

PROMOTING AWARENESS OF CORRECTIONAL INDUSTRY PRODUCTS AND SERVICES



Building Futures and Restoring Lives

Celebrating Alabama's Progress

Certified Public Manager® Program

CPM Solutions Alabama 2024



Table of Contents

Team Members	3
Acknowledgements	4
Introduction	5
Background	5
Purpose	6
Operations	8
Financials	12
Evaluation of Other States	13
Products & Services Offered and Approved Purchasers	14
Georgia	14
North Carolina	16
Tennessee	17
Texas	19
Sales and Marketing	21
Conclusions from the Evaluation of Other States	23
Challenges Faced by ACI	25
Recommendations	26
Customer Feedback Survey	26
Utilize Social Media	26
Evaluate Sales Territories	26
Changes to Alabama Laws	27
Participate in PIE Program	28
Conclusion	28
References	29

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The research, findings, and recommendations presented in this white paper do not represent the views of any agency or organization, but rather the collective educational research and analysis from the above diverse group of participants in the Certified Public Manager® Program.

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INTRODUCTION

Alabama Correctional Industries (ACI), a division of the Alabama Department of Corrections, is a work training program established to manufacture products and provide services utilizing labor from Alabama prison inmates. The program is voluntary for the inmates who want to participate. Our Industries program ranks among the top in the nation in providing meaningful work for inmates. This also allows inmates to learn skills that will assist them in getting better paying jobs upon their release back to society (Alabama Correctional Industries, 2024, <<https://www.aic-al.org/>>). ACI takes pride in the quality products and services offered.

ACI sells products to State departments, institutions, and political subdivisions of the state that are supported by public tax funds and under the supervision of the State. This includes State government, city and county governments, schools, colleges, and universities. The customer base for ACI is set by Alabama laws.

ACI desires to generate more awareness of the products and services they provide and highlight the value of the program for Alabama inmates. ACI is a self-funded work program and relies on the income from the sale of products and services to keep the project operating. Our CPM Solutions Alabama team research project will offer research-based recommendations to increase revenues through the sale of ACI products and services.

BACKGROUND

Alabama Correctional Industries (ACI) has a deep-rooted history that mirrors the broader landscape of challenges and progressions within the American correctional system. Established in 1976 under the umbrella of the Alabama Department of Corrections (ADOC), ACI emerged from the understanding that offering meaningful work opportunities to incarcerated individuals is pivotal for their eventual reintegration into society. Alabama Law (Regular Session, 1976) Act No. 286 regulates the sales and purchases of the products manufactured by the work program. Act No. 286 states that sales are limited to

state departments, institutions, and political subdivisions of the state that are supported by public tax funds and under the supervision of the State of the Union. Under current law, ACI is not allowed to sell its products to the public, including state employees, non-profit entities, or private businesses or individuals.

As a self-funded program, ACI operates with the revenues generated from the sale of its products and services, meaning that it does not rely on funds derived from Alabama taxpayers. Inmates who participate in the work program earn a wage while learning work skills that will allow them to reincorporate to work life on the outside once they have served their time in detention. Inmates may use their wages to purchase items from the prison commissary. Money earned may also be used to pay restitution, court fees, or other obligations. Not only does Correctional Industry programs offer a chance for incarcerated individuals to learn work labor skills but also to learn work ethics, time management, individual and team goal achievements, and motivation that promotes a sense of accomplishment that helps the inmate successfully transition back into society.

PURPOSE

Moreover, ACI goes beyond technical training, incorporating educational and rehabilitative components into its programs. Classes on financial literacy, conflict resolution, and life skills are offered to foster personal growth and character development among participants. By promoting a culture of professionalism and accountability, ACI aims to empower inmates to break free from the cycle of incarceration and make positive contributions to their communities upon reentry.

Alabama Correctional Industries is a cornerstone of Alabama's correctional system, committed to balancing rehabilitation, cost-effectiveness, and public safety. Through its emphasis on vocational training, work experience, and personal growth opportunities, ACI strives to serve as a beacon of hope for incarcerated individuals, striving to break the cycle of incarceration and foster safer communities with reduced recidivism rates. ACI

believes in the program they have established and feels strongly about their commitment to inmates.

At the heart of ACI's mission lies a belief in the transformative potential of work and education for incarcerated individuals. Recognizing the eventual reintegration of many inmates into society, ACI places a strong emphasis on preparing them to become productive, law-abiding citizens. This is achieved through comprehensive vocational training initiatives, offering a diverse array of programs in collaboration with industry experts and educators. These programs not only equip participants with marketable skills but also instill crucial values like discipline, teamwork, and integrity—essential for success both in the workforce and in life beyond incarceration. ACI helps inmates while providing necessary and important products and services.

