WML Engineering Buys Worlds First DECO 20s

WML Engineering Ltd has always been an innovative company looking to progress in the continually competitive UK subcontract market – so when TORNOS launched the new DECO 20s at EMO, the Swansea based company was on hand buy the Worlds first DECO 20s.

Predominantly a sliding head lathe machine shop, WML serves the medical, electronic, automotive and general subcontract sectors. The company felt it needed to alter its manufacturing strategy to improve its competitiveness in the UK's continually changing marketplace – with this in mind it bought the new DECO 20s.

WML Director Jason Meir comments: "The market is always changing and we found our machine shop was suited to batch runs of 500 plus, the new DECO 20s enables us to meet the needs of the small batch runs from 20, 50, 100 parts upwards. The changing marketplace meant we were missing out on small jobs that often came with larger contracts, this will not happen with the DECO 20s in place".

The DECO 20s was procured by WML not only because of its ability to suit the needs of WML's changing customer base but for its en-

hanced tool setting, control option and machine rigidity. This combination provides WML with a significantly improved machine set-up time. The new TORNOS control designed in conjunction with Fanuc has proven a major selling point to WML. Mr Meir continues: "The DECO 20s has the option of switching the control from the TORNOS TB-DECO programming software to the industry standard ISO code – and this makes the machine very appealing. The TB-DECO configuration will enable the machine to interface with our current range of TORNOS DECO 20a machines and allow us to programme offline and connect the machine via our Ethernet set-up. Whilst the ISO set-up on the new Fanuc 30i control enables us to become more flexible and competitive with the market needs. If a job is required immediately, the ISO set-up enables us to program from raw on the shop floor. For applications requiring batch runs of 1,000 plus we would use the TB-DECO as it fits the application much better".

Developed from the [a-line] series of machines, the DECO 20s has been designed to maximise set-up capacities and flexibility in the range of mid-complex parts. An aspect that TORNOS has paid consideration to with regards to set-up time is the tooling. Mr Meir continues: "The power tooling on the new DECO 20s is very easy to bolt-on and bolt-off. This is ideal for setting up batch runs of 20, 30 or a 100 parts. The [a-line] really is the all singing and all dancing machine that is built for power, strength and it can do anything. However, the new [s-line] uses the same philosophy of power, strength and rigidity. It enhances our the ability to set-up a machine for an emergency batch of 20 or 50 parts".

The short set-up times of the new DECO 20s now enables WML to offer customers a sample service. "The DECO 20s is configured with less complexity than the [a-line] of machines; however the [s-line] machine can produce a wide part of the components that the [a-line] can manufacture. The [s-line] doesn't have a number of characteristics that are on the [a-line] of machine such as the balanced turning feature and independent feed rate drilling. On a longer batch run these are key performance variables, but we want the machine for what it was predominantly designed to do – short batch runs with short set-up times. We now have the [a-line] of machines for batch runs of 500 plus and the [s-line] for the small batches from 20 upwards. With the DECO 20s we now have the capability to competitively meet the needs of the changing marketplace", says Mr Meir.

Despite being the first company in the world to purchase the new DECO 20s, WML has no doubts regarding the capability of the machine. "I have full confidence in the machine; it has the same barfeed technology and interface, wireless program transfer technology and TB-DECO technology as the current [a-line] machines. The axes of machining are similar but slightly less, so I have full confidence in my purchase. We went through our requirements with TORNOS engineers and the machine has been configured to suit the market we plan to attack. The [s-line] is so modular that we can add bolt-on after bolt-on if we require – but we have the "crème de la crème" [a-line] machines for the purpose of highly complex work", concludes Mr Meir.

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