SABRINA SCHILLING

Improved sheet metal bending – how TRUMPF is powering automation at Steinhuber

The managing directors of S&S Steinhuber GmbH hoped that retrofitting their TruBend 7050 bending machine with TRUMPF's Flex Cell bending automation would give them greater flexibility, efficiency, and a little more independence. They were so impressed that they immediately decided to add another!

It's half past six in the morning in the Steinhuber production hall, and Ferdinand Steinhuber is inspecting parts that have been processed overnight on the TRUMPF TruBend 7050 bending machine equipped with Flex Cell bending automation. He is extremely satisfied and delighted that his brother Gerhard found the perfect solution for entering the world of automated bending. "It's only been a short time, so I don't have any specific figures yet," he says. "But productivity has increased significantly and our delivery times have also become shorter because we can now run unattended night shifts."

Ferdinand Steinhuber (left) managing director of S&S Steinhuber GmbH, is in conversation with Wolfgang Radler (right), product manager at TRUMPF Maschinen Austria, is impressed by the processing quality of the automated TruBend 7050.

Just two weeks after commissioning, the TruBend 7050 with Flex Cell bending automation was fully integrated into production and running at full speed.

It couldn't be more flexible! The Flex Cell can be quickly and easily attached to the TruBend 7050 for automated operation and detached again for use in manual mode.

Why automate? Because reality dictates it!

The brothers Ferdinand and Gerhard Steinhuber don't let the grass grow under their feet. Since founding their sheet metal manufacturing company S&S Steinhuber in Austria in 1997, they have always been known for their spirit of innovation and their boldly, but always judicious, investment in the very latest technologies. "We have now positioned ourselves as a full-service provider in sheet metal processing, always focussing on the current requirements of our customers," explains Ferdinand Steinhuber, who is responsible for the commercial side of the business. His brother Gerhard takes care of production and machinery, which he has steadily expanded in recent years.

"We manufacture lot sizes from one to 100,000 pieces on our six state-of-the-art laser cutting systems and two laser punching machines from TRUMPF," he says and continues: "As lasers are getting faster and faster, we have been thinking about automated bending for quite some time. This allows us to create more efficient processes as well as increasing productivity and manufacturing quality." And Ferdinand adds with a grin: "It makes our customers happy, and of course our technicians are thrilled with modern automated bending systems, which also reduce their workload."

The robot also grips asymmetrical parts reliably, and the ACB angle measuring system ensures perfect angles and process reliability.

The Steinhuber team can program simple parts in about an hour.

With the Flex Cell bending automation, Steinhuber increases productivity and shortens delivery times by enabling unattended night shifts. Skilled technicians can be deployed more flexibly.

Simply get started and be amazed

When the entrepreneurs first heard about TRUMPF's flexible, retrofittable Flex Cell bending automation, they waited until

2024, when it was made available with the ACB angle measuring system. "The issue of processing quality had been causing us some headaches when it came to automated bending," admits Ferdinand Steinhuber. "We weren't prepared to compromise on this, so almost all of our bending machines are equipped with the ACB angle measuring system. We are huge fans, because ACB guarantees consistently accurate angles and offers a high level of process reliability. Of course, we don't want to do without this in automated processing either."

In September 2024, the time had come. One of the company's existing TruBend 7050 bending machines was fitted with a Flex Cell, and the Steinhubers were over the moon. "After just two weeks, the machine was firmly integrated into our production and really started picking up the pace," says Gerhard Steinhuber, adding: "It quickly became clear that the Flex Cell was the ideal solution for us from a cost-benefit perspective."

Reason enough for Ferdinand and Gerhard Steinhuber to decide to order another TruBend 7050 including Flex Cell, which TRUMPF delivered in January 2025. "We managed to significantly automate our bending processes in less than six months," says Ferdinand Steinhuber happily. "This gave us maximum flexibility." This was an important factor for the brothers. "A fully automated bending cell is a major investment, particularly if you're unsure whether you can actually utilise it," explains Gerhard Steinhuber.

Productivity has increased significantly and our delivery times have also become shorter because we can now run unattended night shifts.

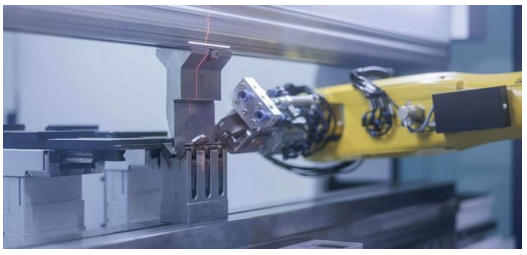
Ferdinand Steinhuber, Managing Director of S&S Steinhuber GmbH

Perfect cost-benefit ratio

However, this is not a problem at Steinhuber, which now bends more than 50 different parts automatically – and the number is constantly growing. "TRUMPF used the online data from the machines to show us that we had already performed almost half a million bends on the two machines after such a short time, which surprised us, but also confirmed that the investment had been worthwhile," says Ferdinand Steinhuber. The Steinhuber team was not deterred by the fact that programming was challenging at first.

"We have a great team here who were enthusiastic about the task and quickly got the hang of it," says Gerhard Steinhuber proudly. For simple parts with one or two bends and a simple contour, the Flex Cell is ready for use in about an hour; for more complicated parts, it takes a little longer, he explains: "The staff must be more highly qualified, but once the system is up and running, it operates smoothly and our skilled technicians can concentrate on other tasks."

After just over six months, Steinhuber is already bending over 50 different parts automatically – and the numbers are rising.



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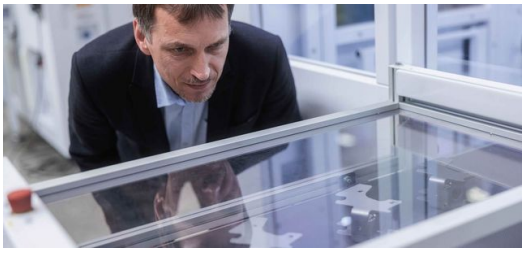

Won over by the quality, Steinhuber invested in a second complete

automated system just a few months after retrofitting a TruBend 7050 with TRUMPF's Flex Cell bending automation.

Fully automated in 25 minutes

Although both automated systems are currently in continuous use, the Steinhubers agree that the option of switching the TruBend 7050 back to manual operation if necessary is an excellent feature. The entire system requires less than ten square metres of space and – this is the real highlight – it can be moved out of the way easily. "So far, we have never disconnected our two Flex Cells", says Ferdinand Steinhuber. "Of course, we learned how to do during the training course. It was a simple process. In just 25°minutes, the automation was disconnected, moved, reconnected and recalibrated."

This flexibility, the reduction in workload for their employees, the more efficient production, and the consistent quality of the parts convinced the Steinhubers of the benefits of Flex Cell. "The system is fast, and the robot consistently performs well and always picks up even asymmetrical parts correctly. Added to this is the ACB angle measuring system, which ensures process reliability – it couldn't be better," summarises Ferdinand Steinhuber.

Large-scale automation in a small space – find out all about the Flex Cell, one of many highlights at Blechexpo: Ultra-fast offline programming with integrated collision monitoring ensures smooth operations without compromise. With a minimum floor space requirement of less than 10 m², you maximise both productivity and flexibility. Small parts automation offers a cost-effective entry point into automated manufacturing. Get your free ticket now and pay us a visit from 21 to 24 October 2025 at the Blechexpo in Stuttgart!

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