ACI IS ALWAYS READY TO MEET YOUR NEEDS

ALABAMA CORRECTIONAL INDUSTRIES (ACI) IS A SELF-SUPPORTIVE DIVISION OF THE ALABAMA DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS, PROVIDING A WORK-TRAINING PROGRAM FOR INMATES OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTIONS. OUR PURPOSE IS TO ASSIST ALL STATE DEPARTMENTS, INSTITUTIONS, AND POLITICAL SUBDIVISIONS OF THE STATE IN SECURING THEIR REQUIREMENTS TO THE EXTENT THAT WE ARE ABLE TO SUPPLY THEM.

Our Alabama Certified Public Manager (CPM) Solutions white paper endeavors to propel ACI's mission forward by offering recommendations that would help “devise a comprehensive strategy” to expand its market reach and increase sales. By increasing awareness of ACI to government agencies, school districts, and colleges, we aim to capitalize on opportunities within these sectors to promote ACI's offerings. Through strategic marketing, partnerships, and outreach efforts, our goal is to establish ACI as a preferred supplier for governmental and educational institutions, generating revenue to support the organization's expansion and enhance its vocational training and educational programs for incarcerated individuals. Ultimately, our project seeks to facilitate ACI's

mission of rehabilitation and reintegration, enabling the organization to reach more customers and train more inmates for successful futures beyond incarceration.

ACI: Building Futures and Restoring Lives

OPERATIONS

Over time, ACI witnessed significant expansion, both in the breadth of industries it engaged with and the scale of its operations. Recognizing the potential benefits of prison labor across various sectors, ACI diversified its portfolio to include agriculture, printing, furniture manufacturing, and even cleaning supply distribution. This broadening of scope not only widened the vocational training avenues for inmates but also aligned ACI with the evolving needs of both government bodies and private enterprises. By engaging in diverse industries, ACI aims to optimize the potential for incarcerated individuals to acquire transferable skills, thus enhancing their employability upon release.

Initially focusing on conventional manufacturing tasks like garment production and license plate making, ACI utilized the labor force within correctional facilities to provide goods and services needed by state agencies and other entities. Not only did this ensure cost-effective production but it also imparted invaluable job skills and experience to inmates. While inexpensive production is a goal of ACI, the overarching purpose of the program is rehabilitation and training inmates so that recidivism is less likely.

Previously, in the agricultural domain, ACI's endeavors spanned crop cultivation and animal husbandry, with inmates actively engaged in the cultivation of various crops, including vegetables, fruits, and grains, to meet internal consumption needs and potentially engage external markets. Concurrently, livestock rearing initiatives within correctional facilities contributed to meat and dairy production, while offering inmates invaluable skills in animal husbandry. However, ACI halted farming operations in 2016, citing lack of profit.

ACI extended its services beyond institutional confines, offering printing and signage solutions, as well as electronic assembly services, leveraging skilled inmate labor to fulfill diverse market demands.

ACI represents a multifaceted enterprise operating within the framework of correctional institutions, offering an extensive array of products and services to both internal and external stakeholders.



Within the manufacturing sector, ACI boasts a distinguished legacy of crafting high-quality furniture and modular operations that are revered for their durability and precision. Janitorial and sanitary products are offered for purchase to help agencies clean and disinfect their facilities. Printing and signage services offer an innovative graphic art department to meet any design needs. Complementing this, textile and apparel manufacturing units meticulously produce textile goods, adhering to stringent industry standards and customer specifications.

ACI's furniture manufacturing facilities within correctional institutions produce a wide range of furniture items including desks, chairs, tables, and cabinets. These products are known for their durability and quality craftsmanship. Furniture products may be viewed in a showroom in downtown Montgomery.



Metal fabrication activities produced metal products such as signage, fencing, and structural components. Skilled incarcerated individuals are trained in welding, cutting, and shaping metal materials to meet various needs. Metal fabrication has been discontinued and has been replaced by modular operations that allow for building cubicles and similar items.

Janitorial and sanitary products are manufactured and distributed. These products are provided to institutions, schools, office buildings, hospitals, law enforcement agencies, and other agencies supported in whole or part by funds derived through public taxation, and under the supervision of the State of Alabama. Products available are all-purpose cleaner, hand and dishwashing liquid, spray and wipe cleaner, glass cleaner, laundry detergent, and degreaser.

