



MEP  
National  
Network™



PURDUE  
UNIVERSITY®

Manufacturing  
Extension Partnership

---

## How U.S. Manufacturers Can Take Advantage of Reshoring

Navigate the reshoring landscape by adding value to the supply chain

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## INTRODUCTION

**CHAPTER 1:** Making the Decision to Reshore

**CHAPTER 2:** How Reshoring Companies Can Find Domestic Suppliers

**CHAPTER 3:** Developing a Roadmap to Fill Emerging Gaps in the Supply Chain

**CHAPTER 4:** Reshoring Is an Opportunity to Build Value-Driven Relationships

**CHAPTER 5:** How SMMs Can Adjust Their Strategy to Become a Supplier of Choice

**CHAPTER 6:** The MEP National Network Is Here to Help You





# INTRODUCTION

Reshoring has emerged as an attractive option for manufacturers to address rising transportation costs, bottlenecks at ports, and uncertainties with importing critical materials.

The reshoring movement is being driven by an increased emphasis on supply chain resiliency. Bringing manufacturing closer to home reduces risks and improves responsiveness. Reshoring solves problems, lowers costs, and creates jobs. Conceptually, it makes sense. Yet the thought of reshoring some or all of the supply chain can be intimidating for a small or medium-sized manufacturer (SMM) lacking supply chain expertise. However, expert guidance is available through [Purdue MEP, your local MEP Center](#), and the [MEP National Network](#), offering resources to help manufacturers navigate the reshoring process.

In this white paper, we will look at the key considerations for taking advantage of the reshoring movement:

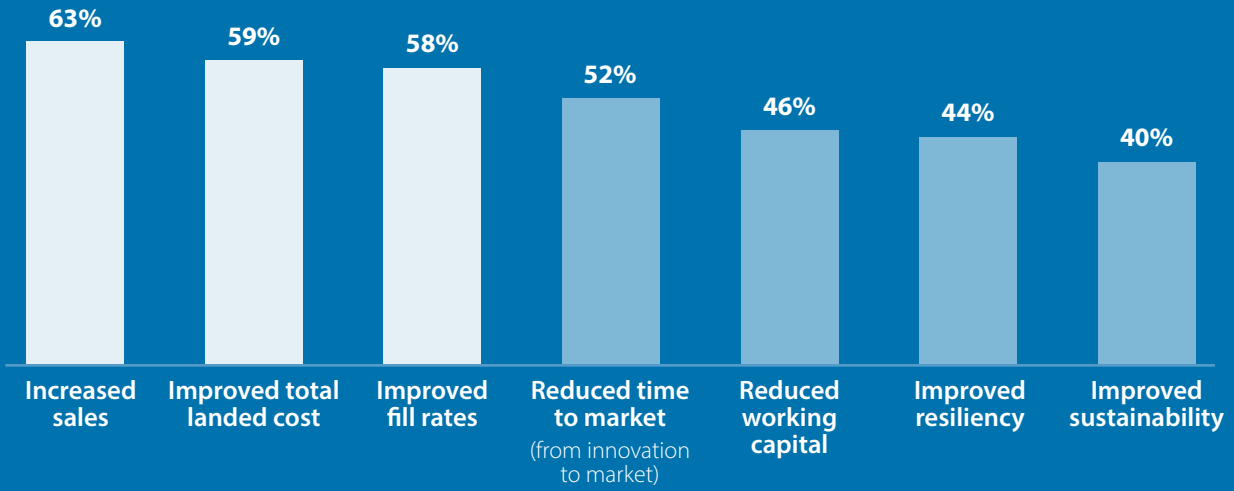
- **Making the decision on whether to reshore**
- **Leveraging supplier scouting to rebuild domestic supply chains**
- **Developing a roadmap to fill supply chain gaps**
- **Investing in technology to make reshoring more feasible and cost-efficient**

Reshoring supports the “Made in America” movement, aligns with trends toward sustainability, economic security, and shorter, more efficient supply chains. As original equipment manufacturers (OEMs) and Tier 1 suppliers reshore, it creates opportunities for domestic suppliers to become valuable contributors to these newly restructured supply chains.



