

CASE STUDY: DLHBOWLES

In 2011, NovaLink began working with DLH Industries, Inc (“DLH”), a supplier of plastics and fluid management systems for the automotive industry, which merged with Bowles Fluidics Corp in June of 2015 to become dlhBOWLES. Through partnering with NovaLink, dlhBOWLES has been able to substantially grow their business, enhancing both efficiencies and the quality of their products.

Business Challenge

During the automotive industry rebound in 2010 after the economic recession of 2008–09, many suppliers were unable to effectively address the renewed demand coupled with changes in the industry, including updated Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards. Engineered plastics producers like DLH, however, benefited from the changes as the new CAFE standards caused the Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEMs) to push light-weighting.

With a need to grow quickly to take full advantage of new business opportunities propelled by the increased focus on light-weighting, DLH sought a partner that could become a comprehensive part of their manufacturing operation and help them move their manufacturing operations to Mexico, where they could achieve cost savings and benefit from an ample, motivated and viable labor pool.

The NovaLink Approach

As dlhBOWLES's manufacturing extension, NovaLink manufactures air and fluid management assemblies used in a wide array of automotive applications from our manufacturing facility in Mexico. Our approach to working with dlhBOWLES entails the following:

dlhBOWLES delivers raw materials and equipment with the corresponding documentation to our Brownsville warehouse. NovaLink then processes the information to execute the importation of all materials and equipment into Mexico, where the Mexican team works through the dlhBOWLES' MRP system maintaining material, lot and equipment traceability and prepares for production. With the help of our **dedicated group of laborers and supervisory staff**, NovaLink schedules, plans and manages the manufacturing process with sporadic oversight from DLH designated project leaders. The dedicated QC team oversees the manufacturing through the implementation and execution of lean manufacturing procedures. Once the finished goods are packed and readied for shipment back to the US warehouse, we distribute the final goods to dlhBOWLES' customers.

DLH chose NovaLink given our ability to:

- Communicate effectively with their team
- Seamlessly transition operations to Mexico
- Run and manage the business in Mexico
- Learn and understand DLH's business
- Build a local management team that requires minimal ex-pat resources from DLH
- Learn DLH's product and processes
- Manufacture at a high-quality level with timely delivery of product