BTE Helps Harley-Davidson Drive Down Workers’ Compensation Costs per Crated Unit from $26 to $2
Reducing Recordable Injury Rate 6.7 fold

As one of the most recognizable brands in the world, Harley-Davidson prides itself on its passion and purpose in “fulfilling dreams of personal freedom.” But in 2006, Harley-Davidson manufacturing facilities were seeing alarmingly high injury rates and spending millions in workers’ compensation claims. To address this issue, the motorcycle manufacturer connected with BTE Workforce Solutions, and within the year, Harley-Davidson was moving in the right direction.

“Our relationship with BTE started very simply. We wanted help identifying our essential job functions. We needed to be sure we were not hiring our next workers’ comp issue,” explains Sue Gartner, Harley-Davidson Corporate Health Services Manager. “We evaluated several other companies, but selected BTE because their work was legally defensible. BTE stood by their product, and understood it from both the employee and employer side.”

In 2007, Physical Demands Analyses (PDAs) were established for all manufacturing jobs. Seeing immediate results, Harley-Davidson asked BTE to start Post Offer Employment Testing (POET) in 2008 and take over a struggling ergonomics assessment program.

Over the years Harley-Davidson added services including BTE OnSite early intervention programs, medical and drug exam scheduling, BTE OnSite physical and occupational therapy, work conditioning, and active recovery tracking. The company also implemented a Return to Work program including Fit for Duty (FFD), Functional Capacity Evaluations (FCE), and job matching and management. Today, Harley-Davidson utilizes the full suite of Workforce Solutions services and products available from BTE.

“We kept adding BTE services and things just took off,” Sue says. “At Harley-Davidson, we aren’t satisfied with being best in class, we want to be ‘best in galaxy’ and BTE is a part of that.”

Without the services of BTE, we would be hiring a lot of people who would be injured.

Beth Mrozinsky Corporate Safety and Health Director

$4.7 MILLION TOTAL SAVINGS

6.7x REDUCTION

5.7x REDUCTION

RECORDABLE INJURY RATE

CLAIMS COSTS
Aging Workforce & Temporary Employees

Harley-Davidson is challenged with some of the same issues as other manufacturing corporations, including an aging workforce and temporary employees.

“When I started here 28 years ago, our average worker was in his 40s and pretty healthy,” says Sue. “Today the average age is 50-55, and things are different. Lifestyles have changed. People are overweight and dealing with health issues outside of work. Also, older employees don’t recover as fast, and their injuries are more severe.”

Additionally, to build motorcycles “just in time” and meet the summer season demand, Harley-Davidson hires a large percentage of untrained temporary workers to be on the job from January to June.

Injury Rates and Claims Costs Reduced Dramatically

Relentless focus on initiatives in program innovation and improvement has paid off for Harley-Davidson’s bottom line.

Recordable Rates

- 5.96% recordable injury rate
- 1 in 12 employees injured on the job
- $25.70 Cost per Crated Unit
- $6 million in workers’ compensation costs
- Employees are 4X MORE likely to get hurt
- WORST IN CLASS safety performance

A Shift from Treatment to Prevention

When Harley-Davidson asked BTE to create onsite therapy centers at its four manufacturing facilities, BTE hired physical therapists and occupational therapists to help employees with their injuries.

“This innovative idea of focusing on early intervention and prevention instead of simply injury recovery has produced tremendous results. Today, Harley-Davidson has wellness centers in each facility and takes a very proactive and comprehensive approach to employees’ health and safety.

“We focus more on prevention now,” Sue shares. “We encourage employees to report any discomfort early, and let us get involved. They might need reconditioning, or they may be doing something incorrectly. We want to help so that it doesn’t become an injury.”

I believe we utilize every service BTE offers, and we have asked them to develop some new ones for us. Every time we identify a new challenge, BTE comes through with a customized solution solving our problem.

Beth Mrozinsky
Corporate Safety and Health Director

Workers’ Comp Costs

- $5,709,777 TOTAL INCURRED
- $29,370 COST PER CRATED UNIT

AFTER 2014
- .89% recordable injury rate
- 1 in 100 employees injured on the job
- $1.70 Cost per Crated Unit
- $1 million in workers’ compensation costs
- Employees are 2X LESS likely to get hurt
- BEST IN CLASS safety performance

BEFORE 2009
- 5.96% recordable injury rate
- 1 in 12 employees injured on the job
- $25.70 Cost per Crated Unit
- $6 million in workers’ compensation costs
- Employees are 4X MORE likely to get hurt
- WORST IN CLASS safety performance
I would truly classify BTE as a partner. We hold them up to other vendors and say ‘this is where you need to be as a true partner for Harley-Davidson.’

Sue Gartner
Corporate Health Services Manager

A True Partnership with BTE

Harley-Davidson and BTE value their very special and unique partnership.

“Put plainly, BTE is simply wonderful to work with,” states Sue. “They bring us new ideas that are working for other corporations. When we come upon a new business need, the BTE team dives in with expert analysis, and does the leg-work to figure out how to make it happen for us. Time and time again, BTE really makes things come alive – keeping our workers healthier and saving us money.”

“Harley-Davidson has a never-ending passion for being innovative and always pushing for better results,” Connie Miller, BTE Vice President of Business Development points out. “We describe each other as committed partners; we understand each other. They present us with a lot of challenges, and we try to exceed their expectations. We work together to visualize the next ‘best practice’ and how we will get there.”

For over 35 years, BTE has been a leader in physical performance evaluation and treatment. BTE Workforce Solutions provides employers with superior processes and technology to optimize productivity including job assessment, employment screening, evaluation, treatment, job-matching and return-to-work, resulting in lower absenteeism and turnover, improved safety, reduced injuries, reduced claims costs and measurably increased performance. With BTE, companies are more productive and more profitable.