



**Yoder Lumber**  
*Quality is Our Tradition*

*The Branch of Success*

[www.yoderlumber.com](http://www.yoderlumber.com)



## Inaugural Edition President's Column

By **Bob Mapes**, President

### Who is Yoder Lumber Co, Inc. and why would you want to do business with them?

This is normally where the experts would tell you to insert your 45 second elevator speech. Time for me to disagree with the marketing experts- Yoder Lumber cannot be described in 45 seconds.

Yoder Lumber is a 70+ year old family-owned Appalachian Hardwood business comprised of seven very distinct divisions and operating in four locations in two states with domestic sales primarily east of the Mississippi coupled with a very active lumber and log export operation to Asia and Europe.

The seven divisions are comprised of:

- **Forest Management division** that handles our timber procurement to support our sawmill operations.
- **Sawmill and Kiln division** that processes the timber into lumber which provides green and kiln dried lumber to the other divisions.
- **Lumber and Millwork division** handles all of our direct sales of lumber and operates a full service millwork operation.
- **Hardwood Manufacturing division** is a major supplier of color sorted glued panels and cut to length stock utilizing a WoodEye Scanner

optimization system.

- **Architectural Wood Solutions (AWS) division** is a major supplier of hardwood solutions to architects, designers and contractors that cater to the store and restaurant 'fixture' market.
- **Rolling Ridge Woods division** handles procurement of veneer logs and 'saw logs' for both domestic and export sales.
- **Yoder Logistics division** provides direct logistics support to all the other divisions as well as providing logistics for other timber operations in the area.

### Yoder Lumber's "Elevator Speech":

- We have 8MMbf of the finest Appalachian standing timber under contract. This standing



*State of the art sawmill operations*



### ***A strong logistical division is key to success***

timber is managed by a team of Foresters and loggers that harvest the timber utilizing only recognized 'best management practices' logging and reclamation techniques. Appalachian hardwood forests are naturally certifiable as 'sustainable' and require no reforestation as the timber is harvested.

- At any one time Yoder Lumber has over 1MMbf of mixed Appalachian species logs to produce 'flat sawn' lumber and another 500Mbf of Appalachian White Oak to produce either quarter sawn or rift sawn lumber.
- Our saw mills produce over 10MMBF of Appalachian hardwood lumber annually that we sell green or kiln dried to the furniture and flooring markets both domestically and internationally
- We average over 6.75MMbf of Appalachian hardwood lumber in process at any one time.
- Our sawmill operations are further enhanced by a 45 bay bin sorter operation that allows us to more precisely fill customer requests for specific lengths and widths.
- We have 10 kilns with over 520Mbf of kiln capacity on a 30 day turn cycle. This drying cycle is augmented by using a 750Mbf 'pre-drier'. The kiln and pre-drier capacities allow us to meet unexpected customer just-in-time delivery schedules.

- Appalachian hardwood 'live edge slabs' and lumber is an emerging market for our Forestry, saw mill, millwork and Architectural Wood Solutions divisions. Furniture makers, architects, and designers have discovered the beauty and warmth and uniqueness that 'live edge slabs' and hardwood lumber brings to a design is unmatched by market substitutes.

- Our AWS division caters to the national store fixture market. Our unique hardwood solutions to Designers and Architects requests ensure that their marketing visions fulfill the store owners' requirements.

This division is supported by the rest of the Yoder Lumber team to deliver the ultimate customer experience that only Appalachian hardwoods can provide.

- Our Rolling Ridge Woods division focuses on the procurement and sale of Appalachian hardwood veneer logs. We sell 50% of our veneer logs to foreign markets. Rolling Ridge also is actively involved in the export of Appalachian hardwood saw logs to the Asian markets.
- All of the Yoder Lumber production and sales divisions are supported by our Yoder Lumber Logistics division. The Logistics division operates 25 semi-tractors and straight trucks to meet our customers ever demanding delivery schedules. Without this division our customers' "just-in-time-inventory" requirements would just be an empty promise.

In following issues I will try to cover whatever is current and pertinent at publication time that concerns not just Yoder Lumber but also the domestic and export markets for Appalachian hardwoods as seen through the eyes of you our customers and through our eyes as we strive to provide you with the very best quality and service possible.

Wishing you all the best,

— **Bob Mapes**, President



# How Does the Lean Manufacturing Problem Solving Process Work?

By **Tony Yoder**, Manager, Hardwood Components

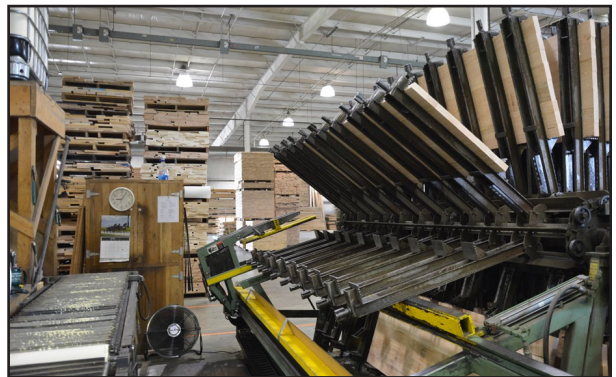
**Almost anyone in the manufacturing world has heard the word ‘lean’ used in some manner.**

Lean helps businesses of all types and sizes compete in today’s complex economic environment. When companies like Toyota, Intel, and Nike get behind the philosophy it’s bound to get some attention. These businesses are all well respected as leaders in their industry and they certainly don’t lack the resources required to evaluate whether techniques work or not. There’s little room for any doubt on whether the lean philosophy is effective, the only question that remains for many people is how it works.

