

THE DUNCAN DISPATCH

JUNE 2009 EDITION

The Value of American Manufacturing

Commentary by Gary Weldon (Operations Manager)



On a cool Monday morning in late May, I stood soberly on the cemetery lawn as Taps played hauntingly from the distance. The silence that followed was shattered by the unified shots of the seven uniformed riflemen standing nearby. I stared at the flag, hanging heavily at half-mast, as I considered the pain and loss that this ceremony represented.

I was one of many who had gathered there that day to pay tribute to those brave American soldiers who have fought and died for the cause of freedom and for the lofty ideals of our beloved country. This

Memorial Day service was a somber reminder of the sacrifice that has been and continues to be made so that we can experience the many benefits of liberty and its corresponding prosperity. It also reminded me that things of real value come with significant cost.

In the manufacturing industry, the association between Cost and Value is often misunderstood. When talking about tooling and machinery, for example, it is important to consider that lower cost does not always mean greater value. Lower purchase cost only reflects the short term outlay. It does not reflect the long term expense or overall impact of that purchase. A wise buyer needs to carefully consider all factors to make sure that they are getting the best overall value (Total Cost of Ownership).

While off-shore manufacturing has become increasingly popular in our industry, there are inherent risks, difficulties and hidden expenses that are often overlooked. One tooling importer recently shared with me his constant struggle with poor communication, unsatisfactory quality control, extended lead times and generally poor craftsmanship. Truth be told, these things are very costly. By the time the imported tool or machine hits the factory floor, the initial costs can be eclipsed by the expense of delays, reworks and extended debug. Then when the rigors of production reveal poor workmanship and overall quality, the cost of down-time, repairs and/or replacement will need to be added as well. When these post-sale costs are considered, American made products often boast the greatest value.

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One should also consider that American made products are most often made in clean, safe environs, by valued employees who often receive benefits such as paid vacation, Workman's Compensation, health insurance and retirement. They are made by educated, hard working people. They are made by our neighbors, friends and family. In contrast, many exporting nations greedily exploit both their land and their people in order to offer products at unfairly low prices. The reality is that the impact of our purchases goes far beyond just mere dollars and cents.

In order to get the best overall value when making a tooling or machinery purchase, there are several key areas that should be considered. They include: initial cost, past vendor performance, project lead time, vendor capabilities, post-sale support and service as well as long-term equipment reliability. When these simple, but important, criteria are part of the decision, the likelihood of receiving the greatest value significantly increases.

"American Made" always has and continues to be synonymous with Quality and Value. **Duncan Tool, Inc.** is proud to be an American manufacturer producing quality tooling and machinery at a great value. ▀

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Product Spotlight

Duncan Tool, Inc. recently designed and manufactured this **Dual Station Drilling Machine** for a Southern Ohio manufacturer. This stand-alone machine is part of a comprehensive fabrication cell for an automotive sub-assembly.

This compact machine runs two different tubular parts, each with unique drilling configurations, with zero tooling changeover. It features a welded steel frame, Omron® Programmable Relay Controller, Sugino® drilling units and Norgren® pneumatics.

Duncan Tool has many years experience in designing and building custom machinery and equipment providing turn-key systems, including full controls, tooling, framing, hydraulics and pneumatics. Our specialty is single and multi-station forming, cutting and assembly machines. You can check out many more applications at www.DuncanTool.com.

Did you know...

...that Duncan Tool has CMM inspection capability? Our **Mitutoyo Bright 507** Coordinate Measuring Machine is an integral part of our standard Quality Control program. It can also be used for Reverse Engineering, utilizing its CAD-integrated profile scanning capability. This versatile machine holds up-to-date certified calibration and is located in our climate-controlled inspection room.



Feedback

We value your input. Won't you take a minute and let us know how we can better serve you?

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