



TruBend 7000 offers a "revolution" in operator comfort and productivity

Better by design

Trumpf Ltd managing director Hartmut Pannen highlighted new products and the underlying design philosophy at a pre-Christmas Open House briefing. Andrew Allcock was there

The event at Trumpf's Luton headquarters followed the parent company's attendance at the EuroBLECH sheet metal exhibition where, Mr Pannen revealed, the company sold over 190 machines – the company also displayed eight new machines: "the largest number of new machines ever displayed by Trumpf." Two of the machines launched at EuroBLECH had been brought direct from Hanover to Luton, with these the centrepiece of the Open House.

"The response has been surprisingly good, with the quality of discussions very good," the managing director noted. "Customers do have concrete projects and the event concluded with sales of

over £500,000. In our sector, industry is continuing to invest."

The two new machines shown at the Open House were the Trumpf Trulaser 3030 NEW – its best selling laser profiler, now in a new version – and the Trubend 7036 press brake (360 kN, approx 36 tonnes), one of the members of the 7000 series, the other being the 7080 (800 kN, approx 80 tonnes).

DIN A3 SIZE PARTS

The TruBend Series 7000 is primarily designed for the production of parts that are no bigger than DIN A3 (297 by 420 mm). This size of component is particularly common in the production of

automation and electrical equipment.

Following the launch of this range at the recent EuroBLECH sheet metalworking show, 23 of these machines were sold from the stand.

Novelties of the 1020 mm length, 7026 machine are back gauges made from light carbon fibre (fingers are hardened steel); high speed and acceleration of the pressure bar are delivered by a new low-maintenance gearless direct drive, with the need for crowning completely eliminated; while height- and angle-adjustable support surfaces, a pivoting control panel and seated operation the TruBend 7000 press brake are intended to provide the best

possible working conditions for any operator with all bending stations easily reached from the seated position.

The TruLaser 3030 NEW is equipped with an energy-saving 5 kW CO₂ laser for cutting sheet up to 25 mm thick, and instead of a three-phase servo motor, the long X axis is powered by a gearless motor featuring very high torque. Y and Z are driven by wear-free, non-lube linear motors. These changes increase simultaneous axis speed from 85 m/min on the original to 140m/min.

The FastLine process is now also a standard feature, ensuring a smooth transition between piercing and cutting and so reducing processing time for thin sheet by an average of 20 per cent.

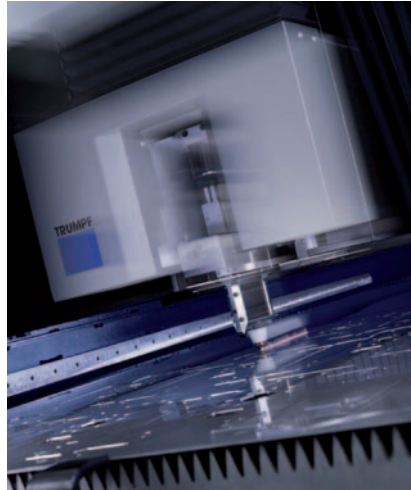
A universal cutting head suits the entire range of sheet thicknesses – before up to three cutting heads had to be exchanged. And there's a collision system which allows for the head to be repositioned quickly, should one occur.

If poor quality material reaches the machine, at the push of a button the appropriate cutting parameters can be selected ensuring maximum material usage and continued production. There's also a reduced floor space requirement due to the ability to position the pallet changer perpendicular to the machine - installation space is reduced by about 20 per cent.

Energy efficiency is another feature: for example, when the laser is not cutting, the radial fan goes into standby mode to save power.

But these machines and their design features and benefits are the result of a design approach that Mr Pannen was keen to underline. "Trumpf's approach is to reduce the cost per part; increased productivity does this, but any productivity gain must not be more than the cost of technology. We are very sensitive about this. With our machines cost per part always goes down, and does so with each new generation, as it has with these two new machines."

To achieve this, you can reduce manufacturing cost and the level of technology, he said, but then you have a compromise between cost per part and



The TruLaser 3030 NEW offers a no-compromise approach to reducing cost per part

part quality or flexibility. "Our approach is to deliver better cost per part without such compromise."

DELIVERING THE PROMISE

Turning to the new laser machine, Mr Pannen highlighted some of the various features that deliver on these objectives. The reduction in floor space, for example allows companies to earn more turnover per square metre. "Normally the compromise to deliver this would be that a machine cannot be automated or cannot be automated in a flexible manner. This machine allows both." As a result, customer reaction and sales have been good, he said, while sales of machines with automation are

increasing. "We think we hit the nail on the head with this concept."

Moving to the press brake, the managing director offered that this machine offers almost twice the productivity offered by larger machines. But this is only sensible for smaller components, he stressed. "If we increased the speed of stroke in cases where the parts are much heavier, say 10, 20 or 50 kg, it wouldn't make sense because users need time to handle such parts. Conversely, for smaller work productivity can be increased."

However, if this was all, the result would be a very tired operator, it was offered. So the other part of the package was to "revolutionise the ergonomics on the press brake". Indeed, as Mr Pannen put it, after eight hours, the operator feels very comfortable – "almost as if he had spent eight hours watching DVDs". To achieve this, chair height, foot position, table position, light intensity, angle of control panel, all of these are adjustable – "It is unheard of in the sheet metal industry that the human interface has been considered in such detail. At EuroBLECH, customers were stunned by this approach."

Importantly, he went on to underline that the average age of press brake operators in the industry is "relatively high" and that it is not possible to attract young people to such work. On the other hand: "Young people will love this press brake," the managing director stated □.

Trumpf focus in the UK

Hartmut Pannen emphasised that Trumpf, Luton is not a sales and service operation but rather a service and sales unit. And on the service side, the company is still "very busy". Customers for its services include those that do not necessarily have time to improve their shopfloor organisation or processes, or who do not have time to implement management software. "Although there is a downturn, we are sure we will be as busy as ever, because 80 per cent of our workforce is in our service side."

More frequent customer events in Luton have also been introduced over the past year, bringing customers in to update them on machine technology or on tooling developments, for example.

The introduction of finance packages is likely another initiative that will see light of day this year.