

Press Release



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ENTRY-LEVEL TRUMPF SHOWS ITS PUNCHING POWER AT OLSON ELECTRONICS

Olson Electronics, a market leader in the design and manufacture of specialised power distribution units (PDUs), has invested in a new TruPunch 1000 entry-level CNC punching machine to replace manual manufacturing methods. The move is bringing new levels of flexibility and efficiency to this ambitious and highly competitive business.

Founded in 1961, family-run Olson Electronics today employs 27 people at the company's ISO9001-accredited facility in Stanmore, northwest London. By adopting an in-house design and manufacturing strategy, Olson Electronics assures the superiority of its components, development methodologies and quality testing procedures. Many of the PDUs manufactured at Olson Electronics are rack-mounted for use in data centres and other IT applications. Desk-mounted PDUs are also popular, typically for schools, colleges and laboratories. Another important industry is healthcare, in particular mobile trolleys for hospitals that require an electrical supply. In short, the company sells its PDUs to anyone who needs one, even household consumers can acquire them from Amazon or the company's website, with products shipped worldwide.

Alongside over 30 different standard catalogue product ranges - including intelligent PDUs with monitoring and switching capabilities - many of the products manufactured at Olson Electronics are bespoke, which provides important market differentiation and opens doors to new business.

Until recently, the company relied on manual equipment such as power presses, shears and guillotines to produce the enclosures for its PDUs. However, the arrival of Mark Rebeiro as Production Manager 16 months ago confirmed a shift in thinking.

"I had a CNC punching machine at my previous employer and knew the advantages it could bring," he says. "While there was no problem with quality regarding our previous methods of manufacturing enclosures, it was all about gaining efficiencies and being more flexible. The previous process was quite rigid: if the equipment had a 50mm square tool, we got a 50mm square cut-out - that was it. In contrast, investing in a CNC punching machine would allow us to produce any size of cut-out using just one tool."

Olson Electronics shortlisted two CNC punching machines, but the company already had a TRUMPF TruBend 3066 CNC press brake that arrived a few years ago to replace manual sheet-metal bending, a factor that was set to influence the purchase decision.

“It made sense to invest in the TruPunch 1000, as well as TRUMPF tooling and software, to provide brand familiarity across the business,” says Mr Rebeiro. “We now have everything that we need from one supplier.”

The compact entry-level TruPunch 1000 is extremely flexible, cost-effective and quick, processing sheet up to 6.4mm thick at up to 600 strokes per minute. Importantly, innovative Delta Drive dynamics eliminate the need for the sheet and support table to move in the Y axis, while full automation is possible in line with business development.

Installed in April 2022, the TruPunch 1000 at Olson Electronics is predominantly processing galvanised steel or zintec from 0.9 to 1.5mm thick, sometimes up to 2mm. Batch sizes extend from 1-offs up to thousands. All enclosures are programmed using TRUMPF TruTops Boost software. The company creates models in 3D modelling software and exports them into TruTops Boost for automated disassembly. By activating the ‘Boost’ button, Olsen Electronics can take advantage of a quicker process from geometry to NC program, while the software also allows more efficient material use thanks to a shared order pool and ‘Lean Nest’ nesting processor.

“It’s early days in terms of cycle time and process cost reductions, however, these are things we can now measure as we get actual run times from the TruPunch 1000 for evaluation,” explains Mr Rebeiro. “For us, the investment is more about flexibility, particularly with the global supply chain issues that the whole manufacturing industry is currently witnessing. If a component we use regularly is unavailable, we can select an alternative safe in the knowledge that the TruPunch 1000 can produce different cut-out sizes in our enclosures without any need for new tooling. Previously, the components we specified were set in stone because of the tooling we had available.”

TRUMPF offers the largest range of punching tools on the market. Among the innovations are MultiTool, which allows users to perform punching, forming and embossing processes highly productively. Up to 10 different inserts in one tool adapter ensure shorter set-up and tool-change times.

Clearly, the transition from manual equipment to affordable CNC punching technology at Olson Electronics is yielding many benefits.

“Business is currently good; we’re seeing steady growth year-on-year and increasing our headcount in certain areas,” concludes Mr Rebeiro. “In addition, our new TruPunch 1000 has opened up other markets that we are now looking to penetrate.”

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