



Productivity Inc®

Pro • duc • tiv • i • ty

1. doing more with less
2. a key advantage over offshore competition

One of the biggest challenges facing today's manufacturers is the ability to do more with less. Your customers want the highest quality at the lowest cost, and you need to deliver on a reduced workforce. Fortunately, there's help right around the corner.

Since 1968, Productivity has been helping local manufacturers compete through state-of-the-art machine tools, robots and related equipment. Its application engineers help companies evaluate the value of robotic automation based on certain jobs or processes.

Productivity's customers include large OEMs as well as small job shops across the Midwest—wherever there is a need to combine operations to save time and costs. Its robotic automation systems are designed to accommodate more than one type of job and often result in a 2- to 3-year payback.

"We're seeing more and more job shops turning to robotic automation to be more competitive in the areas of pricing and quality," says Don Engles, manager of Productivity's automation group. "If we're going to be viable in manufacturing, we're going to have to do it with fewer people."

Affordable, Flexible Automation for Job Shops

Productivity's RoboFlex® line includes several economical, pre-engineered systems for job shops that use FANUC robots to load or unload different parts into a variety of machine tools or industrial equipment. These robots can be put on simple machines, such as lathes and mills, to increase efficiency, improve quality and slash operator time. The result is a significant decrease in costs.

"The return on investment on these systems comes in the form of reduced labor costs," Engles says. "If you're tending a machine with a full-time operator, you can expect to cut your operator expense for that machine from about \$50,000 to \$10,000 per year. That gives you a reduction in payroll of about \$40,000 per year. Our basic systems start at \$75,000, so that's a pretty simple 2-year payback on a machine that will easily last 7 to 10 years."

The labor savings allows companies to be that much more profitable for the remaining 5 to 8 years or tackle additional work through a better cost structure. "By spreading labor over more machines you can reduce your cost from \$30 per hour to \$4 per hour," he continues.

In addition to affordability, flexibility is another key aspect of Productivity's robotic automation systems. When one job is finished, the system can accommodate new parts in a matter of seconds, making them suitable for small lot sizes. They can also be retrofitted with a vision system, high-speed door opener, air blow-off unit or quality inspection station.



CAMBRIDGE METAL AND PLASTICS

- ▶ **CHALLENGE:** After winning a large contract in 2005, the start-up job shop needed to expand its capacity by hiring four additional employees or investing in a robotic automation system.
- ▶ **SOLUTION:** An automated cell that allows complete machining of the part without a machine operator for 12 to 14 hours at a time. Productivity provided a RoboFlex® robot to load and unload parts into a Haas vertical machining center from a customized conveyor and pallet system.
- ▶ **RESULT:** Payback was less than 6 months and 6 years later the company continues to benefit from increased efficiency. Cambridge Metals and Plastics didn't hire additional people for that job, but has added more than 100 employees since then.

"**Productivity was excellent** to work with," says Robb Bass, owner and vice president of engineering. "They took the lead during meetings and **helped us identify** our key objectives while staying within our budget, which was important when we were first starting out."



“From engineering to tooling to preventive maintenance, we can take care of entire system needs.”

- Don Engles, manager, Automation Group

ULTRA MACHINING COMPANY, INC.

- ▶ **CHALLENGE:** In 2006 the company needed to reduce the number of quality defects in a high-volume medical part and increase throughput. Machine operators had been under-and over-adjusting the machine tools and occasionally forgot to flip the part over for additional machining, resulting in machine crashes.
- ▶ **SOLUTION:** Productivity added a RoboFlex® robot to the machining center to unload and flip the parts so they could be completed in one step without any human intervention. The robot ran for about 20 hours per day uninterrupted, replacing the need for a full-time machine operator.
- ▶ **RESULT:** The job's throughput increased by 30 percent and part quality improved by 20 percent, which has slashed inspection time. The robot is now being used in another cell to reduce variation in part quality.

“Productivity helped us learn that the robot is the easy part,” says Randy Hatcher, director of development. “They showed us improvements that needed to be made to our cutting tools in order to have the robot work correctly and helped us refine our manufacturing process. They were very professional and great to work with.”

Your Single-Source Supplier

Productivity provides its customers with more than machines. It serves as a single source for tooling and accessories, metrology, and CAD/CAM services. “We want customers to get the most out of their investment,” Engles says. “From engineering to tooling to preventive maintenance, we can take care of entire system needs.”

Local Support and Service

Based in Minneapolis, Productivity offers customers the convenience of local support, service and training. Backed by a 2:1 ratio of systems technicians to salespeople, Productivity is well-suited to service and support the equipment it sells.

“We take customer service and training very seriously,” Engles says. “Our trucks are loaded up and ready to go on a moment's notice if an issue can't be resolved over the phone. We also provide classroom training on our equipment several times a week.”

High Customer Satisfaction Rates

Productivity asks customers to rate the company and provide feedback after every machine sale or training program. More than 95 percent of manufacturers have given Productivity high marks for its equipment, service and training in the past year.



Productivity Inc®

Providing innovative solutions for manufacturers in Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Iowa, Nebraska and Western Wisconsin.

The Mark of Our Success is YOUR Success

15150 25th Avenue North • Minneapolis, MN 55447
(763) 476-8600 or (800) 328-3272

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You're Hired **ROBO** Flex[®]



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RoboFlex[®] is a line of pre-engineered automation packages that utilizes FANUC robots to automatically load and unload machine tools. RoboFlex packages are designed to meet the demanding requirements of job shops, with short to long part runs, and multipart changeover. RoboFlex automation is a versatile, economical way to lower your manufacturing costs and increase productivity. Every RoboFlex package comes with a thorough evaluation of your needs, integration, installation and ongoing applications support.



RoboFlex PS
Pallet Switcher



RoboFlex PT
Pallet Transfer



RoboFlex CS
Conveyor System



RoboFlex VP
Value Package



For more information, or to schedule a meeting to determine how RoboFlex can work for you, contact your local Productivity sales representative.

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