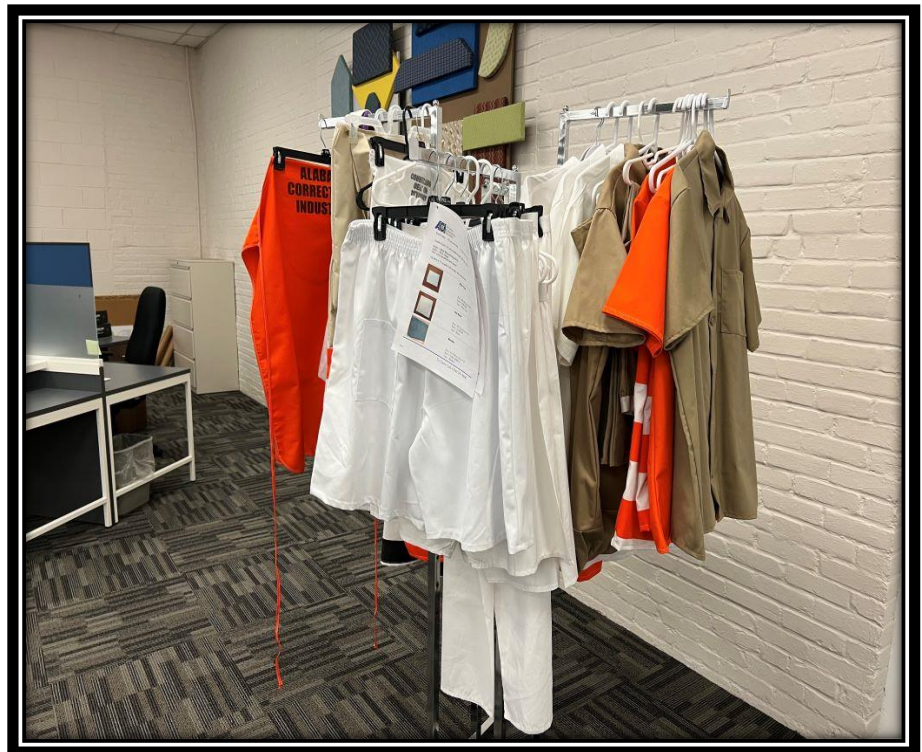
ACI offers printing and signage services, producing various printed materials such as



signage, banners, and promotional materials. Some of the printing services offered include the printing of business cards, desk and wall calendars, wide format printing, student handbooks and educational materials, and also customized engraving. Skilled inmates are involved in graphic design, printing, and finishing processes to

fulfill customer orders.

In addition to furniture and modular operations, ACI manages textile and apparel manufacturing units, producing uniforms, bedding, and other textile products for correctional facilities, state agencies, and external customers. The textile operations include cutting, sewing, and finishing processes, ensuring compliance with industry standards and customer specifications.



The clothing plant located at Julia Tutwiler Prison for Women manufactures inmate clothing items for the Alabama Department of Corrections and county jails.

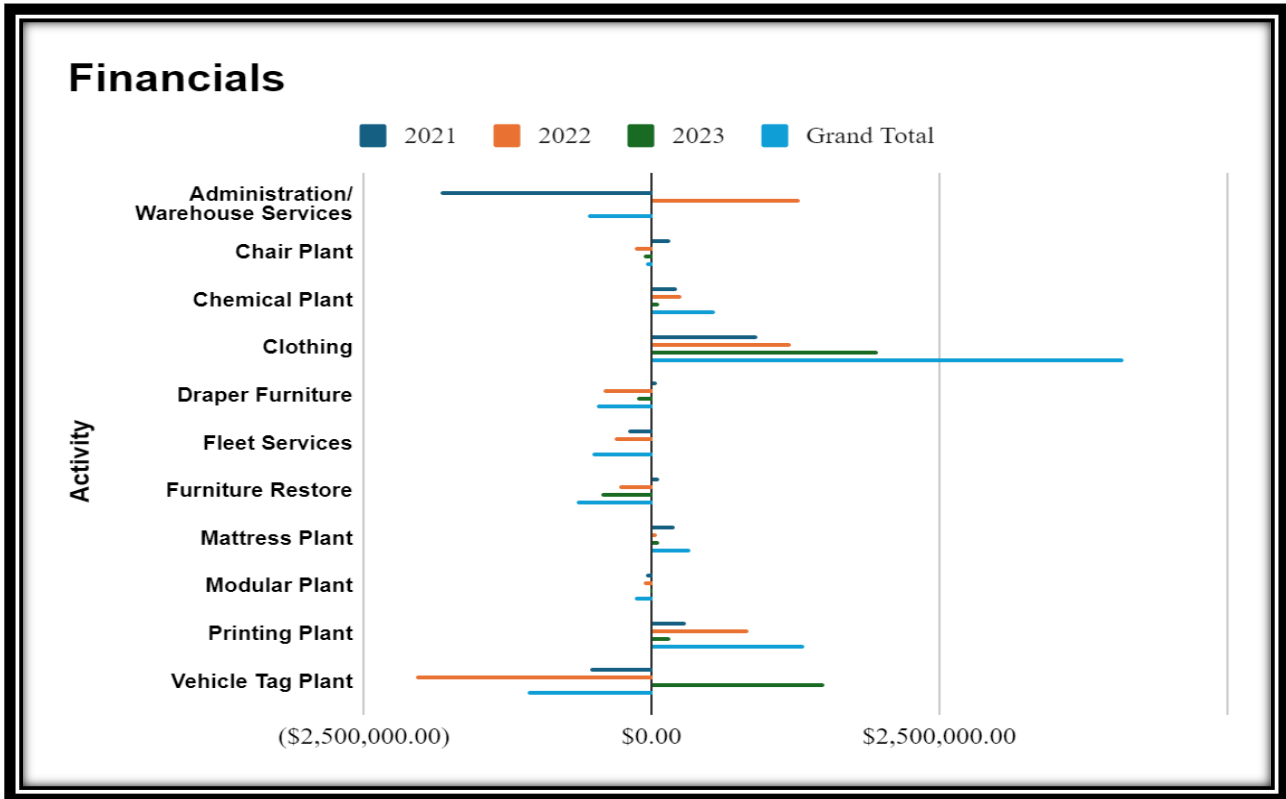
Inmates participating in ACI programs are trained to perform janitorial tasks within correctional facilities, including cleaning and maintenance of common areas, restrooms, and living quarters. These services help uphold cleanliness standards and improve the overall environment within the facilities.

