

BOLLARDS AS REQUESTED

Intuitively operated conversational control system increases flexibility in production

Happy to have produces high-quality bollards from V4A stainless steel in its own CNC production. The bollards are individually assembled from more than 100 individual parts upon customer request. In order to be able to offer this in an economically attractive manner, Happy to have develops all individual parts itself and produces them in CNC machining centers by HURCO.



A business idea and quality requirements that exceed the expectations of its suppliers were the trigger for Michael Braun to establish himself on the market with his own production. He spontaneously closed his

import business and created his own little production for extendable bollards. In an online shop, customers can now assemble “their” bollard. Each one is made from more than 100 individual parts completely by customer request. Thanks to its own production, Happy to have can also manufacture custom-made products, for example, bollards with a thicker wall strength or with another drive system. To ensure he can offer this to customers at an attractive price but still be

economically viable, Braun uses three CNC machining centers by HURCO.

The company has specialized in the manufacture of products that can be quickly assembled from an existing catalog of individual parts. That’s why Michael Braun sought out robust machines with high performance and lots of flexibility. “And ones that did not require much space,” he adds, thinking of his small production hall. Three criteria for which HURCO has the right machines in its portfolio. But what was crucial for the decision was ultimately the intuitively operated control system of the machines by the provider from Pliening, near Munich, Germany. “In the control systems by other manufacturers, the first impression was already very complex,” Michael Braun remembers, thinking back to the initial phase. A YouTube video on the conversational control system by HURCO aroused his interest and after a visit to the booth of the machine tool manufacturer at AMB 2014, his mind was made up.



All HURCO machines are equipped with the “Max 5” conversational control system. Its high-performance WinMax CNC control software simplifies the programming. The control system is self-explanatory, ensuring that a short introduction is enough to cover the functionality. Trained employees are also quickly in a position to work with the control system. This greatly reduces the

expenditure of time when programming or reprogramming. In order to be able to take advantage of the full performance of the machine, Braun and his wife, together with whom he runs the company, visited the HURCO training center in Verl. There they watched application engineers at work and benefited from their experience. They then tried them out themselves and gained their own experience – until the processes were perfect, simple and cost-effective, remembers Sabrina Braun: “So good and secure that we were able to convey them to our first employees.”



The prototypes that Braun produced on his first purchase – the VMX 10i starter model by HURCO – already proved to be highly promising. He quickly realized that he was able to produce at a price that would be accepted on the market and do so at a quality that he could not import in this manner. In this way, an extendable bollard for the protection of driveways, parking spaces or similar areas was made from V4A stainless steel with an LED warning light. In a housing enclosed against dirt and water, there is a 10 bar lift cylinder which

works at temperatures from minus 30 to plus 80 degrees Celsius. The bollard is equipped for 80,000 cycles without a maintenance interval and can be installed by the customer himself.

When asked about the comparably expensive stainless steel, Michael Braun answers in his very own way: “The customer should be happy to have the bollard – that’s why the company is called ‘Happy to have’.” With the right tools on a HURCO, processing of the material is no problem: The construction in conjunction with the control system as well as neat programming allow the workpieces to be cost-effectively metal cut and for high-quality parts to be produced. After all, it is not complex parts, but solid, robust components that are being produced. Ones that do, however, have to precisely fit, explains Tobias Hillebrand, operator at Happy to have.

The team at Happy to have has now grown to eight employees and more than 85,000 components for bollards are created each year in four different configurations on the machining centers by HURCO. Braun was able to implement the vision of manufacturing high-quality, but easy-to-install bollards for parking spaces, driveways and garage entrances and to keep the distribution channels narrow. He is called up by architects, planning offices, gardeners and landscapers or even homeowners, explains Braun. “I started to produce myself because I want to offer high quality at a good price. And it is precisely that which I am able to do in Germany with my idea and the machines by HURCO.”

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