

# Brenco *achieves*

by Jerry Cook

## improved efficiencies with new laser system



The PRIMA laser cutting system shown here has significantly improved laser cutting efficiency for many parts at Brenco Industries.

**I**nstalling a new laser cutting system has provided Delta, BC-based Brenco Industries Ltd. with a variety of benefits including additional production capacity and a significant improvement in laser cutting efficiency for many parts.

“We needed to add the additional capacity,” says Steve Heim, president of Brenco. “Sometimes we were running our (existing laser) machines 24 hours a day which can be rough on the operators. We prefer just to run two shifts.”

As a result, Brenco recently installed a PRIMA PLATINO 1530 two-axis laser cutting system. According to Heim, the PRIMA laser cutting system complements two existing laser cutting systems the firm already had.

Brenco, which began operations in 1983, has 68 employees at two facilities totalling 60,000 sq. ft. The company specializes in fabricating and processing sheet metal and plate both as a subcontractor and on a custom basis. Brenco is a member of the Fabricators and Manufacturers Association, International (FMA). Heim is currently serving as vice chair on the FMA’s board of directors.

Brenco does work for a variety of customers in various markets including transportation, forestry, mining, and many more. The firm offers a variety of services including laser cutting, waterjet cutting, shearing, plasma cutting, CNC bending, forming and rolling, hardware insertion, plate beveling and marking.

Typically, Brenco is working with aluminum, stainless and mild sheet steel and plate in thicknesses ranging

from 26 ga up to 6 in. plate. However, Heim notes that the majority of the firm’s work falls within material thicknesses ranging from 3/16 in. to 1/4 in. plate.

In general, the firm’s part runs range from one-offs and prototypes up to thousands of pieces. “More typically, we produce kits (of components) as well as batch runs. For example, on average we will run approximately 500 work orders per month for about 200 active customers per month. There is a huge variety of work that we handle so flexibility is critical,” Heim says.

The PRIMA PLATINO 1530 laser cutting system has provided Brenco with a number of benefits including the ability to cut thicker materials. “Because the PLATINO offers 4,000 watts, we can now cut thicker materials,” he says.

Another benefit is improved efficiency. “The PRIMA laser is providing us improved efficiencies on certain materials and geometries,” says Heim, adding that in general the PRIMA laser has provided Brenco with an improvement of 28% in efficiencies for many parts. “That has been a huge benefit for us.”

Heim was impressed with a number of features and technology offered by the PLATINO 1530 laser cutting system including the flying optics beam delivery system and the CNC controller on the machine. “The control is very simple to operate. We are very pleased with the simplicity of operation of the machine,” he notes.

Continues Heim, “Another nice feature of the PLATINO is that the guarding opens up giving the operators complete access to the cutting table.”

Given Brenco’s previous experience with laser cutting, training on the PLATINO laser system was a relatively simple and straightforward process, says Heim.

The PLATINO 1530 CO2 laser system is 4,000 watts and features a Cartesian, cantilever structure that provides three-sided access. The PLATINO integrates the machine frame, CNC controller, laser resonator, beam-delivery system, axes of movement, and laser head all into one compact structure.

The machine offers X-axis length of 120 in. and Y-axis length of 60 in. The PLATINO 1530, which features a flying optics beam delivery system, offers maximum speed of 3,937 ipm and maximum acceleration of 1.2 g.

The PLATINO 1530 laser cutting system was supplied by *PRIMA North America Inc.*, Chicopee, MA ([prima-na.com](http://prima-na.com)).