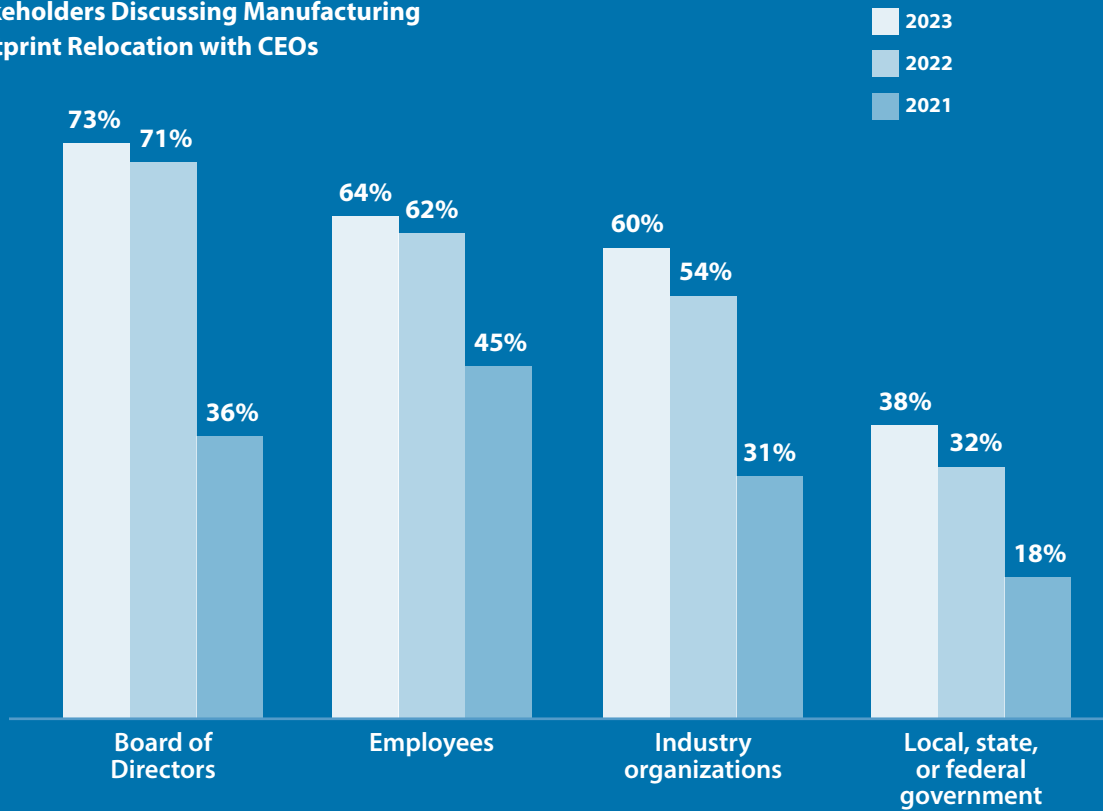
# Making the Business Case for Reshoring

CEOs Business Case for Reshoring/Nearshoring\*



Increased sales, improved total landed costs, and improved fill rates are the top elements that CEOs cited in their business case behind the decision to reshore or nearshore some or all of their manufacturing footprint.

Stakeholders Discussing Manufacturing Footprint Relocation with CEOs



CEOs continue to increase their discussions about reshoring and nearshoring with their stakeholders.

\*Kearney, a global management consulting firm, conducts an annual survey of manufacturers to produce its Kearney Reshoring Index.

# CHAPTER 1

## Making the Decision to Reshore

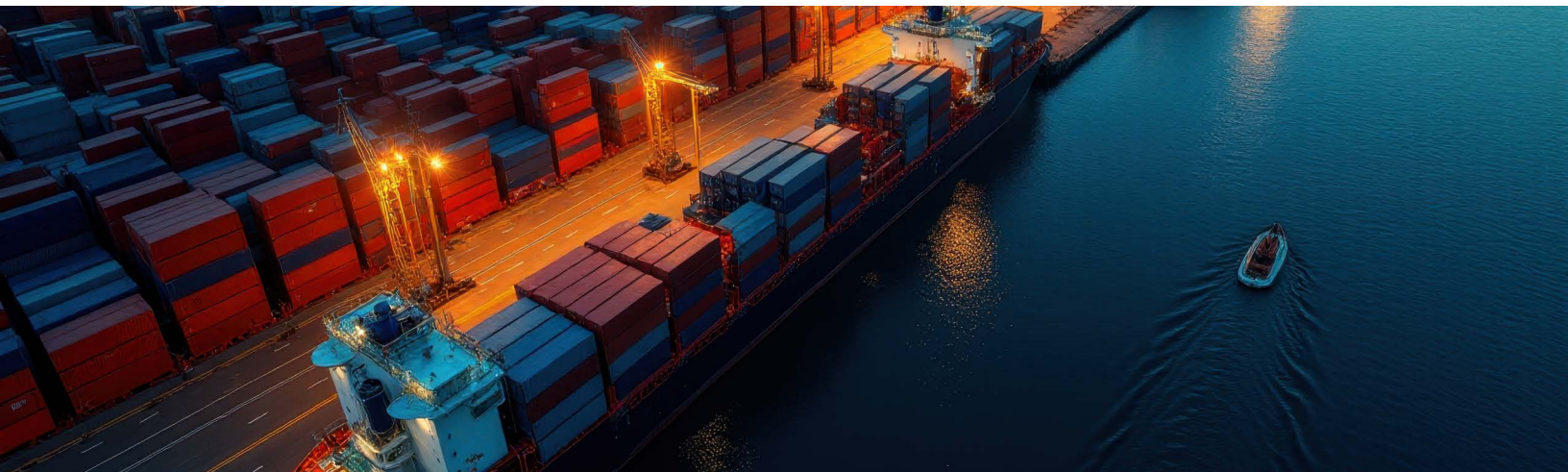
For many manufacturers, the best way to begin evaluating the case for reshoring is to go back to why the decision was made to move the supply chain offshore. Dust off the presentations and pull those old Excel files from the archives to answer these questions:

- What initially drove the decision to offshore?
- What has changed since then?
- If you used current data with the same criteria, would the evaluation yield the same recommendation?
- What have been the positive results of this move?
- While recent challenges have magnified the disadvantages of offshoring, when was the offshore supply chain working well and why?
- Are there reshoring disadvantages that should be evaluated?

