



Yes, It's a Very Bold Claim

We know it's pretty bold to proclaim yourself a leader in an industry. But we've worked hard to back it up with high quality, cost-saving efficiency and on-time delivery.

That's what this newsletter is all about:

- **Introducing** you to our team – whose experience and continuing education provide great assets to our customers.
- **Showcasing** our wide range of products for the Medical & Surgical, Dental, Food & Beverage, Lab Supply, Sports & Leisure, Industrial & Distribution and other industries.
- **Sharing** stories about our creative problem-solving for clients.
- **Demonstrating** lean processes at our three facilities.

And more!

We have a proud history of mastering the technology of our time while researching and developing ideas of tomorrow. Founded as Kent Latex Products in 1960, we specialized in dipped natural rubber latex tubing.

Since then, KEP has worked hard to become an American success story. We have adapted and thrived through the decades, earning recognition from the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and have held over 650 lean events to continually improve our quality and efficiency.

We lead because we love to learn. Each newsletter will be a new chapter in our leadership story.



KEP President Shares Our Lean Journey Story

KEP is 100% dedicated to a culture of continuous improvement, learning to trust and work with each other. It didn't come easy, but after a lot of hard work and study, our customers can now expect higher quality and greater efficiency.

That's our "Lean Journey" story that KEP president and 35-year employee Bob Oborn shared with an audience of business professionals at WIRE-Net's Lunch 'n' Learn series on March 23 at the Embassy Suites in Independence, OH. It is presented by the business advisory Skoda Minotti, showcasing successful manufacturing leaders with great lessons to share.

Using before and after images, Bob told the story of how we overcame our frustration with waste by changing our way of thinking – with great results.

It began in 2005. KEP leadership attending their first Lean Seminar, toured factories to see beautifully organized facilities with engaged employees. Everyone was excited and on board.

Bob explained how all of our managers, supervisors, and key personnel received 6 days of training. We learned to perform kaizen events at our three KEP facilities. (Kaizen is the practice of continuous improvement that originated in Japan and is considered essential to any organization's long-term competitive strategy.)

The attendees at Bob's talk learned that KEP's lean practice techniques resulted in production efficiency, better organized inventory and even improvements in accounting.

The major takeaway from Bob's talk is that our Lean Journey will never end. This improvement is constant and involves all employees from president to floor worker...from the manufacturing plant to the offices.

KEP's continual improvement creates a sense of pride and ownership and illustrates that we can be innovative with our time, processes and solutions for ourselves and our customers.

Ask us what's our latest success on the Lean Journey – we've always got a continuous improvement in the works!



1ST MOGADORE KAIZEN: LINE 6 CHANGEOVER		
Process Chart	Before	
Extruder Down Time	3hrs	
Process Steps	315	
Walked away from extruder (to get equipment, clean materials etc.)	87	
Travel time from extruder (to get equipment, clean materials etc.)	18 min.	

1ST MOGADORE KAIZEN: LINE 6 CHANGEOVER		
Process Chart	After	% Saved
Extruder Down Time	2hrs	34%
Process Steps	138	57%
Walked away from extruder (to get equipment, clean materials etc.)	36	59%
Travel time from extruder (to get equipment, clean materials etc.)	5 min.	72%



THIS MONTH'S KEP CHALLENGE



We Love a Challenge

We love a challenge. Whether it is improving our own systems or finding a better way to design and deliver your product, KEP applies a can-do, continual improvement philosophy to every challenge we face. It's what gets our enthusiasm pumping and our innovation roaring.

In every edition of this newsletter, we will share real-life stories of how our customers have brought us challenges...and how we've applied our knowledge, experience and imagination to create real solutions.

Till our next edition, just remember – we love a challenge. What's yours? Do you want to optimize efficiency? Build a prototype? Improve product or customer service? Let's make it happen!

Call us at 800.331.4762 or [contact us here](#).



TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Meet John Danes, Vice President of Operations

John brings start-to-finish, top-to-bottom understanding of the latest products and technology to a changing global market.

Lean-Certified and Knowledgeable

John began his career at Kent Elastomer Products in 1987. Over time, Danes has learned thoroughly each phase of product development and customer service. He is lean-certified and frequently participates in leadership and team-building training.

"John's product knowledge and commitment to customer success led to his promotion from executive director of latex operations to vice president of operations," states Bob Oborn, president of Kent Elastomer.

Values Relationships with Clients, Co-Workers & Community

The same value that Danes places in building strong relationships with coworkers and clients is also what he invests in his community. "I have enjoyed organizing athletic teams, coaching and watching children grow through the system." He is the co-founder of No Child without a Gift, a non-profit group that provides holiday gifts for underprivileged children.

From his early years as an hourly employee, then a floor supervisor, to today as an executive, Danes has helped Kent Elastomer evolve from a rubber latex tubing manufacturer into a diversified supplier of thermoplastic elastomer tubing, dip-molded products, PVC tubing, non-latex Free-Band® Tourniquets and more – all proudly and efficiently USA-made.



PRODUCT FEATURE



Take Me Out to The Ballgame

You'll be amazed at all the places where you may find our products. Like the ballpark. Did you know that one of the many products we make is the tube that dispenses nacho cheese?

So the next time you're at a game, enjoying a snack and cheering on your favorite team, it's cool to know that KEP is the trusted name behind many food and beverage industry products.



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