FLEXIBILITY IS THE TOP PRIORITY FOR MACHINERY

The 20,000th HURCO machining center goes to Allgäu-based contract manufacturer ENIG

Contract manufacturer ENIG has relied on HURCO machining centers for its machinery for over 30 years. Customer loyalty and coincidence have now come together. The Allgäu-based company ordered a new VMX 42i and received the 20,000th HURCO machine.

The family-owned company ENIG Gerätebau & Gravuren GmbH has stood for precision work since Hans Entensperger founded the company in 1981. Today, the supplier with 60 employees produces for production machines in the packaging industry and focuses on the food and medical technology industries. A medium-sized supplier has to provide special customer benefits if it wants to have a lasting presence in the highly competitive market. Along with its technical expertise, ENIG features an outstanding combination of marketable prices and quick order turnaround.

„Some days, we receive a request and deliver the batch on the same afternoon," says Managing Director Alexander Entensperger. The trained master mechanical engineer is responsible for supervising production, management and corporate decisions. All ENIG customers are in the vicinity of approximately one hundred kilometers, which makes it possible to transport parts from Eisenberg near Füssen quickly.

From 8 to 24 HURCO machines

State-of-the-art machinery used to make work precise and profitable simultaneously makes the immediate response to customer requests possible. Alexander Entensperger: "On HURCO machines, we can program in an uncomplicated manner according to the drawings and, at the same time, maintain our claim to quality – an invaluable asset." Since 2004, HURCO increased from eight to now 24 systems. And because the machining centers are also durable, ENIG purchases them after the leasing agreements expire. The junior manager puts it succinctly, saying "The machines are very robust and reliable. For us, that is sound business."



The 24th machine at ENIG is simultaneously the 20,000th machine produced by HURCO. The VMX 42i 3 axis machining center makes it possible to carry out any metal cutting application in high-performance mode. Michael Auer, Managing Director of HURCO Germany: “The 20,000th HURCO is here in Germany. For me, that is a clear sign of the significance of Germany and Europe as markets for the machine tool industry.” In his view, this proves the concept of HURCO, because the standard of quality in Germany is particularly high. Alexander Entensperger thinks it is great that the 20,000th machine landed at ENIG. “The operators are happy with the new machine – almost like it is a new car.” And, like a typical businessperson with his investment plan in mind, he adds, “We expect the system to contribute to increasing profitability.”

After two days, new employees are trained on the HURCOs

For the production suppliers, it is essential that the machines be easy to operate. He works in a highly competitive market – in terms of personnel as well. ENIG takes countermeasures by qualifying its employees and positioning itself as a family operation with high-quality machinery and a family-oriented climate compared to large companies. Because there are always bottlenecks when it comes to personnel in the Allgäu region. Many potential job candidates prefer large companies in metropolitan areas. All the more reason for ENIG to rely heavily on machines that are easy to program and operate. “Even employees without specific programming knowledge can be trained quickly by specialists. After two days at the latest, new employees are trained on the HURCOs.”

ENIG delivers 400 different components daily. According to Alexander Entensperger, this is why he and his team would be confronted with new challenges daily. He does not know the more exact purpose of the products he manufactures within the individual, highly complex machines. “That’s how it always goes. We get a drawing of the respective part from the client and manufacture the product according to the drawing.”

Surfaces must be smooth

ENIG provides the material – plastic, stainless steel, brass, aluminum – from its in-house stock. Only rarely does the customer supply special, certified materials. This allows the team to get started with production quickly and the customer does not have to deal with any delays due to purchasing getting involved. The specialization in the food and medical industries require the surfaces to be smooth and easy to clean.

Uncomplicated and fast programming was also top priority for the new investment into the VMX 42i machining center. Alexander Entensperger: “We work in individual parts, not in series production and, therefore it is an advantage if the control system is easy to operate.” In his profession, he has to rely on his machinery. “There must be no downtime.” Particularly during periods of stress, such as in August, a vacation month when half of the team is absent anyway, it would be a catastrophe if a machine failed. The Managing Director knows HURCO’s reliability from experience. “At HURCO, there were never problems, which was perfect for our application area, because programming was very easy and highly precise. Decisive for me is the combination of user-friendliness and every day practicality. And if a wear part ever has to be exchanged or replaced, it arrives the next day.”

Anything can be done on any machine

The head of the company observes that complex parts are increasingly in demand – measured by the order volume, these types of products have increased ten percent to date. And because these parts are more expensive to program, that ten percent is a significant contribution to sales. A five axis machine is used to produce these. “We don’t use it to make any ‘Average Joe’ three-axis parts, but parts like oblique holes or bevels that cannot be machined using the form milling cutter.” The advantage of HURCO machines, says Entensperger, is also that anything can be done on any machine. His employees typically program the drawings directly on the machine – unless they have to produce very complicated parts, for example according to 3D models. Then, the model is read in on the console by the NC control system as a DXF file and machining begins. “The HURCOs take this over directly, and it is very easy to make entries.”

The company sees its business model as sustainable. It is aware of its dependence on trends in the end markets in Germany, Austria, Spain and Brazil: “We are contractors. Our customers trust our performance. But we have to prove ourselves every day; we handle this on both sides as partners with success in mind. We are simply a down-to-earth company, know what we are talking about, and are serious and reliable.” For the daily challenges of the market, this does not change a thing. “Everything that we see today is just a snapshot. Products, quality, delivery times and prices can appear completely differently from day to day.” He also describes his relationship to the main supplier succinctly, but directly: “It works. We wouldn’t be with HURCO anymore if it didn’t. The systems are a pillar to the competitiveness of ENIG.”

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