There is a reason that reshoring wasn't seriously considered until now — you have to be aware of that reason to make an informed decision. Once you understand why the supply chain went offshore in the first place, you must quantify the current problems you are trying to solve. Reshoring should not be a solution in search of a problem. Clearly define the issues you want to resolve and evaluate whether reshoring is the most effective approach. Questions to guide your decision-making should include:

- What components or processes are causing the most disruption?
- How will reshoring specifically address the problems and provide a more workable solution than the current supply chain?
- Are there alternative solutions to reshoring that might be equally or more effective?

Focus on a few key starting points to research and analyze the advantages and disadvantages of reshoring, while conserving your valuable resources and giving your team the information they need to make strategic decisions.







## Total Cost of Ownership Is a Key Driver of Reshoring Decisions

Ultimately, the total cost of ownership (TCO) drives many reshoring decisions. TCO is the sum of all visible and hidden costs associated with the acquisition, transportation, storage, finance, transactions, and environmental impacts of every activity of the supply chain. Knowing your TCO helps clarify risks and provides a structured approach for optimizing your supply base and improving your overall value.

While overseas outsourcing initially offered significant cost advantages, many factors have eroded those benefits. For example, while labor costs in Asian countries were initially significantly lower than those in Western countries, they have steadily increased over the years. Currency issues and tariffs have also led to higher prices. Meanwhile, global trade tensions, geopolitical uncertainties, and other factors such as the COVID-19 pandemic have led to more uncertainty and disruptions that have costs associated with them.

For many SMMs, developing a comprehensive supply chain strategy can be challenging. Often, these companies focus on transactional, price-driven decisions, evaluating suppliers primarily on per-unit costs. However, this approach can result in a higher TCO over time, especially if the purchasing department is evaluated on price reduction, while operations are measured by throughput. This disconnect can create conflicting views about the value of a supplier and overlook long-term costs.

To make informed reshoring decisions, manufacturers must carefully evaluate the TCO of their supply chains and consider a range of factors, including labor costs, shipping costs, currency fluctuations, quality control, intellectual property protection, supply chain complexity and visibility, and environmental and social responsibility.

## Areas of Your Operations to Include in Reshoring Evaluations

While it may seem obvious to consider shipping and storage costs, there are other areas you should evaluate when determining if reshoring is right for your business. Reshoring in many respects is no different than any other organization-wide project. You need to consider your people, processes, and technology. Be sure to account for these three areas.

### 1. Supply Chain Technology

Evaluate your current supply chain technology and determine how it can be leveraged to support reshoring. While technology will inevitably become the backbone of the supply chain industry, use what you have to get started. Often SMMs have their supply-chain data in Excel files downloaded from an ERP system. If this is the case, build a visual of these siloed Excel datasets and determine your starting point, then ask these questions:

- Will the technology and data you are using to support offshore suppliers have to change in some way to provide the supply chain visibility you need for reshoring?
- Can you leverage the suppliers' technology and/or integrate it with yours easily?
- What benefits would there be to implementing new technology?
- Does your team have the bandwidth to take on a new technology implementation right now?

### 2. Performance Analytics

If your analytics have not changed over time to keep up with the global supply chain evolution, this needs to be addressed before any final recommendations regarding the solution to your current supply chain problems can be made. These questions can help get you started:

- How are you measuring your supply chain? If your supply chain focus defaults to pricing or delivery, you may be taking on additional risk if your suppliers begin cutting corners. Quality must be maintained and not allowed to decline.
- Are you considering all parts of the landed cost equation?
- Are you factoring in cost predictability, possible import tariffs, carbon offset costs, or what you may have to spend to react to a late or canceled delivery?

### 3. Management Structure

Assess your overall supply chain management and team bandwidth, strengths, and weaknesses. You will need to ask questions such as:

- What is your supply chain management organizational structure and how would it need to change with reshoring?
- Does your team have the resources they need to establish new suppliers and ensure these suppliers' success?
- Is your current team's environment one in which the challenges of major supply chain changes can be openly discussed, measured, and acted upon?

