the quality and being able to work with larger customers."



## Constant improvements in customer satisfaction



Zero-Max manufacture motion control products, has been in business for around 50 years and employs around 80 staff.

Customer demand was the driving force behind Zero-Max gaining the ISO standard. Zero-Max does a lot of work for the wind turbine industry and in order to carry out this work or even be considered, they had to be ISO certified.

It took Zero-Max 1 year to become certified. Mr. Terry Skjod, Quality Control Manager, describes their ISO journey, "It was a learning process, a lot of the stuff was already in place, it just needed to be documented." On why they chose IMSM to guide them to ISO certification, Mr. Skjod explains, "IMSM stood out to Zero-Max in comparison with other companies that quoted for us and locality to our buildings was a key factor for us".

"Quality and performance are key to the business." Mr. Skjod explains that quality at Zero-Max has definitely improved over the years since first becoming certified in 2008. What has the ISO certification has done for Zero-Max? Mr. Skjod comments "There is constant effort to improve the customer satisfaction and the ISO helps a great deal."

Zero-Max customers recognize the value of the standard and what it says about Zero-Max; it has been vitally important in the growth of the organization over the past couple of years.

"It has been a good experience and the continual improvement is important." Mr. Skjod concludes, "It all depends on our customers, if that business changes we may well require more ISO standards in the future."

## Practising what you preach

Solar Plastics is a global leader and supplier of innovative, custom-engineered, rotationally-moulded plastic parts, with 200 employees spread over 2 factories in Iowa and Minnesota.

Solar Plastics decided to become ISO 9001 certified because their high-profile global OEM's requested that suppliers should have an established and verifiable management system. Mr. David Johnson, Quality Engineer, regards ISO 9001 as the ultimate foundation of excellent quality management, "It inspires customer confidence as well as enhancing professionalism. It helps to ensure that all internal processes are as efficient as possible and enables employees to take responsibility for assuring the highest standard of quality in every procedure." In order to further bolster the company's green credentials, and to meet with several major customers' requests, Solar Plastics recently became ISO 14001 certified.

Solar Plastics used IMSM to help them in the process of acquiring both ISO 9001 and ISO 14001. Mr. Johnson recalls, "IMSM were extremely professional and very helpful in showing us the best way to comply with what sometimes seemed like rather daunting demands." Becoming ISO 14001 certified involved the company proposing objectives and projects to improve efficiency in energy usage and reduce waste, as well as being compliant to all state, federal and local environmental laws; the process took 10 months.

As a result of being ISO 14001 certified, David is pleased that the company "practises what it preaches" and demonstrates a clear commitment to the environment. This supports the company's sales effort, as well as satisfying the expectation of its existing customers. David believes that having two ISO certifications adds important value to the company and helps to differentiate from the competition.