The most common work done is for prison operations. Correctional industries across America produce a wide range of products and offer various services. Products offered may change due to the product becoming unprofitable to maintain production. The most common type of work done is producing license plates, textile manufacturing and wood/furniture products. Many factors go into deciding what products are produced and what services are offered. Products and services may change due to increasing manufacturing costs, customer demand, and changing laws. Prison work programs offer inmates the opportunity to work to support operations of the prison, private companies or the public. Most correctional industries have a limited customer base due to differing State and Federal laws. Expanding the customer base usually requires an act of Legislature. Sales representatives are used by the correctional industries to establish new customers and to maintain existing customers.

FINANCIALS

The financial statements of ACI were reviewed for the prior three fiscal years. In 2021, ACI reported total revenues of approximately \$12.73 million against total expenses of \$13.42 million, resulting in a net loss of about \$692,141. In 2022, revenue surged to \$26.32 million, with expenses slightly lower at \$25.93 million, culminating in a net profit of \$395,503. For 2023, revenues decreased to \$13.66 million, while expenses further declined to \$10.52 million, leading to a significant net profit of \$3.15 million. The financial

analysis of Alabama Correctional Industries from 2021 to 2023 reveals an overall improvement in profitability for the 2023 year.



The data indicates that the only product lines that are consistently profitable are the chemical plant, the clothing plant, mattress plant and the printing plant. Their modular furniture division has consistently operated at a loss. In 2021 and 2022, the vehicle tag plant lost over 2.5 million dollars as a result of the rollout of the new license plate design and increased sheet metal costs.

EVALUATION OF OTHER STATES

As stated previously, Alabama Law (Regular Session, 1976) Act No. 286 limits potential customer bases for ACI. The primary source of revenue for ACI is the Department of Corrections. The goal of this project is to expand ACI’s customer base and to bring an increased awareness of what ACI has to offer both to the consumer and in regard to inmate rehabilitation and reentry into the workforce once released. An evaluation of

Correctional Industries (CI) from other states was conducted to establish similarities and differences between them. Information was obtained through the official websites of each State researched and speaking with Marketing Executives and Sales Representatives.

Prison work programs are operational in all states in the US according to the Bureau of Justice Statistics Census of State and Federal Adult Correctional Facilities 2019. To help ACI with their mission, the operations and marketing techniques of other states were evaluated. Four state's correctional industries were reviewed in depth to evaluate what products and services they offered and who their laws allowed to purchase their products and services. The marketing and sales methods of each CI was inquired about in an effort to apply best practices discovered to ACI's marketing strategy. The four states studied were Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas.

