

Case Study

Young & Wood keep up to speed with customer demand

For more than 60 years engineering subcontractor Young & Wood of Harlow, Essex, has manufactured a diverse range of components for architectural fittings, commercial buses and the banking industry. The company has recently installed a Sincrono laser cutting machine from Prima Industrie in order to keep production costs down and remain competitive.

“Versatility is a key requirement for us in providing solutions for customers,” explains director John O’Rourke. “In the morning we could be producing bus components, and in the afternoon, banking trolleys. It was vital we invested in a machine that was not only able to handle the wide-ranging job specifications, but also offered speed, reliability and the highest cutting quality.”

Young & Wood uses a range of materials between 1 mm and 15 mm thick in its production processes – including mild steels, stainless and aluminium – and as such, was looking to source a machine that could cut both heavy and light gauge material to the standards required.

Six years ago the company added a Platino laser cutter from Prima to its machine set up – the majority of which are punching machines. Young & Wood typically profiled up to 15 mm thick mild steel, 8 mm stainless steel and 6 mm aluminium sheet on the Platino, which provides 0.03 mm cutting accuracy across its 3 x 1.5 m machining envelope. Superior dynamics enable a head speed of up to 140 m/min and acceleration of 12 m/s² to be achieved.

“The Platino’s ability to pierce material in around 0.5 sec and cut at up to 6.5 m/min has substantially reduced cycle times and increased our productivity, enabling us to minimise the effects of escalating raw material costs,” explains John. “The machine’s accuracy and repeatability has allowed us to manufacture a much wider range of products than is possible with our punching machine set up.”

Impressed with the Platino’s versatility and the high level of support and



back-up from Prima, John decided to exchange it for a Sincrono in order to benefit from the further improvements to productivity and efficiency that it offered.

“Prima has always responded quickly when we have needed assistance and that is so important for us,” he continues. “We had a few teething problems to overcome – which is to be expected with a piece of kit newly introduced to the market.”

The Sincrono produces very fast processing times, enabling more than 1000 holes to be cut in one minute. While a job carried out on the punching machines typically took around 14 seconds to complete, Young & Wood has been able to achieve the same operation on the Sincrono in just 4 seconds (with N₂) and 6 seconds (with air).

A major benefit for the company is the Sincrono’s adjustable optics, which provide fast speeds and extreme precision, irrespective of the gauge of metal being machined.

“This feature really sold it to us in view of the wide range of materials and thicknesses we deal with every day,” concludes John. “Sincrono’s modular construction and versatility ensures we can machine all of our jobs with confidence and have the flexibility to meet future production requirements.

“We currently utilise a shuttle table, which, at the end of the day shift, automatically switches over two plates. This is sufficient to feed the machine to enable ‘lights out’ operation. However, we plan to install Prima’s automatic Compact Server stacker/destacker in the near future. Controlled directly by the Sincrono, this will enable us to handle an increased volume of work overnight.”

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