## Expert Help in Your Reshoring Considerations

Your local MEP Center can provide guidance and refer you to credible partners for appropriate counsel as you engage in this inquiry. They can help you make the leap from vision to project with:

- Conducting a feasibility study of reshoring and nearshoring
- Assessing, planning, and implementing reshoring/nearshoring initiatives
- Determining what to consider when selecting a new domestic or nearshore manufacturing location (e.g., workforce availability, infrastructure, tax incentives)
- Researching available government grants, loans, and tax incentives to support reshoring efforts

## Cost Elements in a TCO Calculation

The main insight that TCO offers to the supply chain manager is the understanding that the acquisition cost can be a small portion of the total cost of ownership. Decisions should be made not only based on the purchase price of a procured good, but also on consideration of all costs associated with acquiring the good. TCO is made up of a number of different cost elements, including:



### Transport and logistics costs

- Includes packaging, transport, temporary storage, duties and taxes, and insurance.
- Landed costs generally denote the sum of the purchase price and the transport and logistics costs.



### Transaction costs

- These are the company-internal expenditures for the organization of the buyer-supplier relationship. They include costs for the processes of searching, initiation, negotiation, drawing up contracts, adaptation, and control.



### Depreciation, amortization, and capital costs

- These are the cost elements for investments and obsolescence.
- Includes costs for tied-up capital owing to transport times, payment arrangements, and safety stocks.
- Total monetary costs are the sum of the landed costs, the transaction costs, and the depreciation and capital costs.



### Risk costs

- Risks concerning the company's objectives are in the target areas of quality, costs, delivery, flexibility, and reputation.



## CHAPTER 2

### How Reshoring Companies Can Find Domestic Suppliers

Finding domestic suppliers has primarily been a B2B match based on a database of manufacturers. In these scenarios, a manufacturer has a need for materials, parts or components, and is looking for a supplier that has the capability and capacity to do the work and will agree to terms. But manufacturing databases have limitations, such as showing a company's capabilities but not capacity. Databases also are not necessarily dynamic, so they may not reflect current capabilities.

The MEP National Network supplier scouting (finding domestic suppliers, capacities, and capabilities) has greatly evolved in recent years with a more nuanced approach that can help bridge supply chain gaps. Supplier scouting now begins with a wider lens to focus on:

- **Technical and process capabilities:** A prospective supplier may have the required equipment but is not using it for that particular part or component.
- **Production capacities:** Evaluate whether the supplier has sufficient capacity to meet your demands.
- **Proficiency to make products:** Ensure the supplier has the expertise and experience to manufacture your specific products at the quality and standards you require.
- **Ability to pivot production to critical supplies:** How easily can they pivot to meet new demands or adapt to technology changes?

When a company reshores its manufacturing functions, it may need new domestic suppliers for a wide variety of parts and components. When such an initiative involves new technology, it creates even more opportunities for a regional ecosystem and associated supply chains. This is where [local MEP Centers](#) bring more to the equation, with trusted relationships, knowledge of business plans, and unique understandings of business models and the goals of each party. They are not just making a sale.





## OEMs Are Looking for Capabilities, Not Just Parts

Reshoring is a great snapshot of how OEMs invest in companies with specific capabilities as opposed to ones that can make specific parts. It's also a great argument for SMMs to adopt Industry 4.0 technologies to build out future capabilities.

When a local MEP Center learns about the needs of an OEM and understands what capabilities are required to meet those needs, they can identify what local suppliers have the capacity to do that work, which are capable of doing that work, and which companies might be able to pivot to produce the needed parts or components. It's more than simply matching current production with needs.

This process helps the smaller manufacturers who might be eligible to support the OEM in two ways. First, it provides new business leads for some companies. Second, it helps others learn what they need to do in order to become supplier-ready by closing gaps in capabilities or certifications.

OEMs are looking for capabilities in addition to specific parts and components. For example:

- Aviation and aerospace companies will be looking for precision manufacturing, component assembly, lightweight materials, and advanced composites.
- Microelectronics and quantum technology companies will seek fabrication, characterization, assembly, packaging, testing, and validation.
- Medical device companies will be attracted to precision machining, quality control, sterilization, and compliance with stringent regulations.





## Supplier Scouting Helps Fill Needs for Green Energy Producer

### The Situation

Topsoe, a Danish energy company with customers around the world, approached the MEP National Network (MEPNN) for help in finding suppliers for a \$400 million Electrolyzer facility they are building in Virginia. Topsoe will be building its new solid oxide electrolysis cells (SOEC) there. The technology utilizes renewable electricity from sources like solar and wind power to split water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen to create green hydrogen, a carbon-neutral fuel. The facility is designed for industrial-scale production, making it capable of meeting the growing demand for clean hydrogen. But as is the case with many emerging technologies, there are no turnkey components or products. Nor is there an existing supply chain in the U.S.

### The Solution

The MEPNN began the initiative by “reverse engineering” the technology to understand what capabilities were needed to build and operate the cells. The initial nationwide scouting focused on manufacturers’ capabilities, as many companies might be able to pivot to produce parts. The MEPNN identified about 12,000 potential suppliers nationwide, and Topsoe narrowed the pool to 300 using criteria such as capacity, specific capabilities, and certifications.

Local MEP Centers helped prospective suppliers understand the opportunity and identify any capability gaps. Topsoe selected 35 companies from 14 states to apply for the request for quotation (RFQ) stage.