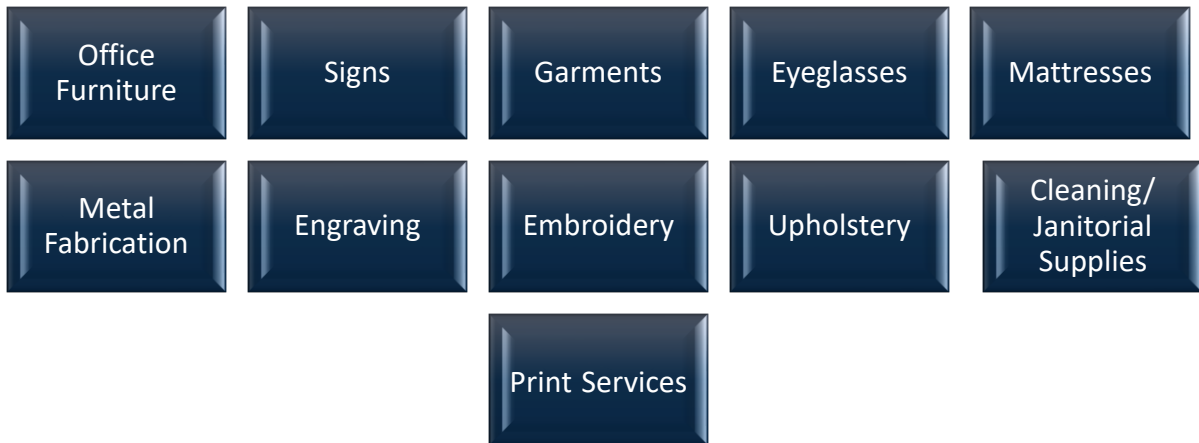
PRODUCTS & SERVICES OFFERED AND APPROVED PURCHASERS

Georgia

Georgia Correctional Industries (GCI) was established in 1960, by the Georgia General Assembly as a public corporation. The corporation is owned by the State of Georgia. The program works to improve the future of inmates incarcerated in Georgia. The program hopes to help inmates build a strong work ethic and learn skills that will allow them to enhance their lives once their incarceration has ended. GCI began making garments and chemicals.

The concept of prison labor in Georgia dates back to the early 20th century when inmates were primarily used for labor-intensive work such as road construction and agricultural work. The state recognized the potential of utilizing inmate labor for more structured and productive purposes, leading to the establishment of formal prison industries.

Products offered today include:



GCI offers training opportunities in the following areas:

- Manufacturing: Warehousing, inventory management, heavy equipment operation and graphic design.
- Food Service: Food safety and sanitation practices, culinary skills and commercial food production, processing and packaging.
- Agribusiness: Crop rotation/production, livestock breeding/nutrition and heavy equipment mechanics/operation.

GCI's products and services are available to the following government entities:

- (1) State Agencies & Authorities
- (2) Corrections & Law Enforcement
- (3) Colleges and Universities
- (4) City and County Governments
- (5) Local Boards of Education

GCI is also a government entity and purchases from them are considered exempt from the State Purchasing Act.

GCI's products and services are available to non-government entities who meet at least one of the following criteria:

- (1) Contractors performing services for publicly funded projects
- (2) Private colleges and universities
- (3) Private prisons housing State of Georgia offenders
- (4) Private sector employers and employees are eligible to purchase products from GCI through the Prison Industries Enhancement Certification Program (PIECP)

North Carolina

In 1900, the North Carolina Department of Adult Correction created a Prison Industries System. § 148-132 of the North Carolina General Statutes established Correction Enterprises to develop and operate industrial, agricultural, and service enterprises that employ incarcerated offenders in an effort to provide them with work experiences and rehabilitative opportunities. Correctional Enterprises is a self-supported agency at no cost to taxpayers. Annual contributions go to the State's General Fund and the Victims' Compensation Fund. Correction Enterprises has now become the third-largest prison industries organization in the United States of America. Correction Enterprises' mission is to provide marketable job skills and transitional opportunities for offenders in a professional and safe work environment while providing quality goods and excellent service to their customers at a savings to the citizens of North Carolina. Correction Enterprises offers the following products and services:



§ 148-132 of the North Carolina General Statutes states that Correctional Enterprises is allowed to market and sell products and services, produced by Correction Enterprises, to any of the following entities:

- (1) Any public agency or institution owned, managed, or controlled by the State
- (2) Any county, city, or town in this State
- (3) Any federal, state, or local public agency or institution in any state of the union
- (4) An entity or organization that has tax-exempt status pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. Products purchased by an entity pursuant to this subdivision may not be resold.
- (5) Any current employee or retiree of the State of North Carolina, member, employee, or retiree of the North Carolina National Guard, or of a unit of local government of this State, verified through federal or State-issued identification, or through proof of retirement status, but purchases by a State employee or retiree, National Guard member, employee, or retiree, or local governmental employee or retiree may not exceed two thousand five hundred dollars (\$2,500) during any calendar year. Products purchased by State employees or retirees, National Guard members, employees or retirees, and local governmental employees and retirees under this section may not be resold. (5a) Any individual currently incarcerated within a Department of Adult Correction facility.
- (6) Private contractors when the goods purchased will be used to perform work under a contract with a public agency
- (7) Outside businesses may purchase products through the Prison Industries Enhancement (PIE) Program

Tennessee

The Tennessee Rehabilitative Initiative in Correction (TRICOR) was created by the Tennessee General assembly by Section 41-22-116. TRICOR is a self-supportive state agency created to help Tennessee's incarcerated population obtain occupational and life skills through job training to assist offenders with reintegration into society. The program

was created to help offset the costs of incarceration through the sale of products and services.

