

Case Study



£800,00 investment

Swelco, the sub-contracting and sheet metal fabrication division of Altron Communications Equipment Limited, one of the leading suppliers of CCTV mounting equipment, has placed an order with Bystronic UK Limited for equipment valued in excess of £800,000. The order comprises a Byspeed 3015 laser cutting system equipped with ByTrans, the intelligent solution for loading and unloading; a rotary axis for an existing Bystar laser cutting system; and two high-specification Bystronic Beyeler Xpert press brakes.

Sixty per cent of Swelco's work comes from external customers whilst the remaining 40 per cent is on behalf of Altron. The company uses a wide range of equipment including an existing Bystronic Bystar 4020 with 4 kW laser source as well as two lasers cutting systems supplied by another manufacturer. In order to allow Swelco to expand into new markets and to consolidate its current activities such as flame and jig cutting, the company took the decision to retrofit a rotary axis to the Bystar system with a tube processing capability up to 315 mm diameter.

As part of its expansion plans Swelco has also decided to replace the two older lasers with a Byspeed laser cutting system with automation. This system will provide Swelco with the additional capacity to grow existing business as well as expand its sub-contract customer base.

The decision of which laser cutting system to purchase was not taken lightly and the whole process took many months. Swelco firstly worked out the required capacity, the materials the new machine would be required to process and the overall competitiveness. Having selected the Byspeed out of the Bystronic range bench mark tests were carried out on the Byspeed as well as competitor systems.

Steve Jones, Swelco's managing director comments: "When looking at machines to trial we felt the Byspeed with ByTrans would suit our future

demands in terms of material utilisation and thickness; and overall speed. We ran a series of tests over different nests and in one 6 mm nest our existing older laser took 1 hour 24 minutes, the Bystar produced a similar result whereas the Byspeed cut the nest in just 34 minutes! The speed of the machine was electrifying.

"It was not just the speed and quality of the machine that gave Bystronic the order. It was the quality of the organisation, its service and after-sales facility. The ByTrans system will allow us to venture into automation and lights-out production for the first time and we need to be assured that support will be there should we need it. We also have the Team software which will allow us to control and analyse the cutting process.

"It was also suggested that we invest in a nitrogen generation facility through a third party. This will allow those components usually cut with oxygen to be cut with nitrogen, thus reduced cutting times even further and allowing us to be come more competitive."

In addition to improving its laser cutting facility, Swelco wanted to further improve its pressbraking facility. The two Bystronic Beyeler Xpert pressbrakes (one a 320 tonne x 4 metre model, the other 150 tonne x 3 metre) will replace three older machines. Overall it is anticipated these two new pressbrakes plus one existing machine will do the work of five pressbrakes.

Steve Jones continues: "With the Beyeler Xperts' interchangeable tooling and quick set-up times resulting in reduced machine down-time, I envisage a 30 per cent improvement in capacity and accuracy. Investing in a single source supplier was a major factor as was the consistency of the Beyeler Xperts and the ease of programming. The larger 4 metre machine is equipped with tooling to bend deep channels and the lifting aid on the machine will be invaluable"

Contact: Dave Larcombe
E: david.larcombe@bystronic.com