All 35 companies advanced to the RFQ stage, a testament to the MEPNN’s effectiveness. Topsoe is now conducting site visits to these potential suppliers. Meanwhile, the MEP Centers are evaluating how these suppliers can fill gaps in order to strengthen their value to Topsoe and others, now and in the future.



## CHAPTER 3

### Developing a Roadmap to Fill Emerging Gaps in the Supply Chain

Domestic manufacturing is undergoing a boom in critical industries, including automotive, electronics, machinery, and textiles. Companies are constructing U.S. manufacturing facilities [at a higher rate](#) than any other property type. The new construction is dominated by facilities for computer, electronic, and electrical manufacturing.

The construction boom is being driven in part by Federal investments, such as the [CHIPS and Science Act](#), all of which contain stipulations regarding the production and procurement of U.S.-made products and components.

While large companies are prominent in the construction boom, opportunities will trickle down through Tier 2 and 3 suppliers to SMMs. Manufacturers that are reshoring are not just looking to create domestic supply chains. Ideally, they are looking to develop a regional base of customers and suppliers to shorten supply chains and improve responsiveness. A manufacturer in the Midwest benefits even more if they are getting supplies from within the region versus incurring more risks, higher shipping costs, and additional time needed for supplies from the West Coast or South.







## Leverage Your Digital Prowess, Certifications, and Visibility into Supply Chains

Reshoring companies will seek suppliers with proven track records and the ability to meet their current and future needs. In some cases they may be looking for high volumes of parts, but customers increasingly expect their suppliers to deliver customized and tailored products. They are looking for flexibility and agility, as well as precision and reliable production. It's no longer about who is making the cheapest parts, components, and products, but who is making them the smartest. Quality, materials, timely delivery, and collaboration matter greatly in the current supply chain.

If you are among the many job shops that do a lot of high-mix, low-volume (HMLV) work, here are three key areas to leverage or consider investing in to fill emerging gaps in the supply chain:

- 1. Digital transformation:** Adoption of artificial intelligence, automation, and simulation is enhancing efficiency, productivity, and product quality, all of which are attractive to companies rebuilding their supply chains.
- 2. ISO and QMS certifications:** Many reshoring companies are in critical industries such as aerospace, aviation, energy, and health care that require their suppliers to have ISO certifications and quality management systems.
- 3. Visibility:** An increasing number of larger companies are requiring suppliers to have compatible enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, which can increase visibility in the supply chain through real-time data sharing. This will support better forecasting and make it easier to identify disruptions in the supply chain. The desire for additional transparency with ERPs and cybersecurity requirements helps position manufacturers to gain trust and new business.

## Work With MEP Centers and Other Stakeholders to Identify Opportunities

Traditionally it's been difficult to convince a manufacturer to invest in equipment without having clear outcomes. MEP Centers can now bring local manufacturers immediate and future opportunities to justify these investments.

For example, a large defense sector company secured a massive contract but needed to free up capacity to handle the additional demands. They approached a local MEP Center to help offload millions of dollars' worth of existing projects to capable Tier 1 and 2 suppliers in the region, which allowed the company to focus on the growth aspect of its new contract. MEP's expertise and ongoing relationships were crucial in identifying suppliers who could take on the existing projects or rapidly adjust to meet the requirements.

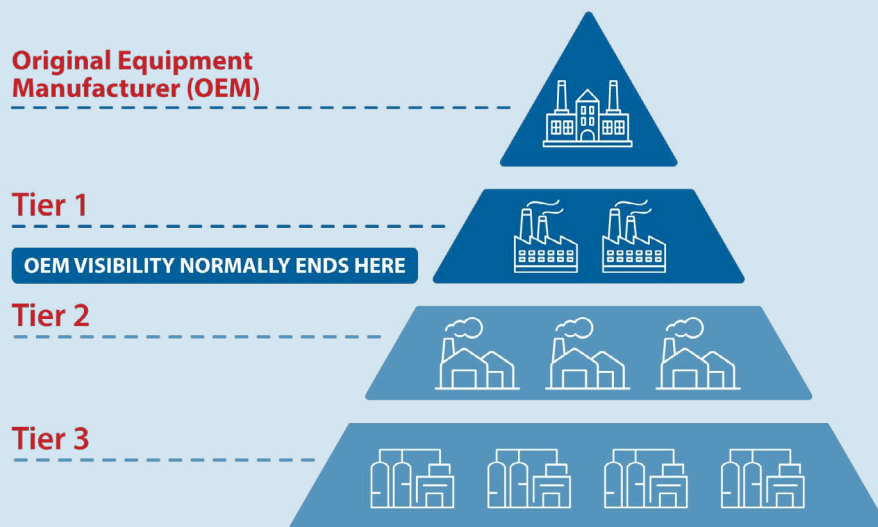
The MEP Center worked with the defense sector company to create a roadmap for their regional supply chain future, starting with a broad list of capabilities needed and requirements. The MEP Center assessed potential suppliers through two factors: 1) If they have capabilities, do they have capacity? 2) What gaps do they have?

