

Zünd cutter as ideal complement to laser- and waterjet technology.



Josef Zeller

Kurt Forster AG had its origins 100 years ago as a plumbing company. Some 15 years ago, Josef Zeller, the company's CEO, decided to expand into industrial sheet metal forming. Today the company can

offer its customers an extremely wide range of cutting capabilities in materials such as metals, plastics, stone, wood, glass, and composites. At their disposal is a state-of-the-art machine park that fulfills just about any cutting requirements a customer might demand - from laser to waterjet, digital to traditional die-cutting, and even CNC folding & bending. Without any products of their own, the company is strictly a service bureau for industry, trade, construction, architectural and graphics applications, providing cutting services to businesses as well as retail customers in the area.

Ideal complement

„The Zünd Cutter is the ideal complement to our existing equipment and processes“, says Josef Zeller. „Knife-cutting represents a cost-effective alternative to more expensive laser and waterjet technology. In addition, it allows us to diversify and get involved in new applications, for example, cutting of

ancillary tools and aids such as stencils, assembly guides, negatives, etc.“

Expansion of services

Because of the addition of the Zünd, the gamut of services Kurt Forster AG can provide has increased significantly. Today the company uses the machine to cut an impressive array of products, including Forex, Dibond, Polystyrol, rubber (EPDM), fiberglass mats and panels, different types of foam, wood, laminates, PVC, and many other specialty materials. This has led to a much closer relationship with their customers since Forster is now in a position to be their one-stop provider for cutting. Because of this broadening of the company's services, it has become very rare for them to have to turn away any cutting jobs, which has made it that much easier to maintain a steady flow of orders.

Effects on daily operations

The number and diversity of customer inquiries have increased considerably. Because of the exposure to a much wider range of materials, material properties, cutting tasks and requirements, the company's role has shifted from being simply a provider of cutting services to acting as a consultant with the ability to offer comprehensive solutions. The added cutting capabilities have therefore made their task a great deal more varied and interesting.

Consistent with long-term strategies

At the time of purchase, the Zünd cutter was not intended to be in operation 24/7 or even more than one shift; instead the primary focus was to take advantage of the cutter as a complement to the company's existing equipment, i.e. a means of reducing turnaround time by eliminating additional cleanup or drying time typical of other cutting technologies. In the end, the purchase of the Zünd cutter was completely consistent with the company's strategy for self-sufficiency and the ability to provide a complete gamut of cutting services. *„The Zünd cutter has made it possible for us to create a solid foundation for the economic stability of our company and for continuing to improve the services we can provide to our customers“,* states Josef Zeller.

Future challenges

Thanks to their Zünd Cutter, Kurt Forster AG is well prepared for whatever the future may bring. Even so, the variety of material, cutting, and quality demands remain very high. This keeps pushing the envelope further and further in terms of customer expectations. The pressure is therefore on Zünd to keep optimizing and expanding the capabilities of Zünd cutting systems. *„In this we have complete confidence in Zünd, and there is absolutely no doubt in my mind that we have chosen the right partner“,* concludes Josef Zeller.

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Factbox		
Cutting technology	Tools	Material
Cutter	blades and router bits from solid carbide (HMM) or steel (HSS)	Paper, carton, plastics, textile, leather, aluminum, non-ferrous metals, foam-based materials, carbon & glass fiber.
Laser	CO ₂ -high-performance laser	Steel, aluminum.
Waterjet	Abrasive waterjet	Stone, ceramics, glass, steel, plastics, wood.

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