

## Covalent Powers Workforce Agility at Polaris

### Partner

Polaris

### Engagement Site

Huntsville, AL

### Manufacturing Type

Discrete

### Industry

Automotive & Defense

### Engagement Start

July 2019

### Manufacturing Employees

1,000+

### Situation

Hiring growth, turnover, and product model variation made it difficult to identify skill gaps on the floor and maintain quality standards at Huntsville.

### Solution

Covalent digitizes on-the-floor qualification processes, generates real-time granular reporting and drives process control.

### Results

Decreased downtime and quality risk. Increased station-level coverage 95%. Accelerated time to productivity 68%.



## Customer Overview

Polaris (NYSE:PII) is a recognized leader in off-road and on-road vehicle manufacturing. The Fortune 500 company employs 5,000+ manufacturing employees globally at ~20 plants that build industry-leading products across 30 brands in categories including commercial and military all-terrain vehicles (ATVs), snowmobiles and motorcycles.

## Pursuing Safety, Quality & Operational Excellence at Huntsville

Polaris is committed to the safety of its workers and to delivering the highest quality vehicles to its customers. As part of this effort, company leadership, led by the Leader of Manufacturing Training, Naomee Lazo, engaged with Covalent to ensure that manufacturing employees could be effectively qualified up to the highest standards.

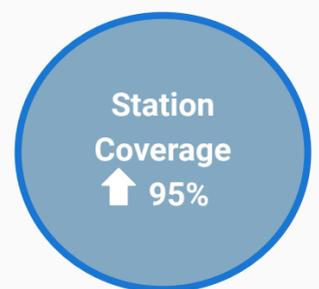
Covalent initially launched with the production facility in Huntsville, AL ("Polaris Huntsville") in July 2019. Employing over 1,000 manufacturing workers tasked with building a complex set of vehicle makes and models, Polaris Huntsville faced the daunting challenge of maintaining consistent skill coverage across multiple lines and many shifts in order to drive optimal quality and operational outcomes during a period of increased demand and workforce growth.

Naomee Lazo's vision for the Covalent partnership was to increase the number of qualified operators working on every station, reduce the time to train operators on new stations up to the standard of work, and empower floor leaders with accurate, real-time qualification data to make better decisions.

## Achieving Workforce Agility

Even with changing market demands and a pandemic driving high-levels of absenteeism and workforce volatility, Polaris increased its workforce agility significantly since launching Covalent by increasing the number of manufacturing employees who are capable of working within more processes. This new flexibility was put on display in June 2020 when cross-training for a new product on an Assembly line took just two weeks for over 100 operators, allowing the product successfully to launch in less than a month.

- **Increased average coverage levels of assembly stations by 95%** to 2.4 available & qualified operators. This means **bench-strength has nearly doubled in 9 months** for every station, thereby improving quality and reducing operational risk.
- **Increased an assembly operator's average proficiency level by 125%**, driving greater flexibility across every line and shift.



54 DAYS



17 DAYS

## Reducing Ramp Time

The Huntsville welding department is costly in terms of training time and resources. Prior to using Covalent, **supervisors and trainers spent 54 days on average** training and validating a welder on a new station. Due to new real-time visibility and improved process structure driven by the Covalent solution, welders are now qualified on a new station in **17 days on average**. The application dramatically reduced the cost to train, while actually increasing the rigor of the qualification process.