

The Laser User



Issue 48

Autumn 2007



Focus on laser cutting

The AILU objectives

The principal objectives of AILU include:

- To foster co-operation and collaboration on non-competitive technical matters and provide a forum and mechanisms for sharing experience and expertise.
- To encourage the expansion of laser use into applications where they can add value and increase company competitiveness.
- To represent and promote the interests of industrial laser users.
- To disseminate professional and other information to members.
- To promote best practice in the commercial applications of lasers in materials processing and allied technologies.
- To support the maintenance and improvement of standards of laser safety and performance.

AILU membership is a valuable source of information concerning laser technology and applications. Benefits include:

Benefits of membership

- Subscription to The Laser User, the leading magazine on laser applications with news and views from the UK and world-wide.
- A 'hot-line' consultancy service provided by members for members.
- Free entries in the AILU Product and Services Directory on the web site.
- Regular meetings, including members-only meetings and open workshops e.g. where key areas of technology are open for discussion.
- Access to the members' area of the web site with lots of technical articles plus frequently asked questions, current laser safety and performance standards etc.
- Major discounts on registration fees for events organised by AILU and affiliated bodies.



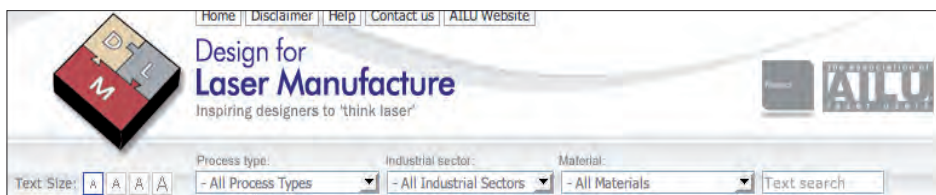
Helping you make the most of laser technology



Courtesy of BLM Group UK Ltd

An opinion on the benefits of laser tube cutting by Paul Lake on p20 is just one of several articles in this issue devoted to laser cutting, from macro to micro.

"Design for Laser Manufacture" web launch



Design for Laser Manufacture Search bar at the top of the webpage

AILU's outreach project, the Design for Laser Manufacture (DLM) website at www.designforlasermanufacture.com is now fully operational.

The site is directed primarily at design engineers, to encourage them to browse through pictures (of laser-manufactured parts), video clips, presentations and documentation, with the aim of inspiring them to 'think laser' at the start of the design process. In so doing, it also provides a useful vehicle for AILU members to advertise their laser-related products and services.

AILU's Market Development Group

The MDG was established by Tim Weedon in 2003, during his time as AILU President. A key motivation was the recognition of company attitudes and internal barriers (e.g. purchasing department protocol) and the block that often exists between designers of products and those that make them. Such practices damage competitiveness, the morale of designers and the creative partnership between sub-contractors and their customers.

To address these obstacles the MDG took upon itself the challenge of creating the a laser web site for design engineers. Now, thanks to additional DTI funding, this dream has become reality.

The information provided on the new DLM site aims to inspire designers to produce product specifications that are optimised for laser-based fabrication. In this way the site will create new opportunities for laser job shops and, indirectly, all those in the laser-related product and service sectors. Market development is exactly what it is all about!

Working your way around the DLM site

In response to the queries we have received about how the site works, here is a quick



Design for Laser Manufacture resource listing.

tutorial to encourage readers to dive in and have a go.

DLM Search facility

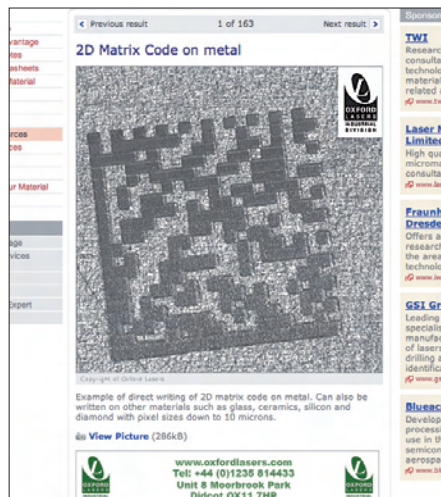
The site design is based around a search engine for specific laser processes, industrial sectors and materials.



Dropdown menus for Searching the resource database.

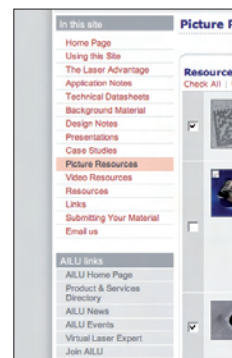
A search bar at the top of the page provides three drop down menus to search all the resources available on the site by: **Process type** (e.g. cutting, drilling, welding, marking, micro processing, etc); **Industrial sector** (e.g. general industrial, transport, security, decoration, defence, medical equipment, energy, etc); and **Material** (e.g. metal, ceramics, glasses, etc).

Multiple selections can be performed on any or all of the three categories to narrow the search or users can type their own text in the Text search box on the right. All these measures significantly reduced the pictures and documents that are returned for the user of the site to browse.



Design for Laser Manufacture Browse view showing an individual resource. On this view you can elect Next and previous result arrows to move through the resources

Users of the site who do not wish to conduct a search can use the Navigation links on the left hand side of the page to browse the resource content of the different categories, such as The Laser Advantage, Application Notes, Technical dash-boards, Background material, etc.



Left hand menu: no search required

Resources are displayed in lists accompanied by tick boxes so that the user can mark ones of interest. Then, by choosing to 'View Selected Resources', browse the full information available on the items selected.

Submitting your own material

Each picture is displayed with its description and the provider's Company banner (see figure bottom centre).

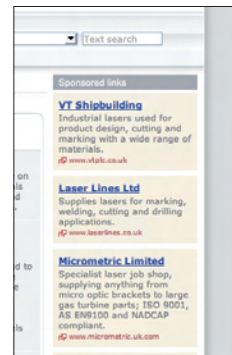
Readers wishing to submit pictures, video clips, slide presentations or information sheets for display on the site, should email the material to the AILU office at d1m@ailu.org.uk

Pictures should each be accompanied by a description giving the industrial sector, laser process used and details about the material. Unless there is something in the picture that makes its scale obvious, then some indication of size should be provided. All material submitted will be assumed to be for publication in the public domain.

Advertising

The column on the right of each page provides a selection of sponsored links. Each time a new page is accessed or the page is refreshed, the advertising changes.

Members wishing to advertise on the site should contact the AILU office for further information.



The right hand menu of sponsored links