The local MEP Center then went back to the OEM with two tiers of prospects, based on capacity and readiness:

- A group of suppliers ready to do business
- A prospect group that needed to make adjustments or investments before they would be ready to do business

This is a great illustration of how MEP Centers can bridge the gap between manufacturers and their supply chains, providing tangible solutions to complex challenges. By leveraging their expertise and the MEP National Network, MEP Centers can help manufacturers identify and develop potential suppliers, ultimately driving growth and innovation.

### OEMs Desire Increased Visibility into Their Supply Chain



One trend driving reshoring and regionalization is how OEMs and large manufacturers are demanding more visibility farther down in their supply chain to mitigate risks. According to Deloitte, approximately 25 percent of the supply-side disruptions occur at the Tier 2 supply level or lower, which makes it critical to understand and illuminate risks well in advance. Big companies do not want to be removed from factors that impact their performance.





## Manufacture Nevada Helps Company Reduce Material and Transportation Costs

### The Situation

HeavyFoot Weight is a manufacturer of recreational safety equipment. It was founded in 2019 in response to a tragic event when high winds caused a bounce house to become airborne, resulting in the death of a child. The company designed, patented, and manufactured solutions that enabled outdoor recreational activities to be enjoyed safely, but its high prices were a challenge to market acceptance. **Manufacture Nevada**, part of the MEP National Network, worked with the company to develop **a more efficient supply chain** in order to reduce material costs, turnaround times, and transportation costs in order to increase sales volume.

### The Solution

HeavyFoot Weight and Manufacture Nevada identified an integral fastening component of the product that was responsible for driving up costs. They enlisted the **MEP's Supplier Scouting** platform to connect with the vast contacts and resources of the MEP Network. Seven MEP Centers from across the country found qualified suppliers, and the company elected to partner with a Nevada-based manufacturer of centrifugal castings and precision machined parts. The new supplier helped reduce the material cost of the component by 60 percent, improve lead time, and almost eliminate transport costs. The supplier also helped HeavyFoot Weight design a new sensor-enabled version of their product line that allows them to expand into new segments.

## CHAPTER 4

### Reshoring Is an Opportunity to Build Value-Driven Relationships

Reshoring will require OEMs and primes to build robust domestic supply chains. For SMMs, this creates the opportunity to position themselves as vital partners in meeting the needs of larger companies. To capitalize on reshoring opportunities, manufacturers need to shift their focus from solely seeking the lowest cost per unit to prioritizing strategies and relationships that offer long-term value. A proactive approach to your supply chain puts you in a better position to be a strong link in others' supply chains. This approach encourages collaboration in areas such as:

- New technology adoption
- Product enhancements
- Flexible manufacturing and customization

Building a resilient supply chain isn't just about meeting immediate needs — it's about fostering innovation, improving efficiency, and mitigating risks through effective supplier relationships.





## Trust Is Key to Growing Your Supplier Relations

Building trust with your suppliers unlocks a wealth of opportunities for both parties and provides peace of mind that your supplier has your back and that you have theirs.

Supplier relationships thrive when partners work together on strategic initiatives, such as testing new processes and developing cost-saving approaches. Sharing appropriate insights with suppliers about your industry or your business needs will build a competitive advantage for your shared supply chain.

Joint problem-solving is a great way to grow your relationship. Approach challenges as a team, working collaboratively with suppliers to find solutions. Encourage open communication to identify root causes and prevent future occurrences. Be sure to engage suppliers as early as possible on potential issues and product design changes. If you integrate your suppliers into the design process early on, you might be able to save on your product development process as you will get feedback more quickly.

## Measure Performance to Nurture Continuous Improvement

Measuring your performance and your suppliers' performance helps identify areas for improvement.

- **Track key performance indicators (KPIs) that align with your business goals.** On-time delivery, quality control, and adherence to cost estimates are supply chain KPIs that give you a clear picture of how performance stacks up to your goals. Monitoring the performance data of your suppliers can help you mitigate risks and recognize opportunities. An underperforming supplier might require some attention to address your concerns, while exceptional performers deserve focus and may warrant increased business opportunities.
- **Don't ambush a supply partner with negative feedback.** While KPIs, scorecards, and dashboards are important, be sure to embrace transparency and be proactive under a "no surprises" umbrella. Some of the most valuable feedback for your partners can come from your people on the facility floor when they notice trends or outliers. For example, if a supplier's failure rate or delivery times are tracking in the wrong direction, let them know before it becomes a big issue. You don't want to ambush a partner with negative feedback.
- **Proactive communication will help avoid disruptions.** Providing your staff with increased visibility into your supply chain allows for better decision-making and improved collaboration. If someone on your operational side notices a reduction in the quality of a certain material, part, or component, this information should be shared with people involved in inventory and purchasing. Addressing the issue with the supplier can prevent it from becoming the source of a bottleneck that could eventually cause a major disruption.



