IMPROVE YOUR PRODUCT QUALITY WITH ISO/TS 16949
The automotive industry is one of the main industrial and financial key sectors of the economic growth worldwide. According to OICA, more than 60 million vehicles are produced each year, and about 9 million employees work directly in making vehicles and parts that go into them.

In today’s globalization world, many automotive companies are having challenges and alongside them discovering opportunities for improvement by handling the complexity of a global operation. Therefore, they can leverage these opportunities for improvement by establishing an ISO/TS 16949 framework for a better-managed process. Citing the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, only in the U.S 51.26 million cars recalled in 2015, each year an average of 25% of recalled vehicles are not repaired. Thus, to improve your business quality of the automotive industry, many companies that establish ISO/TS 16949 have realized cost savings through improved process effectiveness and efficiency. Leading the world market, modern automotive companies have to customize their products as per customer needs and expectations.

AKEBONO BRAKE INDUSTRY CO. LTD. AS ISO/TS 16949 SUCCESS STORY

ISO has published, Akebono Brake Industry Co. Ltd., of Saitama, Japan, a leading manufacturer company of braking systems for the automotive, rail transportation and industrial machinery sectors, success story. It states, that they have successfully improved their ISO 9001 quality management system (QMS) by implementing technical specifications of ISO/TS 16949—the automotive quality management system standard that defines the QMS requirements for the design, development, production, installation and service of automotive-related products.

In 2011, the company has integrated two systems within their operations and has reported “drastically reduced market claims” and achieved greater success in the market.

To improve the quality and reduce customer complaints, the company has begun in early 1996 with the QMS certification. However, overtime several issues surfaced, as the quality became a matter of routine, the number of complains began to increase again.

Simply, the aim of the company was not just to acquire a certification, but to increase product quality by implementing an effective quality framework with proven best practices in the industry; and this approach led the company to a later success. Furthermore, to satisfy business demands, the company realized that ISO/TS 16949 certification and implementation would actually be a benefit during business negotiations.
BEYOND THE AUTOMOBILE INDUSTRY

After the success of and merits of ISO/TS 16949, the company decided to implement the standard through the entire organization. Akebono Brake has also achieved ISO/TS 16949 certification including other branches following further expansion into Asia, Europe, and North America.

Significantly, it is not just an automobile standard; it can also be useful for other manufacturing processes of any product. In fact, the standard for the railway industry adds the requirements of ISO/TS 16949 and JISQ 9100 (aerospace industry QMS) to ISO 9001. Additionally, the company applies ISO/TS 16949 across the whole organization, the same principle to the railway and other industrial machinery division.

MORE ENQUIRIES FROM EUROPE

Akebono Brake has been the official supplier of brakes for the McLaren Mercedes Formula 1 Team in 2007, whose driver Lewis Hamilton became World Champion in 2008; this successful connection of Akebono Brake with McLaren has led the business growth and increased the number of enquiries of manufacturers from European countries.

The company has recognized that the certification is very useful for new business opportunities, and the ISO/TS 16949 has become the pride of the employees. Moreover, business progress is going more smoothly since the company has acquired the certification because customers have built trust on the company.

BASIC INSIGHTS OF THE ISO/TS 16949

This standard is a globally recognized quality management standard for the automotive industry and integrates a collection of standards from across Europe and the US. In addition, it offers a framework for achieving best practice in an organization regarding the design and manufacturing of products and parts that go into the automotive supply chain.

The technical specification of ISO/TS 16949 is harmonized with the ISO 9001 standard. It provides detailed requirements regarding the quality management system during the production process, as well as, the assembling and maintenance of products linked with the automotive sector. The ISO/TS 16949 standard is concentrated on specification requirements and focused on the activities in the field of manufacturing and rendering services. Furthermore, the monitoring, supervision, and measuring of equipment, analysis, and improvement of the quality management system in the automotive sector are done by, undertaking preventive measures to lower the creation of variations and eliminate inconsistencies and losses in the supply chain of the production process.

WHY ISO/TS 16949?

It is often stated that ISO certification brings more income and improvement in the performance of companies. The importance of ISO, particularly quality management, in organizations’ has risen expressively over the last two decades. Genuinely, ISO/TS 16949 certification results in better performance outcomes for organizations in the automotive industry, even though, ISO/TS16949 is relatively new to the automotive industry. Before the development of the ISO/TS 16949, there were some disadvantages of being in the automotive business. Therefore, companies faced some difficulties working with multiple quality standards. As a result, manufacturing companies had to follow the processes and management systems to comply with all automotive standards. Inevitably, the effort of the companies to maintain compliance brought on paperwork redundancies and overall system inefficiencies, as a consequence, some companies came under increasing pressure from their suppliers to look at ways to solve this problem.
HOW CAN YOUR ORGANIZATION BENEFIT FROM ISO/TS 16949?

The main focus of ISO/TS 16949 is a continual improvement, particularly on reducing defects, variation and waste in the automotive supply chain during the production processes and other stages of producing parts. Companies that are certified with ISO/TS 16949 can have vast advantages:

- Improving interactions between business processes
- Improved quality of products and services
- Continual improvement on reducing defects
- Enhanced customer satisfaction – Improvements become immediately visible within your company, as well as to customers
- Ability to get higher business opportunities
- Globally accepted certification – your company will meet worldwide requirements and customer needs.

IATF 16949:2016 REPLACES THE ISO/TS 16949

Since the standard was developed in 1999 by the IATF in conjunction with ISO’s technical committee for quality management, ISO/TC 176, it has become one of the most widely used international standards in the automotive industry.

As IATF stated, "In October 2016 IATF 16949:2016 will be published by IATF and will supersede and replace the current ISO/TS 16949, defining the requirements of a quality management system for organizations in the automotive industry. It will be aligned with and refer to the most recent version of ISO's quality management systems standard, ISO9001:2015. IATF 16949:2016 will fully respect ISO 9001:2015 structure and requirements, and is not a stand-alone quality management standard, but is implemented as a supplement to, and in conjunction with, ISO 9001:2015."

PECB is a certification body for persons, management systems, and products for a wide range of international standards. As a global provider of training, examination, audit, and certification services, PECB offers its expertise in multiple fields, including ISO/TS 16949 Quality Management Systems in Automotive industry. PECB will soon provide the training course and certification for the new IATF 16949.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sherif Mehmeti is a Portfolio Marketing Manager for Quality Management Systems at PECB. He is in charge of conducting market research while developing and providing information related to Quality Management Systems at PECB. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact: marketing.qms@pecb.com.

Kefah ElGhobbas is Vehicle Engineer with intensive 20 years of automotive experience manufacturing in the field of processes enhancement and continuous improvement of quality products. ElGhobbas participated into many automotive production lines to Hungary from different European countries for benefits of "FORD" and "Philips" for couples of years which allow him to be upfront with the knowledge of the implementation of quality management systems into the automotive industry. Please feel free to contact: ghobbas@gmail.com.