On the surface, Lean is a way to help lower costs, increase quality, and improve throughput. Systemic waste is rooted out and eliminated, leaving behind a process that is designed specifically to create value for both the manufacturer and the customer. As simple as that sounds, creating lasting and meaningful change is difficult and needs to be approached as a journey and not a simple task. Every victory along the way can be celebrated as a milestone, and every failure, and there will be many of them, is a lesson learned.

The lean process moves through a series of steps called the **DMAIC Process**. We’ll review each step here.

1. The first step is to **Define the problem** that needs to be addressed. The problem can be simple or complex, localized or widespread. The important thing is to make sure that your definition of the problem is clear enough to give your team a specific area to focus on.
2. The next step is to **Measure the current state** of the problem. Certain problems can be easily quantified, like the number of defects in a batch of parts or the amount of time it takes to complete a task. Other problems need to be measured more broadly, for example customer satisfaction issues or information flow between business units. The idea is to get a baseline.
3. Next, your team needs to spend time **Analyzing this information**. Your team will need to do quality brainstorming to gather ideas out in the open and discussing them. A large quantity of possible solutions can help here so this is the stage where creativity needs to be fostered. You’ll be amazed by how often the ideas that are ‘off in left field’ can either be incorporated into other ideas or will allow others to build on them. This is an excellent reason to be sure to get a very diverse team assembled to approach your problem. Don’t be afraid to ask someone like a janitor or secretary to participate on a project that involves a process that they know nothing about.

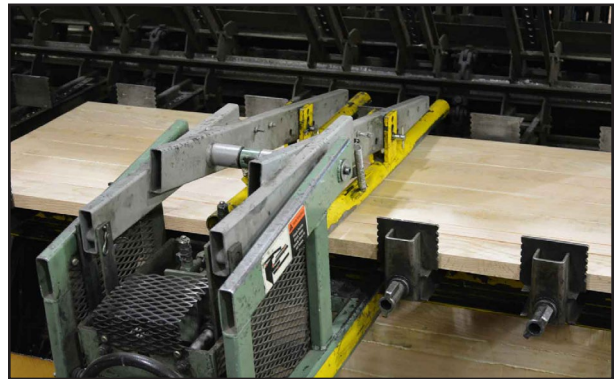




4. Now comes the action we **Improve**. The team needs to decide on which idea or ideas should actually be put into action. Generally, the action items are fairly obvious if the analysis stage was thorough enough. Once a direction is decided on, tasks are assigned and put into a visual timeline.
5. The final step is to **Control the improvements**.
  - a. Step 1 - Get your team to re-evaluate your improvements and if necessary, make changes.
  - b. Step 2 - If you make changes you'll need to go all the way back and repeat the entire process over and over until everyone is satisfied with the improvements.
  - c. There aren't any shortcuts. Once everyone is satisfied with the results you need to put policies and controls in place to make sure that your improvements don't disappear back into the 'old way' of doing things. There are a number of ways to do this, which we will review in a future article. Just remember that all your hard work will be worthless if you don't maintain your

improvements.

Hopefully this review of the **Lean DMAIC** process helps familiarize you with the Lean problem solving technique. It's amazing how it can be applied to a vast range of problems at a very wide range of organizations. A team problem solving approach, when properly executed, can give you such superior results to a traditional problem solving approach that you will probably never approach another problem the same way again.



## Job prospects have consumers confident, and more likely to spend

By **Bill Esler**

**Things are looking up, from the consumers' point of view,** optimism rising on the jobs front and in business expectations, according to the Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index. Confident consumers are more likely to spend on home improvements and furniture. And the sense of improved job security is a key factor in driving home sales. Data gathered through December 15 by Nielsen, which manages the index, found more consumers

saying jobs are plentiful, and business conditions are "good." The latter number increased from 25.0 percent to 27.3 percent. However, those saying business conditions are "bad" also increased from 16.9 percent to 19.8 percent.

Consumers were more positive about the labor market: those claiming jobs are "plentiful" increased from 21.0 percent to 24.1 percent, while those claiming jobs are "hard to get" decreased to 24.7 percent from 25.8 percent. Figures represent the change in the index from November to December.

The Conference Board Consumer Confidence Index, which had decreased moderately in November, improved in December. The Index now stands at 96.5 (1985=100), up from 92.6 in November. The Present Situation Index increased from 110.9 last month to 115.3 in December, while the

Expectations Index improved to 83.9 from 80.4 in November.

[To read the full article please visit: [The Woodworking Network](#). This article was used with written permission from [The Woodworking Network](#).]



