



**Kaizen Breakthrough Experience**  
**Sponsored by TBM Consulting Group**  
**Hosted by ConMed Corporation, Utica, NY**  
**November 3 - 7, 2008**



The ConMed story begins in Utica, NY with an accountant that was blessed with entrepreneurial spirit. Gene Corasanti's first exposure to the healthcare market came via his role as a public accountant for a local medical distributor. He immediately recognized an opportunity in the market for a medical device company to manufacture and distribute disposable ECG (electrocardiograph) heart monitoring electrodes. Consolidated Medical, later shortened to ConMed, started in 1973 with a handful of employees manufacturing these electrodes in an empty back office of the accounting firm Gene worked for.

ConMed's initial growth was slow, but steady. The manufacture of ECG electrodes involved die cut foams, gels and adhesives. As its experience with these materials grew, ConMed expanded into additional medical devices that employ them. Specifically, dispersive electrodes, commonly referred to as "ground pads", are used in conjunction with RF based electro surgery, which is used in over 85% of all surgical procedures worldwide. For several years, by leveraging its core manufacturing competency with foams, gels and adhesives, ConMed grew its business and reach within the healthcare field to become one of the top three players in the ECG and Electro surgery markets.

Today, ConMed enjoys annual revenues in excess of \$660 million dollars, all within the healthcare sector. Their market coverage has expanded to cover the clinical needs within the following fields; Arthroscopy, Electro surgery, Endoscopy, Gastroenterology, End Surgery, Integrated Systems, Patient Care, Powered Surgical Instruments and Pulmonology, with a product offering that includes IV dressings to High Definition Endoscopic Video Systems to fully integrated Operating Room Suites.

ConMed approaches sales and marketing via five business units that are designed to ensure that they can be as close as possible to the individual markets they serve. Its distribution network includes direct employee based sales representatives as well as direct, exclusive and non-exclusive distributor relationships that are able to reach and service customers in every corner of the world. From a manufacturing perspective, ConMed markets over 13,000 individual products and operates 11 manufacturing facilities globally with primary production activities taking place in New York, Florida and Mexico.

The ConMed lean journey began in the middle of 2007 and ramped up quickly with 15 successful Kaizen events—each yielding dramatic improvements in productivity, significant reductions in both inventory and square footage needs, and ultimately enhancing responsiveness to its customers. The first kaizen events focused on the central New York facilities where the process was immediately embraced. The company set an aggressive goal to expand further and plans to host 25 events during 2008. Since launching its lean journey, ConMed employees from other production facilities have systematically participated in kaizen events. As a result, awareness and support continues to build due to ConMed's consistent approach to communications and information sharing across facilities.