# CHAPTER 5

## How SMMs Can Adjust Their Strategy to Become a Supplier of Choice

There is great potential for manufacturers looking to become preferred suppliers to take advantage of new opportunities with their prime contractors that are localizing their supply chains. To do so, SMMs need to address the following five areas:

- 1. Evaluate current supply chain risks:** Conduct an assessment of your current supply chain to identify vulnerabilities, risks, and opportunities. Create strong relationships with key suppliers. Leveraging supplier relationship management (SRM) can speed up innovation and lower costs.
- 2. Invest in digital tools and technology:** If you are not already doing so, evaluate where it makes sense to invest in technology to improve supply chain visibility, enhance forecasting, and manage supplier relationships. Companies that are looking to build stronger regional networks will be attracted to suppliers leveraging technology in this way.
- 3. Build strong local and regional partnerships:** Get to know your region, as a lot of business opportunities come from networking with local suppliers, logistics providers, and industry networks. For example, one MEP Center worked with a client that was not utilizing their stamping and punching equipment anywhere close to its capacity. Until they connected with MEP, they did not have a way to find more business for that capability.
- 4. Upskill your workforce:** Ensure employees are trained in digital tools, supply chain management, and emerging technologies to manage new supply chain processes. Build internal expertise in managing regional supply networks.
- 5. Leverage government incentives and industry resources:** Explore the various [government programs, tax breaks, and grants](#) available for reshoring or localizing production. [Purdue MEP, your local MEP Center](#), has access to a vast network of regional manufacturing stakeholders, from state-wide resources to economic development agencies, as well as local workforce boards.





## Leverage Agility and Location to Become Part of the Reshoring Effort

As an SMM, you have two main advantages over competitors reliant on global networks. One is agility. You can respond faster than overseas suppliers in almost all situations.

The other organic advantage is location. Geographic risk is perhaps the least predictable of supply chain considerations, because of geopolitical instability, trade restrictions, and the many potential causes of disruptions in long-distance shipping. When agility is combined with shorter supply chains, you are in a position to build strategic partnerships to help your customers create a more resilient and efficient supply chain.

You also have opportunities to differentiate your company from global suppliers through:

- **Craftsmanship and quality control:** Reshoring companies are looking for proven quality work.
- **Customization:** Many SMMs already operate in a high-mix, low volume (HMLV) environment and are doing precision, custom work.
- **Sustainability:** The industry has a growing focus on sustainable manufacturing practices. Large companies are increasingly requiring suppliers to adopt sustainable and ethical practices in their supply chain management. Brand reputation is important to protect; a lack of trust in a brand can cause a supply chain disruption.





## Wyoming MEP Helps New Owners of Global Company Identify Local Suppliers

### The Situation

Brunton International was established in 1894 by mining engineer David W. Brunton, who patented the first pocket transit, a portable surveying tool that revolutionized the instrumentation needed for mine survey work. The company has been headquartered in Riverton, Wyoming since 1972, manufacturing pocket transits, compasses, and sighting instruments for customers around the world. In 2021, two employees bought the company and have sought to move their supply chain to Wyoming and U.S.-based suppliers. [Manufacturing Works](#), part of the MEP National Network, [provided assistance](#) to Brunton International by leveraging its U.S. and Wyoming Supplier Scouting resources and industry expertise to identify Wyoming manufacturers that could fulfill their supply chain requirements.

### The Solution

Brunton is collaborating with Pertech Industries Inc., an electronic and contract manufacturer, and Legacy Molding, an injection molding company, both located in Riverton, along with Loya Machine, Inc., a machine shop in Rock River, and HiViz, a sight manufacturer in Laramie. This reshoring initiative has enabled Brunton to reduce product lead times and procure high-quality products with a competitive total cost of ownership. Brunton and these new suppliers are planning to invest in new technology and training to further improve their capabilities. As Brunton celebrates its 130th anniversary, all of its transit and compass models are produced in-house.



## Address Bottlenecks and Constraints That Limit Your Operation

Manufacturers may not realize how closely linked their operation is to the supply chain. The first step in winning new business from reshoring efforts is to remove limitations in your current operation that are preventing you from reaching your potential. Here are two areas to start with:

- 1. Remove bottlenecks:** Manufacturers may be dependent on a few people for a specific skill or dependent upon a key piece of equipment so product quality doesn't vary. During periods of growth, these can become bottlenecks. If you can proactively solve these issues, you can make a better case when reshoring companies are looking at your capabilities and capacity.
- 2. Maximize higher-margin work:** Prioritize the constraints that may be preventing your company from doing higher-margin work. Profits provide greater flexibility for additional investments and can help you manage variable costs that accompany new work.

