

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Pulverman Thrives with Prima Laser Systems

Pulverman Precision Metal Components, Dallas, PA, was founded in the 1940's as a machine/fabrication shop that primarily serviced the local industry's machine and HVAC requirements. Randy Mark, president, purchased Pulverman in September, 1999. At that time, the company had only eight employees, a small 9,600-square-foot production facility, and sales revenues below \$500,000 per year. However, with this acquisition, Pulverman's financial future was about to change dramatically.

Mark transformed the company into a contract manufacturer servicing such diverse industries as trucking and transportation, HVAC, medical cabinetry, construction, computer doors, industrial components, appliance, food processing, agriculture, among others. In 2004, the company moved into its new 80,000-square-foot facility with over 160 employees. And sales revenues have soared to in excess of \$20-million per year.

Company Growth & Engineering

"Through our emphasis on contract manufacturing and diversity, we've been able to grow our business," explains Mark. "We've experienced double digit growth every year except in 2009. We have evolved into a multi-million dollar company that provides our customers with laser cutting, fabricating, machining, stamping, and powder coating capabilities. Our highly trained and experienced engineering group provide our customers with technical expertise, product improvement ideas, and new product development support. Through our product improvement strategy, we



In order to expand its laser cutting capabilities, Pulverman purchased a Prima Platino 2D laser system with a 10-shelf TowerServer in 2004. The Platino is equipped with lasers developed and produced at Prima Industrie in laser powers ranging from 3000 to 5000W. The laser cuts a broad range of materials and thicknesses with speed and precision without the need for manual adjustments.

can offer design alternatives for parts and assemblies to improve or reduce cost of an existing configuration. Our modern software tools – including AutoCAD and 3-D modeling – give us the opportunity to share information

"The Prima Platino lasers run three shifts a day, five days a week – and partial shift on weekends. Considering what we do to them, they hold up very well."

electronically in a way that is beneficial to our customers. We also offer computer-manufacturing systems for our customers and we are EDI and capacity planning capable."

Prima Platino Lasers

In order to expand its laser cutting capabilities, Pulverman purchased a Prima Platino 2D laser system with a 10-shelf TowerServer in 2004. The Platino is equipped with lasers developed and produced at Prima Industrie in laser powers ranging from 3000 to 5000W. The laser cuts a broad range of materials and thicknesses with speed and precision without the need for manual adjustments.

Platino's laser cutting head gives users a choice of a 10-inch focal length in addition to the standard 5-inch and 7.5-inch lenses. The 10-inch lens enhances the application flexibility by



According to Ken Yermal, engineer, while lights out automation is not a major part of Pulverman's current production, the Prima Platino lasers have helped the company trim labor costs. With two people, the company is able to run all three Platino lasers efficiently, and have parts that are already out of the skeleton and ready to move to the next operation. In most cases, no deburring operations are needed.

“We are very impressed with the Prima lasers and the company’s service. Back in 2004, I never imagined having three Prima lasers when we bought the first. Today, I don’t believe we would ever buy a different brand. We are quite satisfied. From a service standpoint, there is a high level of responsiveness and a very good relationship that is very important to us. The interaction is there. We also run our machines very hard, as evidenced in our first Platino, which has over 46,000 hours of run time.”

increasing the depth of focus and enlarging the spot diameter for high and uniform cut quality of thick stainless (5/8 inch), thick aluminum (1/2 inch) and thick mild steel (1 inch).

Offering a compact footprint along with a Cartesian, Cantilever structure that provides three-sided access, Platino is a cost-effective machine that is easy to operate and quick to program. Its unique stonecast frame reduces vibration and increases stiffness by about 4 times compared to cast iron and about 6 times compared to welded frames. Its low heat conductivity results in much higher thermal stability compared to traditional cast or steel frames.

TowerServer

Prima’s 10-shelf TowerServer allows easy loading/unloading for blanks and processed sheets. It has an elevator for loading and unloading the pallets on and off the tower, and features single sheet separating, control systems, and sheet reference. “We tend to run medium thickness, longer-running parts on the 4000W Platino laser with the TowerServe,” explains Ken Yermal, engineer. “We run the parts that repeat through the shop every single week.”