TRICOR is governed by a board of directors that are appointed by the Governor of Tennessee. The daily operations are overseen by an executive team.

TRICOR operates two farms in the State of Tennessee. The first is a beef cattle farm located at the Bledsoe County Correctional Complex in Pikeville, Tennessee. The second is a row crop operation at the West Tennessee State Penitentiary in Henning, Tennessee. TRICOR has sports ball operations located at Northwest Correctional Complex in Tiptonville, TN, where the program participants work with sports balls for a national brand.

TRICOR may sell and offer services to the following organizations:

- (1) Government agencies, including state, county and municipal governments
- (2) Not-for-profit corporations in Tennessee
- (3) Private contractors in Tennessee who purchase goods for subsequent use by a public agency or a non-profit organization
- (4) Private corporations under the Private Sector/Prison Industry Enhancement (PS/PIE) Program

TRICOR partners with outside businesses and organizations including call centers, manufacturers, and Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) Program partners. TRICOR makes sports balls for a national brand at the Northwest Correctional Complex utilizing the PIE Program. Medical devices and flooring are manufactured at different textile operations within the state. Participants are trained in OSHA safety and recycling standards with a post-consumer recycling program in Mountain City, Tennessee.

Texas

In 1963, Texas Correctional Industries (TCI) was established within the Manufacturing, Agribusiness and Logistics Division of the Texas Department of Criminal Justice. Senate Bill 338, the Prison Made Goods Act, allows TCI to manufacture goods and provide services on a for-profit basis. The work program allows inmates the opportunity to obtain marketable job skills and to reduce department costs. TCI facilities produce:



TCI products must meet specifications established and regulated by the Statewide Procurement Division of the Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts.

TCI may sale to the following:

- (1) City, County, State, and Federal Agencies
- (2) Public Schools
- (3) Public and Private Institutions of Higher Education
- (4) Public Hospitals
- (5) Political Subdivisions
- (6) Private Companies participating in the Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) Program

Non-profit corporations, private schools, private hospitals, and private enterprises and individuals are ineligible to purchase from TCI.

TCI utilizes a marketing division and marketing representatives to sell products and services. TCI's website contains a Customer Survey sheet that may be filled out to help with customer satisfaction.

The Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) Certification Program exempts State and local certified departments of corrections from restrictions placed on the sale of prisoner-made goods. The program allows state agencies and certified companies to sell "prison-made" goods and services across state lines and to foreign countries. The PIECP allows private companies to establish joint ventures with state and federal prison labor programs. The PIE program was authorized under the Justice System Improvement Act of 1979 (Public Law 96-157, Sec. 827). It was expanded under the Justice Assistance Act of 1984 (Public Law 98-473, Sec. 819). The Crime Control Act of 1990 (Public Law 101-647) authorizes continuation of the program indefinitely. All States, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands, and all units of local government authorized by law to administer correctional industry programs are eligible to apply for program certification. Georgia, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas participate in the PIE Program.

The Rules and Regulations of the State of Georgia, Subject 125-3-8 created the Prison Industries Enhancement Program for the state of Georgia. The purpose of the program is to provide a work program for the inmates of state and county correctional institutions for privately owned employers to produce goods and services for the sale to public or private purchasers.

The North Carolina Department of Adult Correction (Correctional Enterprises) also offers a Prison Industry Enhancement Certification Program (PIE) to help other businesses. Outside businesses have the opportunity to contract with Correction Enterprises to use their labor force to meet the production needs of the outside business. Two opportunities are available for businesses to use: Customer Model or Employer Model.

The first option, customer model, is for Correction Enterprises to provide all materials and to do all the work with Correction inmates for the outside business. The second option, employer model, is for the outside business to use their own materials and to do all the work with their labor force using the Correction Enterprises facility.

According to an article printed in the June issue (257) of NIJ Journal issue “The research suggests that PIECP has been successful. Inmate PIECP wages benefit inmates, taxpayers, victims, families and states. PIECP participants also acquire post-release jobs more quickly, retain these jobs longer, and return to the criminal justice system less frequently and at a lower rate than inmates who worked in traditional industries (TI) or engaged in other-than-work (OTW) activities.”

