

IMC Featured as WLCC's Legacy Member

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Innovative Modernization Center makes impact

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Manufacturing companies face a host of diverse, complex and often sticky problems they can't always conquer on their own.

Many others simply need the resources that can help them become more efficient, competitive and profitable.

For 50 years, the Innovative Modernization Center has been a key component in helping industries throughout a 13-county region.

"We work with manufacturing companies," Don Muscato, IMC executive director, said.

"That is our focus."

The IMC brings the latest edge and resources to a company, utilizing both in-house staff and partnering with outside experts.

Located at 1527 W. Fourth St., Williamsport, it is one of the state's seven Industrial Resource Centers and 10 National Manufacturing Extension Partnership centers leveraging private investment to drive manufacturing growth.

Training, marketing, web design, technology, sourcing, environmental and safety compliance, sales development and business planning are among the areas of expertise offered by IMC.

Muscato said small to mid-sized companies ranging from 10 to 250 employees represent the bulk of the IMC's client base.

"What we are really known for is continuous improvement," he said.

Many other companies seek IMC for assistance in quality control and environmental issues and technology implementation.

The list of businesses working with IMC includes relatively new companies to more established ones.

"Once we have a relationship with a company, it doesn't ever go away," Muscato said.

The length of time IMC works with any particular company varies.



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Laurel Muscato, manager of training and outreach at the Innovative Modernization Center, tours the Williamsport plant of Williamsport with both customers, independent of production scheduling, and other company employees.

A misconception of the IMC is that it is a government agency, according to Laurel Muscato, manager of training and outreach.

Rather, it can be defined as a public-private partnership that operates with its own revenues as well as state and federal dollars.

A board of directors comprised of representatives from manufacturing, economic development and education provide the IMC with guidance and strategic planning.

Over the years, the IMC has developed strong relationships with such partners as Penn State College of Technology, which it often turns to for expertise and resources.

Muscato and Muscato agreed that the IMC plays an important role in the region.

"It's nice to know you have an impact with helping companies and creating jobs for people," Muscato said.

Many people, she said, would be surprised at the diversity of companies they help.

Muscato noted the overall impact of reaching out to a single business.

"When you help a company add jobs, there is a multiplier effect," he said.

During 2017 alone, sales revenue of those companies assisted by IMC increased by \$7.4 million, according to IMC figures.

In addition, a total of 149 jobs were created and 121 jobs retained during the year.

Companies realized cost savings of \$3.8 million and investment savings of \$66,500 in 2017.

"The number of companies we are reaching is growing," Muscato said.



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The Innovative Modernization Center is located at 1527 W. Fourth St., Williamsport. For 50 years, it has helped regional manufacturers with various aspects of their operations, helping them become more competitive, efficient and profitable.