

New router speeds up production

A machine breaking down irreparably could spell disaster for a busy production department. But for Centre Signs (UK) Ltd, it led to investment in a new router which has enabled the company to speed up production and take more work in house.

Centre Signs (UK) Ltd, a leading trade manufacturer in the UK of built up and flat cut metal and Perspex lettering which supplies an extensive customer base in the UK and exports to Europe, suffered such a breakdown in August.

Trevor Cockbill, Managing Director, says, "I had been very impressed when I saw Tekcel E Series routers in action at Sign UK, and was in the process of finding out more when our previous machine broke down beyond repair. We opted for the E Series because it is built for high production environments such as ours, and its accuracy is superb every time. Tekcel was able to supply us a router from stock in a matter of weeks.

"The 3 x 2m bed we chose means we are now able to bring larger format work in house, where previously we had to outsource it. This is hugely advantageous in time savings for us and our customers."

Tekcel's E Series offers a choice of bed sizes but all incorporate several features designed specifically for high production work. The series utilises a ball leadscrew technology for superior durability compared to rack and pinion systems, and Centre Signs also benefits from the new router's powerful high frequency 10hp HSD spindle motor and 20hp vacuum bed. These contribute to consistently high accuracy and repeatability, ideal for Centre Signs' busy trade service. Standard on the E Series is an 18 tool capacity Automatic Tool Change (ATC) system. ATC systems are sometimes found on other routers, but not with a capacity for 18 tools, which provides further time and labour savings, especially in complex fabrications. The 18 tool capacity enables operators



to set tools for more applications, or to split tools into wet and dry for working with metals and acrylics. This means operators can link metal cutting tools to the automated mist coolant system at the design stage.

The E Series' ATC system is also different from most other ATC systems in that the tools not being used are automatically tucked away. This protects the tools and allows easy access to the router bed from any side.

"The new router is an integral part of our business and I couldn't imagine being without it. We're using it for just about everything, metal and acrylic built up letters, Perspex and aluminium flats, fabricating templates, and stainless and back trays. We just leave it to get on with cutting one job, however complex, while we prepare the next," says Trevor.

The consistent accuracy and performance of Tekcel routers is not just down to the quality of machinery. The industry leading software included with all E Series is also critical, as Huw Davies, Tekcel's Marketing Director, explains:

"ArCAM Insignia from DelCAM is industry leading software in 2 and 3D CNC routing

and is the result of years of research and development for industries such as aeronautical manufacturing, which demands the highest levels of precision. We provide customers with what we consider is the best software to go with the best routers."

The E Series' very useful "cut to mask" feature demonstrates this precision perfectly. It cuts through film on the top side of an acrylic letter and through the acrylic letter itself, but stops before cutting the film on the bottom side of the letter. This holds the material together on the router bed and allows parts to be picked off later, and is especially beneficial when working with very small components that tend to move on the bed if cut all the way through.

Trevor adds, "What we do, we do well and are proud of the high quality of our craftsmanship. Our work has won awards for our customers and with the E Series we expect to produce more award winning work in the future."

Go to www.centresigns.co.uk or tel. 01162 714247 to view examples of Centre Signs' work; more information on Tekcel routers can be found at www.tekcelcnc.com or tel. 01275 342668.