SALES AND MARKETING

The sales and marketing methods of the four states were evaluated. Information garnered by the websites of the four Correctional Industries and interviews with representatives from the four were examined. The states researched all had similar methods of using calls and emails contacting customers and marketing methods.

Georgia Correctional Industries works to enhance brand awareness. GCI focuses on success stories and testimonials to improve public perception of the inmate labor force used by GCI. Work is done with local media to cover the positive impact of the program and to feature specific products or services and their contributions to the community.

Georgia’s correctional industry works to expand their customer base by targeting state and local government agencies and researching for opportunities with Federal Government contracts as well. Schools and universities are also sought out to establish relationships. Non-Profit organizations that may benefit from the cost-effective products and services of GCI are contacted to offer their assistance. Private sector industries such as construction companies needing furniture or textiles are also contacted in the hopes of gaining a contract with them.

Marketing campaigns are developed for different product lines, highlighting their unique benefits and value propositions. GCI has worked to establish a website that is easy to navigate with clear information about products, services, and how to make purchases. GCI invests in search engine optimization and regularly updates their site with blog posts, case studies, and news articles to attract more traffic.

Platforms like LinkedIn, Facebook, and Instagram are utilized to connect with different audience segments and regularly posts updates about new products, behind-the-scenes looks at production processes, and stories of inmate rehabilitation. A monthly newsletter to keep customers informed about new products, special offers, and success stories is also made available. GCI uses targeted email campaigns to different customer groups based on their purchasing history and interests.

Various government departments are partnered with to ensure a steady demand for their products and services. Private companies are sought out to help advertise GCI's products and services as a means of supporting social good. Joint ventures with private companies where GCI can provide labor and production capabilities are explored through the PIE Program.

North Carolina Department of Adult Correction contacts customers by phone, email, and in person. Sales representatives attend conferences to network and call on potential new customers. Correctional Enterprises maintains a website and posts on LinkedIn and Facebook for marketing purposes. Correctional Enterprises purchases advertising space in conference booklets and programs to gain awareness. Marketing material is given out at conferences. Correctional Enterprises has their branding on some of the delivery trucks that are used to deliver goods to customers.

Tennessee Rehabilitative Initiative in Correction (TRICOR) reaches their clients via their website and three salespersons who make calls and send emails to current and possible future clients. Texas Correctional Industries (TCI) utilizes a marketing division and

marketing representatives to sell products and services. TCI's website contains a Customer Survey sheet that may be filled out to help with customer satisfaction.

CONCLUSIONS FROM THE EVALUATION OF OTHER STATES



ACI and the four other state's correctional industries all offered a lot of the same products and services. Manufacturing of office furniture, textiles and apparel, metal fabrication, making vehicle tags, printing services, and janitorial products and services were the most common products and services offered. ACI offered each of those. Eyewear, oil and

lubricants, braille transcription, making shoes, framing and matting and call center services are not offered by ACI.

Each state maintains a website featuring an About section detailing the history of their organization and what they represent and what their mission is. The websites show the products and services they provide, who they partner with, and success stories of inmates. The websites each offer information on ways to contact sales representatives. A customer feedback section was available on the website for some states.

Sales representatives with the other states all actively make routine calls and send emails to current customers in an attempt to acquire new customers. Sales representatives attend conferences and pass out pamphlets, utilize social media, and advertise their products and services. Marketing campaigns and branding is also used to raise awareness. Some of the states use a marketing division and marketing representatives to bring attention to the products and services they offer and to bring awareness of the benefits of the program to the public, but most importantly to highlight the benefits to the inmates.

It was found that some states have a broader range of customers. ACI is not allowed to sell to the public, private companies, non-profit organizations, private schools or hospitals, or to state employees while other states are allowed by their state laws. The states researched are also all participants in the Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) Certification Program.

CHALLENGES FACED BY ACI

After conversing with stakeholders and sales representatives, it was found that ACI faces challenges that causes issues with the sales process and production process. It was found that under current operations, Alabama Correctional Industries has four sales representatives that cover different parts of the state. Their job is to maintain sales with

existing customers and to acquire new customers. Sales representatives, in Alabama, according to the Code of Alabama 1975, Code of Ethics for Public Official, Employees, etc. (Sections 36-25-1 through 36-25-30) are state employees, and therefore, do not make a commission on their sales as they could working in private industry. The area that each sales representative is responsible for is currently scattered across the state. Sales territories are not clumped together by counties that share boundaries. The sales territories being vastly separated makes travel to visit with customers time consuming. Time spent on travel would be more productive and efficient when being used to generate new sales and establish relationships with new customers.

Stakeholders and sales representatives both voiced that many state agencies are not aware of the products and services that ACI provides and are also not aware that the bidding process is waived when ACI is used over other public businesses. ACI is also limited on who may purchase products and services due to State of Alabama laws. Currently only tax-funded entities and government agencies may purchase products and services from ACI.

