

Rittal Automation System Delivers Major Commercial Benefits to Peterborough-based Panel Builders

When the directors of Peterborough-based panel builders Pneumatechnique Ltd were looking at ways to improve efficiency and offer better production consistency they turned to Rittal and its automation systems for switchgear construction.

Pneumatechnique's aim was to find ways to lower both overheads and operational costs.

One of the main issues the company faced was the underemployment of their highly skilled labour force. This had become obvious during an evaluation of work practices that considered how they were meeting customer demand, and how the company in turn made demands on production as an "internal customer".

"The interesting point is, that in conducting the review, we became commercially aware of the overheads and the opportunity costs inherent in our working practices and where savings could be made," says Jim Venters, managing director of Pneumatechnique.

"There is no advantage in employing a highly qualified workforce to do basic tasks like drilling holes, which is what was happening,"

Following a detailed assessment and recommendations made by Rittal's expert team, the decision was taken by Pneumatechnique to install a Rittal Automation Perforex CNC machine.

Rittal's team was able to advise on both the benefits that would be realised by installing the system, and potential limitations. It was quickly identified that the capital expenditure could clearly be outweighed by the cost savings and the Perforex installation became a "no-brainer" as part of the investment project.

Adam Wilson, production manager at Pneumatechnique, advises: "The Perforex System has improved the quality, consistency and speed of our output, which has obviously been hugely beneficial for customers. A project that was taking four hours can now be completed in just 20 minutes and with a better finish!

"There are many other benefits too. Quality and consistency is guaranteed and a batch is always the same. Whether it be one panel or 100, we are confident every single one will be identical.

"Specials and one-offs can now be delivered as standard, providing options and flexibility to the customer. And we can now do it all in-house for them in one operation. Our productivity improves the delivery timescale not just to the customer, but to us an internal customer too.

"This project has seen a lot of investment not only in money but in time; it has involved a great deal of hard work. The final result is an excellent fit for us and we are now offering customers something they can't do."

As far as future expansions go, Adam advises that, "the Perforex system has opened up a number of new routes to market. What's more this system looks like it will offer us the opportunity to go way beyond the targets we have set for it."

Further information at www.rittal.co.uk and www.friedhelm-loh-group.com or on twitter

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Image

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Notes

Rittal, headquartered in Herborn, Hessen, Germany, is a leading global provider of solutions for industrial enclosures, power distribution, climate control and IT infrastructure, as well as software and services. Systems made by Rittal are deployed across a variety of industrial and IT applications, including vertical sectors such as the transport industry, power generation, mechanical and plant engineering, IT and telecommunications. Rittal is active worldwide with 10,000 employees and 58 subsidiaries.

Its broad product range includes infrastructure solutions for modular and energy-efficient data centres with innovative concepts for the security of physical data and systems. Leading software providers Eplan and Cideon complement the value chain, providing interdisciplinary engineering solutions, while Rittal Automation Systems offers automation systems for switchgear construction.

Founded in Herborn in 1961 and still run by its owner, Rittal is the largest company in the Friedhelm Loh Group. The Friedhelm Loh Group operates worldwide with 18 production sites and 78 international subsidiaries. The entire group employs more than 11,500 people and generated revenues of around €2.2 billion in 2014. For the seventh time in succession, the family business has won the accolade "Top German Employer" in 2015.

Further information can be found at www.rittal.com and www.friedhelm-loh-group.com.