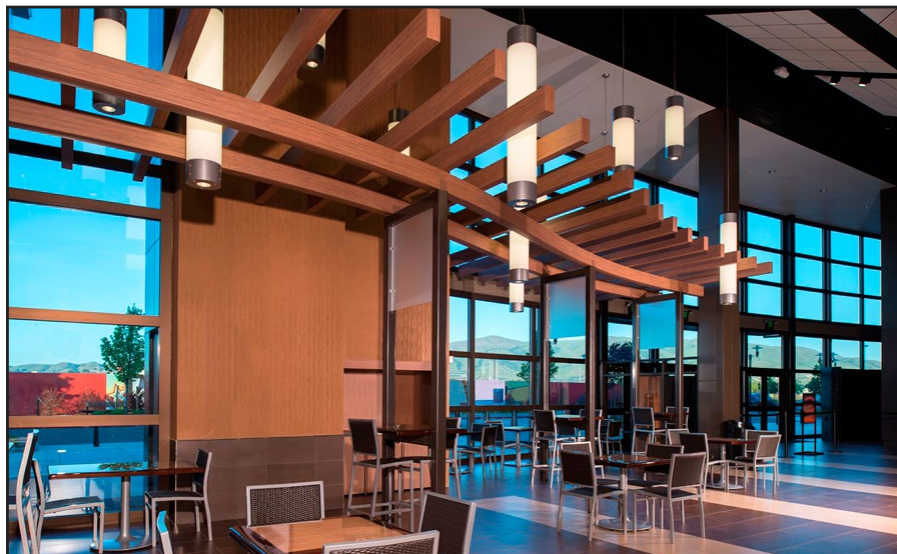
## Highlights from Yoder Lumber - Did you hear about our New Division - AWS?

By **Dennis Hange**, Marketing Manager

Yoder Lumber has introduced a new innovative division of [Architectural Wood Solutions \(AWS\)](#) to better service our growing customer basis. The division offers products and custom solutions for many well-known restaurants, retailers, and commercial interiors. AWS specializes in providing highly precise and Appalachian

hardwood millwork for wood products in a variety of wood species such as cabinets, counters, flooring, shelving, table tops, trim, and wall cladding.

Yoder Lumber and AWS work in tandem



with architects, interior designers, and builders to create unique wood solutions. Gregg Levin, sales representative joined Yoder Lumber in 2013 has over 20 years' experience in the woodworking industry. AWS has the capability to offer a complete range of services from carefully selecting lumber to meet your exact requirement to precision machining, finishing, packaging, and delivery.





## The Hartville Hardware Experience: “Don’t Judge a Book by its Cover”

By **Danielle Scott**, Sales/Customer Service Department

If the word “hardware” is mentioned, majority of the time it is like “whispering sweet nothings” in a man’s ear and his immediate attention is grasped as well as his imagination of all the tools running through his mind.

So, let’s do it one better and throw these two words at you “Hartville Hardware”. It has that same small town feel of your local hardware that includes a great quality product, the friendly personal assistance, and “down-home values”. During our



recent interview with lumber purchasing agent, Bruce Smith, when asked how he would describe the company, his response was “overwhelming and a unique destination”, and it in fact is just that.

As **America’s largest hardware store**, the 305,000 square foot man-cave on steroids, and every woman’s center for dream projects on her “honey-to-do-list”, pretty much sums it up. Its seventeen major departmental areas make it very difficult to begin to describe Hartville Hardware, as the products and services range from Lumber and Building Materials, Tools, Appliances, a John Deere dealership, its own restaurant, and so much more. In fact, several large suppliers have been allotted their own floor space in the building to help showcase the merchandise; which is a brilliant marketing strategy. A section of the lower building also provides a mechanic shop to repair tractors, equipment, and tools.

The construction and concept of the store was developed to be the best of the best that required several years of research in traveling around the country for inspiration from other retailers, owners, and designers to become truly unique. It is easy to see the layout of the store was designed with the customer in mind. The simplest of features include multiple entrance/exit/checkout locations, knowledgeable-trained departmental staff, and the indoor three lane drive thru lumber yard allow ease for customers to make it a more personal and positive experience for both contractors and individuals. The more complex features include an 1850 square foot showcase house and multiple kitchen and bath displays to motivate creativity for



the Kitchen and Bath Design Center.

**An average day brings 3,000 or more individuals through the store.** It appears the future is bright and growth is continuing to lead Hartville Hardware from one year to the next. Their thirteen delivery vehicles cover a 75 mile radius delivering lumber, appliances, power equipment,

etc. The appliance department has had growth of over 400% since the building expansion, selling over 500 appliances in one week alone, growth is evident. Furthermore, Hartville is in the process of an expansion in the spring of 2016 for an outdoor grill patio department.

As a product supplier to Hartville's lumber yard for only a short year, Yoder Lumber is looking forward to see what new ways we can strengthen our relationship and product services to continue the growth. Hartville Hardware is a one of a kind experience the whole family can enjoy from a trip through the hardware store, across the aisle way to the collectibles, stopping in at the flea market, and grabbing a bite to eat at the restaurant. The theory rings true, "Don't Judge a Book by its Cover", as Hartville Hardware is so much more than just a hardware store.



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