ACI can face issues with establishing a timeframe on deliverables of products at times. Increased turnaround times can be attributed to factors such as damaged components, product not in stock, backordered components and raw materials, and inmate lockdowns such as the lockdowns experienced with Covid in 2019. A lack of full-time drivers to deliver the product or vehicle breakdowns can also affect delivery timeframes. A reduction in staff has caused issues for ACI in the last 10 years. ACI has underwent a loss of almost half of their civilian and inmate staff.

David Smith, Director of ACI, has expressed his interest in joining the PIE Certification Program. Mr. Smith stated that a Program Director would need to be hired to oversee the program and to assist with it. Space would also have to be made available for the program on prison property. ACI would have to have a private partner that would be open to setting up an operation behind prison gates.

RECOMMENDATIONS

ADD A CUSTOMER FEEDBACK SURVEY SECTION TO THE ACI WEBSITE

ACI has recently made a change to their website to make maneuvering the site easier. A customer feedback section added to the website would allow ACI to evaluate customer feedback on products and services and allow them to improve customer relationships. It is recommended that ACI add a Customer Feedback section to their website and continue to update their website to keep up with website trends.

UTILIZE SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS

ACI does not currently take advantage of all available social media sites. Alabama Corrections has a presence on social media; however, ACI themselves do not. We recommend ACI to utilize platforms like Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and others to connect with a wider range of people. ACI could also utilize roadside billboards and radio advertisements. Regularly posting updates about new products, behind-the-scenes looks at production processes, and stories of inmate rehabilitation would bring more awareness to ACI. As of April 2024, 5.07 billion people worldwide, or 62.6% of the global population, use social media per information from Google. It is recommended that ACI take advantage of social platforms to utilize social media to grow awareness of their products and services and the impact on the lives of inmates that the work program offers them.

CONDUCT EVALUATION OF SALES TERRITORIES

Sales representatives need territories that are geographically located together to allow easier travel to visit current customers and allow sales representatives to meet personally with potential customers within those territories. Acquiring new customers takes time and commitment. It is recommended that sales territories be evaluated to see if sales territories need to be reestablished geographically convenient for travel instead of the

current method where territories are vastly separated per sales representative statements for better time efficiency.

LOBBY FOR CHANGES TO ALABAMA LAWS

Based on an interview with former Director of ACI, Rodney Blankenship, we believe it would benefit sales representatives for the Alabama Legislation to allow the Alabama Department of Finance to issue annual purchases by state agencies that purchase from ACI. This would provide an insight to the agencies that are not purchasing from ACI and be a great tool to know how to develop marketing strategies for agencies not currently purchasing their products. It is recommended to request the Finance Department issue annual purchases by state agencies.

A law change allowing current and retired state employees to purchase from ACI would permit sales to a broader range of purchasers. North Carolina's Correctional Enterprises allows sales to state employees. A law change would allow Alabama to add this customer base to their list of purchasers. It is recommended to present this change to Alabama Legislation.

Georgia Correctional Industries and North Carolina Correctional Enterprises allow by law the sale of products and services to private contractors who purchase goods for subsequent use by a public agency or a non-profit organization. North Carolina and Tennessee allow by law the sale of goods and services to non-profit organizations that have tax-exempt status pursuant to section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code. It is recommended to request a law change to allow ACI to sell products and services to private contractors for subsequent use by a public agency or a non-profit organization. It is recommended to also request a law change to allow the sale of products and services to all non-profit organizations registered in Alabama.

PURSUE PARTICIPATING IN THE PIE PROGRAM

ACI does not currently participate in the Prison Industry Enhancement (PIE) Certification Program. George, North Carolina, Tennessee, and Texas all participated in the PIE Program. The participation in the program varied from one state to the other. One option would allow the sale of products and services to private companies. Another option would be to allow outside businesses to contract with ACI to use their labor force to meet the production needs of the outside business. Two opportunities are available for businesses to use in North Carolina (Correctional Enterprises): Customer Model or Employer Model. The first option, customer model, is for Correction Enterprises to provide all materials and to do all the work with Correction inmates for the outside business. The second option, employer model, is for the outside business to use their own materials and to do all the work with their labor force using the Correction Enterprises facility. It is recommended for Alabama to participate in the PIE Program.

CONCLUSION

Our CPM Solutions Alabama 2024 wishes for continued success for Alabama Correctional Industries. We hope this work program continues to facilitate ACI's mission of rehabilitation and reintegration, enabling the organization to reach more customers and train more inmates for successful futures beyond incarceration.

Building Futures and Restoring Lives

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