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**Florida MEP Helps CPN Electronics Set Higher Standards**  
*CPN Receives ISO 9001:2000 Certification and Improves Product Quality*

**SUNRISE, FL** – CPN Electronics of Sunrise, Florida is accustomed to strict standards. The small company distributes electronic connectors and electrical components, specializing in assembling connectors that meet the high standards of the U.S. military. While ISO can open new revenue streams for companies, the costs of going through the certification process can be expensive. Even though, CPN needed to take action and put some process controls in place.

“Military standards are focused primarily on quality and ISO standards exceeded the requirements of the military standards. We realized that it was imperative that we establish and implement a quality system compliant to the ISO standard,” said Ed Coughlin, Director of Quality at CPN Electronics. “The ISO procedures create uniform practices within a company that meet international standards, and the requirements are the same worldwide. We decided to contract with the Florida Manufacturing Extension Partnership (Florida MEP) to assist us in our ultimate goal to become ISO 9001:2000 certified.”

Wilhelm Barb of the Florida MEP helped the company assess each production process. Using a computer template, Barb worked with each department to thoroughly answer the questions that pertained to their specific role in the company.

“We went through CPN’s business procedures from sales to shipping, and documented these according to the ISO standard. In the end, we produced documentation that was customized to their processes and procedures and in the format that could withstand an ISO audit,” said Barb.

After documentation, the employees involved in each process were trained to use the newly developed procedures and forms. The company’s new ISO program allows CPN to monitor and measure their processes, and receive specific feedback on all business areas so they can make improvements. With the knowledge they gained through ISO training, CPN is now able to assist their suppliers in improving product quality, leading to more satisfied customers.

“By adding a small step in their process, such as making a final check of the sales order before sending it out, much time, money, and work is saved. These small improvements yield large results,” said Barb. “Inspections for the military and for their ISO audits have all gone smoothly at CPN. Now that the company is ISO certified not only will they continue satisfying the requirements of their military customers, they will also be able to work with potential clients nationally and worldwide,” added Barb.

“This whole experience has been very helpful in creating a good mindset at CPN, and has really made each employee aware of client needs,” added Coughlin. “Due to the professionalism and dedication displayed by the Florida MEP, we have since referred five other corporations to MEP for assistance in establishing their quality systems.”

The Florida MEP is an affiliate of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) under the U.S. Department of Commerce. The national MEP is a network of manufacturing extension centers that provide business and technical assistance to smaller manufacturers in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. Through MEP, manufacturers have access to more than 2000 manufacturing and business “coaches” whose job is to help firms make changes that lead to greater productivity, increased profits, and enhanced global competitiveness. For more information on the Florida MEP program call 321-939-4000.

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