

# PGM Increases Productivity with Lights-Out Manufacturing



(l-r) Todd W. Hockenberger, Vice President; Dr. Michael J. Hockenberger, CEO/President; Jeffrey C. Hockenberger, Manager of Manufacturing; Douglas W. Cauwels, Director of Finance and Human Resources, Precision Grinding & Manufacturing.

A family-owned business founded in 1967, Precision Grinding and Manufacturing (PGM) has built their operations on full-service, customer-focused manufacturing by supplying difficult to source parts and assemblies, engineering, and manufacturing and program management. PGM has also shown significant growth from an initial 2 employees to currently 166 with gross sales in excess of \$20mm annually. According to Dr. Michael Hockenberger, President and CEO of PGM, this growth has resulted with the "need to increase productivity and replace obsolete technology." PGM's core competencies in manufacturing contribute to several industries including products for medical use, aerospace, military, automotive, aviation and business system markets.

Dr. Hockenberger explains, "we seek strategic partnerships to add our manufacturing expertise early in the product development process and to provide Six Sigma quality and value-added solutions to our customers." Our motivated, highly-developed employees use leading edge technology to deliver innovative, timely, and cost effective products and services." With two highly advanced facilities in Rochester, New York and Manchester, New Hampshire, PGM offers multiple manufacturing processes including new product development, vertical and horizontal machining, assembly, grinding, sheet metal, welding, painting, turning and tooling.

In order for continued growth and to increase efficient production, Dr. Hockenberger states, "we needed to evaluate

whether we continued using vertical CNC machines or venture into horizontal machining." After analysis, PGM selected horizontal CNC machines with pallets and pallet changers from Kitamura Machinery of U.S.A., Inc. Hockenberger states the reason these particular Kitamura solutions were chosen was because of "reduced set-up time, lights-out manufacturing, and increased productivity. We can load and unload parts while the machine is running and the improved technology offers added benefits with high-pressure coolant, probing, and laser tool settings."

PGM has four Kitamura horizontal machines including the MYCENTER-HX400iF 400mm horizontal machine with six pallets accompanied by an eight-pallet 400mm horizontal machine. These Kitamura solutions offer 13,000 RPM spindle speed, high-pressure coolant (1000 PSI versus 300 PSI), 150-piece tool storage capacity, and eight-pallet capability.

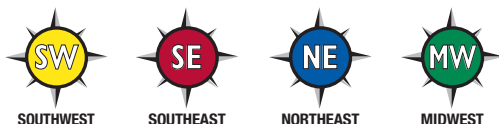


Pallet Changer on the Mycenter HX400iF

Add these to the other Kitamura standard vertical and standard APC horizontal machines and the result has been one of increased overall performance.

Dr. Hockenberger adds, "Previous vertical mill process of machining aluminum that took almost two hours is now completed in twenty minutes. These Kitamura upgrades

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**Kitamura Mycenter HX400iF**

compliment PGM's multi-site, customer-focused, and full service contract manufacturing. Additionally, there have been reductions in set-up times as well as load/unload time. This substantial decrease can be attributed to Kitamura's faster spindle speeds, high-pressure coolant and better chip removal processes."

"PGM constantly strives for continuous improvement and cutting-edge technology. Couple these manufacturing goals of PGM with the latest machining technology from Kitamura, and PGM has seen an overall increase in performance and productivity thus allowing for a competitive advantage as well as an increase in sales and net income," states Dr. Hockenberger.

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**Part manufactured at PGM on  
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