## Become a Supplier of Choice

For manufacturers, fostering a reputation as a "supplier of choice" attracts and retains top-tier customers. This goes beyond simply increasing their spend with a vendor. Here are a few ideas to consider:

- **Invest in long-term relationships:** Prioritize building strong, enduring partnerships with key customers.
- **Share metrics and transparency:** Implement a system for sharing performance metrics with your customers and encourage open communication regarding improvement areas.
- **Align with customer strengths:** Ensure your business model aligns with the core competencies of your customers. They are looking for excellence, not just a vendor to do the job. This fosters stronger collaborations and mutually beneficial outcomes.
- **Consider how you add value:** Look beyond the per-unit cost and total costs to show how you help your customers.
- **Embrace feedback loops:** Actively solicit feedback from your customers to avoid surprises. Provide them with access to your own scorecards. This two-way communication fosters trust and continuous improvement.

# CHAPTER 6

## The MEP National Network Is Here to Help You

Every day, MEP experts around the country help manufacturers find the solutions they need. [The MEP National Network](#) has a proven track record and has helped U.S. manufacturers produce real impacts for more than 35 years. Since 1988, MEP has worked with more than 150,000 manufacturers, leading to new sales and cost savings, which in turn has helped create and retain jobs.

In surveys, MEP Center manufacturing clients consistently rated their customer experience well above industry benchmarks and indicated they're likely to recommend the MEP Center they worked with to another company or colleague. Last year, MEP had a Net Promoter Score of 85.4% (above 80 is considered world-class).

The MEP National Network's ability to serve manufacturers depends on support from the entire manufacturing ecosystem. It works with local and federal government, workforce development organizations, educational institutions, economic development organizations, and federal labs, among others, to provide manufacturers with the resources and support that meet each firm's unique needs.



### HIGH-VALUE SOLUTIONS TO INCREASE PROFITABILITY

#### About Purdue Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP)

Purdue MEP provides high-value solutions to help Indiana businesses maximize their success. As advocates for Indiana's thousands of manufacturers, our staff identifies areas of improvement, streamlines processes, and ultimately increases competitiveness. Purdue MEP serves hundreds of companies annually by implementing continuous improvement principles in the areas of productivity, growth, and technology.

#### Public Workshops, On-Site Employee Training & Project Facilitation

<b>Supply Chain</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Basic Contract Negotiations</li><li>• Mastering Strategic Supplier Management</li><li>• Supplier Scouting</li><li>• Supply Chain Optimization</li><li>• Supply Chain Risk Mgmt.</li><li>• Essentials of Supply Chain</li></ul>	<b>Industrial Maintenance</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• AC Motor Controls</li><li>• Electrical Fundamentals</li><li>• Industrial Hydraulics</li><li>• Programmable Logic Controllers</li><li>• Pneumatics</li></ul>	<b>Innovation &amp; Technology</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Additive Manufacturing/ 3D Printing &amp; Scanning</li><li>• Collaborative Robotics</li><li>• Custom Automation</li><li>• Virtual &amp; Augmented Reality Devices</li><li>• Wearable Safety Technology</li></ul>	<b>Leadership Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Effective Communication &amp; Listening</li><li>• Emotional Intelligence</li><li>• Leading &amp; Coaching</li><li>• Managing Across Generations</li><li>• Team Building</li></ul>	<b>DELIVERING SOLUTIONS</b> <b>Employee Training</b> <b>Business Services</b> <b>Consulting</b>
<b>Lean Manufacturing</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5S System</li><li>• Advanced Manufacturing Practitioner</li><li>• Kaizen Event Facilitation</li><li>• Lean Manufacturing</li><li>• Pull/Kanban Systems</li><li>• Value Stream Mapping</li></ul>	<b>Quality Management</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Advanced Product Quality Planning (APQP)</li><li>• Control Plans</li><li>• Corrective &amp; Preventative Action (CAPA)</li><li>• ISO 9001:2015</li><li>• Quality Tools &amp; Techniques</li></ul>	<b>Six Sigma</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Intro to Minitab and Basic Statistics</li><li>• Six Sigma Black Belt Training with Minitab</li><li>• Six Sigma Green Belt Training</li><li>• Six Sigma White Belt</li></ul>	<b>Workforce Development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Excel and PowerPoint Skills</li><li>• Manufacturing Skills for Success</li><li>• Math &amp; Measurement for Manufacturing</li><li>• Quality Technician Skills for Success</li></ul>	

Click each box above to access additional information on the Purdue MEP website. The topics above represent a sampling of the services Purdue MEP provides to manufacturers in the state of Indiana. For more information, please contact Purdue MEP at [mepsupport@purdue.edu](mailto:mepsupport@purdue.edu).






The MEP National Network is a unique public-private partnership that delivers comprehensive, proven solutions to U.S. manufacturers, fueling growth and advancing U.S. manufacturing.

Focused on helping small and medium-sized manufacturers generate business results and thrive in today's technology-driven economy, the MEP National Network comprises the National Institute of Standards and Technology's Manufacturing Extension Partnership (NIST MEP) and 51 MEP Centers located in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.



 550 Congressional Blvd., Suite 140  
Carmel, IN 46032

 (317) 275-6810

 [mepsupport@purdue.edu](mailto:mepsupport@purdue.edu)

 [www.mep.purdue.edu](http://www.mep.purdue.edu)