

Case Study: Whirlpool

One of the region's largest employers was carefully evaluating operations at its Amana manufacturing facility to make some tough decisions on remaining globally competitive. Significant investments were needed to improve productivity, energy efficiency, and prepare the plant for a new product line.

ICAD Group worked regionally with Priority One of Cedar Rapids, the Amana Society, the Iowa Department of Economic Development and Iowa County to structure a package of financial support to assist Whirlpool.

Whirlpool's \$20 million dollar investment in Amana creates excellent employment opportunities and benefits numerous local suppliers beyond the borders of the Amana Colonies.

The regional impact of this project will be realized for many years to come.

The Opportunity

Whirlpool Corporation leads the \$100 billion global home appliance industry. Its appliances are manufactured in 12 countries and marketed in nearly every nation around the world. Originally founded in 1934, the Amana Division is a leading producer of refrigerators with the freezer on the bottom. This division is the only manufacturer of this configuration of refrigerators in the United States. Amana-produced refrigerators are sold throughout the world; with approximately 80% remaining in the U.S.

Whirlpool officials sought assistance in August of 2009 to make needed upgrades, including improvements in facility infrastructure, equipment and processes. To ensure that the Amana plant remained a vital member of the Amana community, ICAD Group and Priority One began working with the Iowa Department of Economic Development.

The scope of the project required regional coordination from multiple players. In September, ICAD Group and Priority One helped arrange letters of support from the state, Iowa County and the Amana Society demonstrating our region's commitment to Whirlpool.

The Outcome

Whirlpool's local and corporate leadership publicly announced a \$20 million dollar investment in their Amana facility in February of 2010, helping retain more than 1,600 jobs.

Plus, the company announced they were transitioning production of a line of icemakers from Evansville, Indiana, to Amana. Whirlpool saw consolidating the icemaker to the Amana site as an opportunity to further leverage best cost, best quality and best asset utilization production opportunities. The product transition will create 60 new jobs at the Amana plant.

ICAD Group is currently helping Whirlpool with employee recruitment, including providing materials to share with candidates from outside of the area. Additionally, we are working with Whirlpool's local direct suppliers in West Liberty, West Branch and Kalona, monitoring their satisfaction and operations and assisting with workforce or development needs when requested.

"This important work has served to further strengthen the partnership between Priority One, the Iowa City Area Development Group, Iowa County, the state of Iowa and Whirlpool Corporation and its Amana plant. We are profoundly grateful to everyone involved in the discussions and outcome that benefits our employees, our business and the community," said Jeff Noel, vice president, corporate and public affairs, Whirlpool Corporation.

