



PURCHASE OF AN 'ENGLISHMAN' INCREASES PRODUCTIVITY 30 PERCENT

Gary Wight of Auckland Sheet Metals makes no bones about it; the purchase of a new Swift-Cut plasma cutting table from Machinery House – the 'Englishman' as it's affectionately known in the workshop - has increased business efficiencies by 30 percent.

Mr Wight wonders what they ever did without the machine: "It doesn't get sick, never stops working and every cut is a classy finish," he tells *Engineering News*.

He says the company has been at its current premises for close to 10 years, with most of that in partnership, but the real business evolution has occurred in the past two years when he "went it alone".

"It meant I could invest in machinery," he says, talking about the dissolving of a partnership that had two owners wanting to pull the business in different directions. "The last two years we've been Auckland Sheet Metals – in sole charge – and I've bought new presses, welders, the plasma, vehicles that have made life easier and the result has been more progress in the last little bit than the whole time of being in business prior to that."

And since the change they've "been struggling to keep up. I've made it a focus to buy machinery that keeps the work going while we aren't". The 'Englishman' (a derivative from its country of origin) does exactly that.

He says the plasma machine can be cutting and making parts while his workshop engineers crack on with the welding. "It's actually given us more man power. To make those parts the old fashioned way, with less accuracy, would take hours longer and this machine never stops."

Mr Wight adds that the machine was only just installed before EMEX 2016, but despite it being early days he estimates that the Swift-Cut improves the jobs they are using it for by as much as 30%.

"I wouldn't be without it now," he says, explaining that before to the installation they would have to outsource work, and also rely on other businesses being efficient and delivering to timeframes.

"We can continually change things, tweak things, make things better, and if there are ever any problems we just pick up the phone to Machinery House. It's allowed us in great part to control our own destiny.

"We actually end up making a little bit more money on the side because you become almost a merchant of materials, putting mark up on the material we are buying in as well as making money on cutting the product. The local businesses that use our services have responded so well... the new plasma has such a clean finish, we've got people asking us for more laser cut plates, thinking we are laser cutting it." Business has grown through word of mouth and the quality of the jobs they do has meant Auckland Sheet Metals don't even need a website as they have enough on their plate.

Ten staff do a large range of work; stainless steel to structural steel at former All Black John Kirwan's house. Structural steel is a growth area for the business, thanks to legislation with regard to steel in housing and earthquake regulations. The premises houses a 4m guillotine (up to 8mm thick), 4m press brake (135 tonnes also purchased from Machinery House), band saws



[▶ The new Swift-Cut from Machinery House rips into action.](#)



A press brake, guillotine and other engineering machinery complement the new Swift-Cut plasma cutting table.

Mig and Tig welders, rollers and all the general equipment you'd expect of a good engineering workshop, but the plasma has quickly taken pride of place.

"For our size business it's a perfect fit. It's not top of the market in terms of price and/or function, but it's pretty bloody good and also easy for the staff to handle."

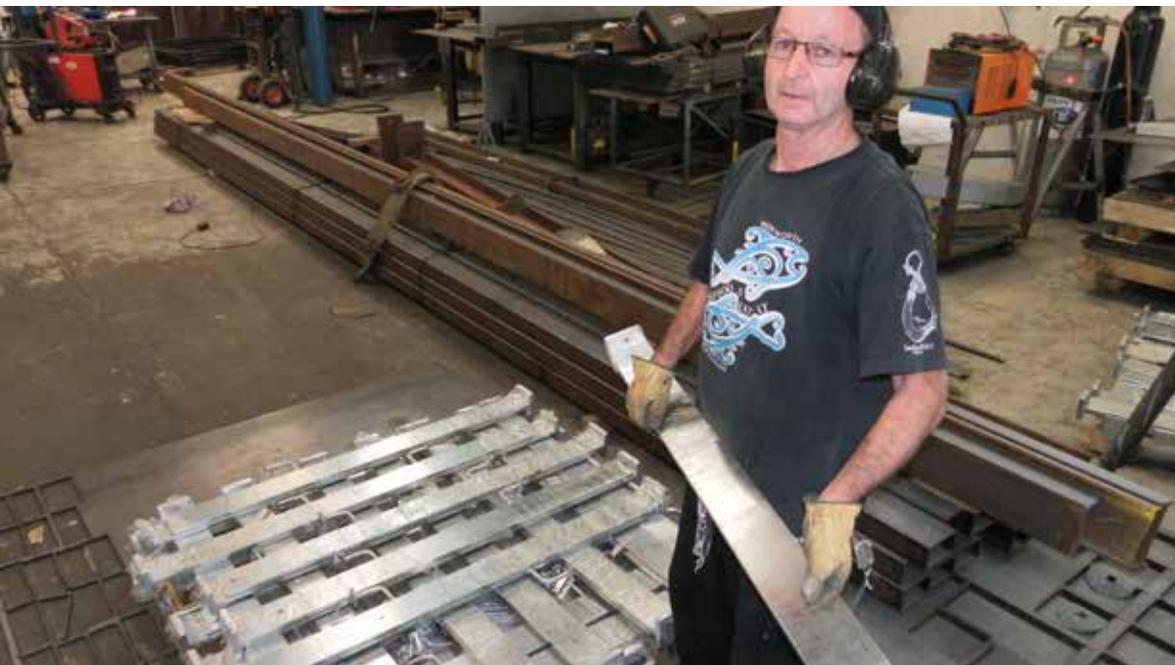
Another staff member is kept busy fulltime draughting and quoting jobs so "we have a bit of a one-stop shop when it comes to that and our customers are dealing with one person through the process.

"Most of the guys are trained and qualified sheet metal workers, which is pretty hard to

say nowadays and that's a feather in our cap," says Mr Wight.

Mr Wight loves the engineering industry, having started work with Morris Sheet Metals in Onehunga as a 15-year-old sweeping the floor. Today, armed with the Englishman and a highly efficient staff and workshop, Auckland's houses crisis will do nothing but add to an increasing workload that already has him eyeing larger premises.

Whether it be residential, commercial, maintenance, structural or repairs, with Auckland Sheet Metals Mr Wight, his team and the Englishman are a cut above the rest. **EN**



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