

SUPERSIZE LASER BIG PRODUCER FOR STEEL SERVICE CENTER



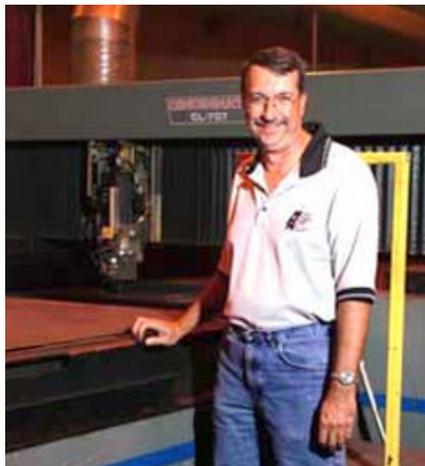
"Supersize" CINCINNATI CL-707 makes fast work of large parts with twin 8'x20' pallets and high-speed linear-motor drive.

Responding to market demand for value-added shape cutting, J. Rubin and Co. in 2001 installed the service center industry's first high-speed, super-size laser - a CINCINNATI CL-707 laser cutting center with 10,000 ipm linear-motor drive and twin 8' x 20' pallets.

The massive laser replaced two conventional 6' x 10' lasers for the Rockford, IL steel service center, took over processing of longer parts previously plasma- or flame-cut, and boosted productivity by making possible long periods of unattended cutting.

The higher cutting speeds and greater cutting hours allow J. Rubin to run significantly more parts per week on the one laser than it previously did on the two machines, according to Greg Doyle, Operations Manager. It has realized greater part processing flexibility and enhanced its value-added capabilities, while reducing operator labor costs.

Part capacity was the critical factor in selecting the largest model of the CL-707 laser. "We were flame-cutting some plate parts 170" and 180" long, but our customer wanted better edge quality," says Doyle. "We do a lot of larger parts that other people can't - not with this kind of edge quality. It's definitely helped us in our sales." Most of the work involves shapes and contours, at which the laser excels with its edge quality and multi-axis precision, according to Doyle.



Greg Doyle, Operations Manager next to CINCINNATI CL-707 Series Laser System

The tremendous capacity of the 8' x 20' pallets also opened up opportunities for unattended processing. "We usually run two eight-hour shifts, but depending on the work load and type of parts, we sometimes run the laser 24 hours with one shift unmanned," he says. "We can get an extra eight hours with no problem." In fact, the company has run unmanned through the weekend. With the two shuttle tables, the laser completes one and automatically switches to the next. "We can set up on a Friday night and run all the way through Sunday," he notes.

Specializing in plate material for the construction equipment, agriculture, and garden equipment industries, the service center mainly runs 3/8"-1/2" mild steel, plus some plate up to 3/4", and some stainless and aluminum. "We try to go with the biggest plate size possible so we can get the most parts on it," says Doyle.

"Even on small parts, we'll utilize a 240" blank where quantities permit." Twenty-foot plates are a standard size, so the large pallets lets J. Rubin go straight to laser cutting without having to cut down a plate into smaller sizes.

High-speed linear-motor drives shorten positioning and processing times, and make a strong impression on customers. "The machine has been a good salesman," says Doyle. "It definitely gets noticed and remembered."

The outstanding reliability record of CINCINNATI's linear-motor-drive system, on the industry's largest installed base of linear-drive machines, satisfied any concerns J. Rubin might have had about the new technology. The

company has experienced no drive problems in two years of two- and three-shift operation with the machine, notes Doyle.

Rubin's service area covers large areas of Illinois, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Iowa. Besides Rockford, it has operations in Horicon, Wisconsin and Plymouth, Minnesota. The CINCINNATI laser processes work for all three facilities. "We cover a big area and we found a laser with big area. It's been a good fit."