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Cutting and Profiling

SORB gets faster with lights out system

07 Apr 2008

Marlow-based SORB Engineers has replaced two laser machines with an automated laser cutting cell. The result is faster and more accurate profiling, a 'lights out' capability and 40% extra material capacity.



SORB's new Prima laser installation has added lights out capability

SORB specialises in precision sheet metal engineering and fabrication, and has a customer base that includes motor sport, medical, IT and communications sectors, in addition to more traditional markets such as machine building, architectural engineering and transportation. As well as laser cutting it also offers CNC folding and MIG/TIG welding facilities.

The company invested in its first CNC laser cutting equipment back in 1994 and subsequently added a second, larger capacity machine in 1999. Now as laser cutting technology had moved on – not only in cutting speed and precision, but also in terms of work handling capabilities – these machines were reaching the end of their useful lives. To take their place managing director Mike Simpson selected an automated system based on a Prima kW Platino laser machine that can profile up to 25 mm mild steel, 15 mm stainless steel and 10 mm thick aluminium sheet.

The company says that 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 productivity, enabling it to reduce the effect of escalating raw material costs. At the same time the automated work handling and storage system has given increased flexibility and the opportunity to run unmanned.

"The automation has been fantastic, especially as Prima's software allows me to update a production list remotely," says Mike Simpson. "I can be at home and change the order of sheets being processed or increase or decrease the quantity, all while the machine is cutting. The equipment provides increased capacity and improved accuracy over the two machines it has replaced, while permitting us to utilise our workforce more effectively."

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