In 2006, Pulverman purchased a second Platino laser with a load/unload. “We really like

the flexibility of the load/unload,” says Yermal. “It gives us the ease of loading and unloading sheets, just like we do on the large tower. All we have to do is touch a few buttons to unload a scrap sheet and load a new sheet. With the load/unload, we can just load the material that we are running at that moment.”

Pulverman purchased a stand alone Platino 4000W laser in 2008. “We run our heavy plate on this machine,” explains Yermal. “It is used for long running jobs that are the same heavy material.”

The latest Platino laser, also 4000W, was installed in January 2010. It replaced the original Prima laser that is used with the TowerServer.

Workhorses

According to Yermal, nearly 50% of all the product Pulverman produces goes through the Platino lasers. “A lot of our lighter material and parts that are not very intricate tend to go through the turrets, and anything that is heavier, has intricate contours, and takes more time to process ends up on the lasers,” explains Yermal. “The Prima Platino lasers run three shifts a day, five days a week – and partial shift on weekends. Considering what we do to them, they hold up very well.”

“We are very impressed with the Prima lasers and the company’s service,” adds Randy Mark, president. “Back in 2004, I never



Prima’s 10-shelf TowerServer allows easy loading/unloading for blanks and processed sheets. It has an elevator for loading and unloading the pallets on and off the tower, and features single sheet separating, control systems, and sheet reference.

imagined having three Prima lasers when we bought the first. Today, I don’t believe we would ever buy a different brand. We are quite satisfied. From a service standpoint, there is a high level of responsiveness and a very good



In 2006, Pulverman purchased a second Platino laser with a load/unload. According to Yermal, the flexibility of the load/unload gives Pulverman the ease of loading and unloading sheets, just like on the large tower. All the operator needs to do is touch a few buttons to unload a scrap sheet and load a new sheet. With the load/unload, the company can just load the material that it is running at that moment.

continued from page 15

relationship that is very important to us. The interaction is there. We also run our machines very hard, as evidenced in our first Platino, which has over 46,000 hours of run time.”

“When we purchased the first Prima laser, we experienced very good results from the machine,” says Yermal. “We also experienced a long run of reliability. If there were any

“When we purchased the first Prima laser, we experienced very good results from the machine. We also experienced a long run of reliability. If there were any problems with the machine, the service was very reliable...and a tech arrived here the same day or the next day.”

problems with the machine, the service was very reliable...and a tech arrived here the same day or the next day. We were never down for a long period of time, and we developed a very good working relationship with Prima. In addition, on several occasions, Prima offered to train our operators in how to take a look at our cut quality and identify what the problems are and

what parameters need to be adjusted. When we employ new operators or start to cut new material, I give a call to Prima and they have been very helpful.”

Labor Savings

While lights out automation is not a major part of Pulverman’s current production, the Prima Platino lasers have helped the company trim labor costs. “Each shift, we have one operator and one helper running three machines,” explains Yermal. “The skilled operator is responsible for anything that needs to be done on the machine, such as beam alignment, and he oversees what is being run on the machine, lines up what jobs are next, etc. His helper will pull the parts off, unload the skeleton, get the next sheet ready for processing, etc. With two people, we are able to run all three Platino lasers efficiently, and have parts that are already out of the skeleton and ready to move to the next operation. In most cases, the cut quality is running good, and we don’t need to perform deburring operations...the parts move directly to the press brakes.”



Nearly 50% of all the product Pulverman produces goes through the Platino lasers. The Prima Platino lasers run three shifts a day, five days a week – and partial shift on weekends.

Expansion

Pulverman is currently adding a 3,000 square-foot office expansion to its facility to consolidate offices and to better centralize departments. “We are creating a better office environment for our entire management group – production, engineering, purchasing, and sales – that will help us operate more efficiently. Plans to add 3,000 square feet of additional manufacturing space in later 2011 are also in the works,” concludes Mark.

“We really like the flexibility of the load/unload. It gives us the ease of loading and unloading sheets, just like we do on the large tower. All we have to do is touch a few buttons to unload a scrap sheet and load a new sheet. With the load/unload, we can just load the material that we are running at that moment.”



The latest Platino laser, also 4000W, was installed in January 2010. It replaced the original Prima laser.