Case Study

Let's Talk SUPPLY CHAIN

910 ADVISORS

A TRANSFORMATIONAL PARTNERSHIP:

CERTIFIED COLLECTIBLES GROUP & 910 ADVISORS

Company Overview

Introduction

Certified Collectibles Group (CCG) has built a reputation as a trusted name in the world of collectibles, offering authentication, grading, and encapsulation services for everything from rare coins to vintage comic books and trading cards. With over 700 employees worldwide, CCG serves a global market, operating from its headquarters in Sarasota, Florida, with additional offices in Shanghai, Munich, London, and Hong Kong.

As a company dedicated to ensuring the integrity of high-value collectibles, CCG plays a vital role in the industry, providing buyers and sellers with confidence in the authenticity and quality of their investments. However, as demand for CCG's services soared, operational inefficiencies began to emerge, threatening turnaround times and overall efficiency. In search of a solution, CCG looked to bring in a third party to review their operations.

The Growing Pains of Success

Despite its position as the market leader, CCG faced internal challenges that hindered its ability to scale efficiently. Many of its managers had risen through the ranks as top performers in their respective fields, yet lacked formal operations training, leading to inefficiencies in leadership and workflow management.

As demand grew, bottlenecks became more pronounced. Work-in-progress (WIP) inventory piled up at various stages of production, creating delays and an overwhelming backlog. The absence of structured communication channels and KPI tracking, made it difficult to identify and resolve issues in real-time. Meanwhile, the physical layout of CCG's production floors was inefficient, leading to unnecessary movement, wasted time, and operator fatigue.

Perhaps most critically, the surge in demand had led to record-high turnaround times. Customers who had entrusted CCG with their prized collectibles were waiting months for their graded items to be returned, putting customer satisfaction and submission rates at risk. It became clear that without intervention, CCG's operational struggles would continue to mount.

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A Hands-On Approach to Transformation

Rather than opting for a large consulting firm with a one-size-fits-all strategy, CCG chose 910 Advisors, a boutique firm known for its personalized, hands-on approach. For a period of nine months, 910 Advisors embedded themselves within CCG's operations, working directly with leadership and frontline teams to drive meaningful change.

One of the first priorities was to strengthen the company's organizational structure. Recognizing gaps in leadership, 910 Advisors recommended the creation of new management roles focused on quality control and safety. Leadership coaching was introduced, equipping managers with the tools they needed to foster better communication, decision-making, and team engagement.

To address communication gaps, 910 Advisors implemented structured daily standup meetings across CCG's core business areas—coins, comics, and cards. These meetings focused on key performance indicators (KPIs) and operational challenges, fostering a culture of accountability and data-driven decision-making. Initially led by the consulting team, the responsibility was gradually transitioned to internal leaders, ensuring long-term sustainability.

Streamlining the Workflow

With leadership alignment underway, 910 Advisors turned their attention to optimizing CCG's workflow and inventory management. Lean principles were introduced to reduce work-in-progress inventory, allowing for smoother transitions between production stages and improved resource allocation. Visibility into WIP levels was enhanced, enabling real-time adjustments to prevent bottlenecks.

A major breakthrough came in the form of a physical workflow redesign. Using a spaghetti diagram analysis, 910 Advisors identified inefficiencies in movement and material transport within the card grading division. By reconfiguring the layout to create a more streamlined, unidirectional process, they minimized unnecessary operator movement, reducing fatigue and boosting efficiency. To ensure consistency in operations, CCG employees were trained in the 5S methodology—a system designed to create organized, ergonomic, and highly functional workspaces. Materials were standardized, tool placement was optimized, and workstations were reconfigured to minimize wasted motion. These small but impactful changes resulted in noticeable gains in productivity.

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The Results: A Faster, More Efficient CCG

The transformation was evident. Thanks to 910 Advisors' interventions, turnaround times improved dramatically, shrinking from months to just weeks. This not only enhanced customer satisfaction but also encouraged more frequent submissions, strengthening CCG's business.

