



The Huffman Corporation

A Better Approach through Innovative Technology

The Huffman Corporation, a global manufacturing company headquartered in the Upstate community of Clover, celebrated the sale of its 1,000th precision CNC machine on June 19, 2008.

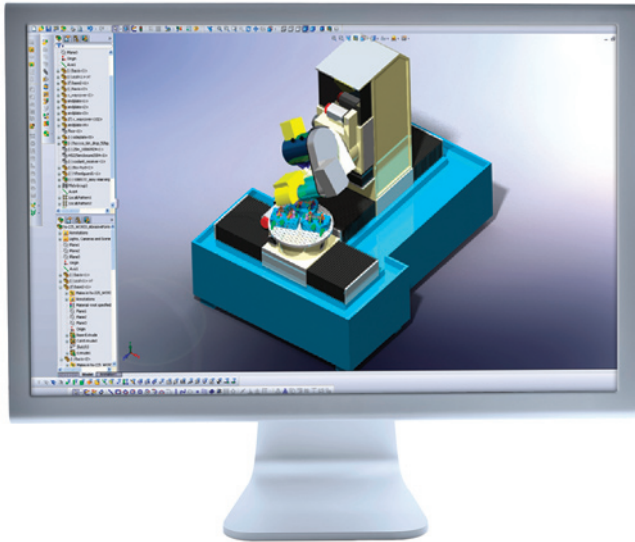
This milestone was achieved through over three decades of innovative work, and reaffirms the fact that Huffman is a leading manufacturer of multi-axis, computer numerical control (CNC), high-precision machine tool systems. Today, as a subsidiary of The Springs Company, the Huffman Corporation has become a trusted international supplier for Fortune 50 companies that use their machinery to make components for the gas turbine and medical markets. Through technological advances and an extraordinary commitment to ISO 9000:2000 quality and customer service, the Huffman Corporation is a perfect example of the dramatic changes taking place to the manufacturing business model.

The Huffman Corporation got its start in 1961 when Stan Huffman founded a machine tool distribution company that sold machines to the gas turbine industry. Always the innovator, Huffman began manufacturing machine tool systems in 1969 and shortly thereafter, radically changed the grinding machine tool

industry when he developed and patented an eight-axis CNC grinding machine that increased productivity and ROI (return on investment) for their clientele. Thanks to this innovation, the end product was able to last 8 times longer, using just one machine instead of several machines.

“Stan Huffman redefined the economics of manufacturing with the development of the eight-axis CNC grinding machine,” said current Huffman President and CEO, Roger Hayes. “Huffman recognized that there were better ways to make machinery that could increase product performance, reduce production time, and lower costs for our manufacturing customers who could in turn lower costs to their customers. This approach is the same philosophy that the Huffman Corporation follows today in every machine we manufacture.”

Huffman’s 1,000 machines have had a tremendous impact in enhancing our quality of life by making products better. Their machinery has been used to shape metal femoral knee implants to match a patient’s natural bone, to refurbish expensive blades for gas turbines that provide electricity throughout the world, and t even eliminate the squeaking sound in power steering for automobiles. Yet, despite the advances Huffman’s machinery delivers to manufacturers, creating precision machinery is a complex process.



from top: Brian Weed/Shutterstock/The Huffman Corporation



The Huffman Corporation uses virtual reality technology to design and simulate CNC machine operations before any physical manufacturing takes place.

With a staff of 73, Huffman makes about 3 computerized machines a month. That's impressive when considering the fact that each machine is custom built to meet the purchaser's needs. Development of grinding machines requires a collaborative approach with customers from design to production of the end product so that optimal gains in productivity and accuracy can be realized. In doing so, Huffman takes a unique approach in the beginning of the design process – through virtual design.

After identifying the needs of the customer, engineers design the machinery through advanced software that utilizes virtual reality technology that can simulate the operation of the machine. By using this software to create a model of the new product, customers receive an early demonstration of the real gains in productivity. Virtual design also eliminates the trial and error process associated with building machinery because any problems or changes needed are identified and resolved first electronically before physical manufacturing of the product starts. This reduces overhead costs and advances the timetable for delivery of a finished machine.

“I like to say that if you're a nerd, then the Huffman Corporation is nerd heaven for you,” says Hayes. “Our engineers collaboratively create an environment where the needs of the customer are worked into the design, which is then tested numerous times before plans for production start. Virtual reality software has allowed Huffman to efficiently manufacture machinery by enhancing the accuracy and productivity for all of our systems.”

When the design is approved, then the production of the machinery begins with the assembly of thousands of parts that must work harmoniously in accordance with the needs of the client. Once built, engineers thoroughly test the functionality of the systems, but rarely run into situations where operation errors delay the delivery of the end product – this is due to the meticulous attention given to the design process conducted in virtual design. The system is then delivered to the customer and is ready for use.

But the delivered finished product does not end Huffman's role in the function of the machinery. Huffman supports its client's investment throughout the production lifecycle with a complete range of products and services that keep its clientele on the cutting edge of technology and competitiveness. This includes providing ongoing software and hardware upgrades to the machine tool system that allows additional gains in productivity and capacity. Technical support is accessible 24/7 through modern technology like PC Anywhere™, which allows machines to call Huffman and share screen diagnostics for immediate access. >>

HC -205 (Top) is a laser system that is a fusion welder - this machine provides precision refurbishing of worn gas turbine components.

HS - 155R (Middle) is a grinding machine used in the turbine, medical, and automotive sectors.

WJ - 155 (Bottom) is a waterjet system that provides coating stripping, hole drilling, and cutting of gas turbine components.



According to Hayes, most problems encountered by clients are user errors, and the problems are usually resolved quickly without a prolonged period of downtime for the machine.

“The end user of Huffman machinery does not have to deal with a middle man for technical related questions. We stand by quality of the system from the time it leaves our plant and the duration of its use. Whether you’re in Singapore, Italy, or here in the United States, Huffman employees proudly stand ready to assist our customers in keeping their machines in production – generating revenue and productivity - for their manufacturing process day in and day out,” says Hayes.

The level of success achieved by the Huffman Corporation is due to the company’s long term commitment to provide a better approach in manufacturing machinery. Solving problems and creating solutions is a hallmark in the development of every Huffman machine tool system, and is the reason for the sale of over 1,000 systems that are being used throughout the world to make products faster and better. +++



The Huffman Corporation's CNC machines are used in high-precision applications such as shaping knee implants.



Manufacturer Profile:

The Huffman Corporation

Product | Multi-axis CNC Tool Systems

Location | Clover, SC

Employees | 73

Years in Business | 47

Client Base | Manufacturers in the Flight and Industrial Gas Turbine and Medical sectors worldwide

Output | 3 Computerized Machines per month

2007 Sales | \$16.3 million

Website | www.huffmancorp.com

from left: The Huffman Corporation/kuedhl/Shutterstock

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