Through workflow optimization and better labor utilization, throughput per operator increased, improving efficiency across verification, encapsulation, and shipping. Real-time inventory monitoring helped prevent excessive WIP buildup, ensuring a smoother, more predictable workflow.

Quality control also saw significant improvements. Rather than relying solely on final-stage quality checks, a culture of quality was embedded throughout the entire process, reducing errors and rework. In addition, the introduction of a dedicated safety manager helped create a safer, more ergonomic work environment for employees.

Significant improvement in response times, reducing from months to weeks.

Workflow optimization and better utilization of labor, increasing efficiency.

Real-time inventory monitoring to prevent excessive WIP buildup.

Quality culture implemented throughout the process, reducing errors and rework.

Cultural shift towards continuous improvement, empowering employees at all levels.

Beyond process improvements, the cultural shift within CCG was equally transformative. Employees at all levels—from leadership to frontline operators—were empowered with problem-solving frameworks that encouraged continuous improvement. The company was no longer simply reacting to inefficiencies; it had adopted a proactive approach to operational excellence.

Why CCG Chose 910 Advisors Over Larger Consulting Firms

During the consulting selection process, CCG considered several larger firms but ultimately chose 910 Advisors for their unique approach. Unlike traditional consultants who offer high-level recommendations but leave execution to internal teams, 910 Advisors took a hands-on role, working side by side with employees to implement real change. Their ability to communicate effectively at all levels of the organization—from C-suite executives to production floor workers—was a key differentiator. Employees felt heard, engaged, and supported throughout the transition, making it easier to gain buy-in for new initiatives.

Additionally, the boutique nature of 910 Advisors meant that their solutions were tailored specifically to CCG's challenges, rather than relying on generic best practices. The result was a more personalized, impactful transformation.

According to COO Michael Browne "We partnered with 910 Advisors because we wanted someone to help empower our teams, meet us where we were, and help own the outcome of the transformation. The 910 Team exceeded expectations in our Operations/Supply Chain Journey that has had long lasting impact and value to our business."

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Key Takeaways for Companies Facing Similar Challenges

CCG's journey offers valuable insights for other companies looking to optimize their operations:

1

Operational efficiency requires both structural and cultural change.
Simply hiring more managers or tweaking processes isn't enough—sustained improvements come from fostering a culture of continuous improvement.

2

Frontline employees are the key to long-term success.
The best ideas often come from those who perform the work every day. Engaging operators in the improvement process leads to better solutions and stronger adoption.

3

Data-driven decision-making is essential.
Establishing KPIs and real-time monitoring allows teams to proactively address issues rather than react to problems after they escalate.

4

Choosing the right consulting partner makes all the difference
Companies should look for consultants who can seamlessly bridge the gap between strategy and execution while ensuring buy-in at every level.

Conclusion

The partnership between CCG and 910 Advisors was more than just an operational overhaul—it was a transformation that redefined how the company approached efficiency, leadership, and continuous improvement. By embedding themselves within the business and working directly with teams on the ground, 910 Advisors delivered practical, lasting solutions that continue to drive success for CCG.

According to 910 Advisors Principals Greg Stephenson andRobert Chapman " "We thoroughly enjoyed partnering with Certified Collectibles Group, Mike, and His Team through their transformation journey and it has been great to see the long-lasting improvements take hold within the Supply Chain/Operations Organization."

Their work serves as a testament to the power of hands-on, personalized consulting and reinforces the idea that meaningful change doesn't come from top-down mandates, but from collaboration, engagement, and a commitment to excellence at every level.

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910 Advisors

At 910 Advisors, we specialize in delivering tailored Commercial and Supply Chain Advisory and Implementation solutions that empower businesses to overcome challenges and achieve measurable success. Founded on the principles of clarity, efficiency, and innovation, our team brings decades of expertise in CRM, ERP, and middleware integration. With a focus on Commercial and Supply Chain functions, we help businesses streamline processes, improve visibility, and stay competitive in today's fast-changing market.

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