SUHNER®



POLISHED: Ray Webb with the finished article. Right: polisher Peter Walpoole uses the LPB12, a handy, high torque right angled grinder for that difficult to get at area.



Magicscope adds finishing touch

A Suffolk stainless steel fabricator has played a small but vital part in developing a medical wonder material that has given new hope to patients with diseases such as osteoporosis.

Magicscope clinched a deal to make the eight-metre long isolators that were used by chemists to develop a biological material known as bone cement that closely matches the properties of real bone and is used to strengthen damaged vertebrae of patients.

The business delivers high quality fabrication, batch work, machining and polishing from its 800 square foot workshops in Haverhill.

And it's that quality that contributed to Magicscope supplying isolators for research into a treatment that could save thousands of victims of osteoporosis from becoming bedridden or wheelchair bound.

Magicscope, which currently employs 10 staff, specialises in stainless steel and haste alloy fabrication for a variety of markets including pharmaceutical biotechnology, marine, joinery and food sectors.

Around 50 per cent of Magicscope's business is for the pharmaceutical industry.

"Stainless steel is the ideal material being non-rusting. It is used throughout the pharmaceutical industry because of its perceived hygiene and they demand such a highly polished finish to equipment used for testing products because you can't have anywhere for bug life to live. So you have got to have the right finish," says Managing Director Ray Webb.

As a supplier to an industry where getting detail wrong by only three microns – that's several thousandths of a centimetre to you and me – can mean the difference between the product being accepted or rejected, Magicscope is a success story as it prepares to celebrate its 19th birthday.

With engineering firms across the country struggling to survive what does Ray attribute the success of the company.

"There are lots of people who fabricate in stainless, but a very limited number of stainless steel fabricators," says Ray who managed a team of 26 polishers and fabricators for a global manufacturing operation for 36 years before launching Magicscope at the age of 56.

"If you build in stainless you must be able to handle each polishing stage of your manufacturing process in-house. It's vital, absolutely vital. That's the difference between us and other manufacturers who use independent metal finishers.

"Times are difficult, especially with rising steel prices and the competition from low cost countries which means it is very hard if you are just involved in simple volume manufacturing. We concentrate on small batch work and have exploited niche markets."

The company has always been committed to the highest quality standards and that is something that has stood it in good stead – with the help of Suhner.

Magicscope draw on a variety of tools from flexible shaft machines to mini straight and angle grinders which cover a range of activities that are key to producing products typically that require the smoothness of a stainless steel worktop.

Says Ray: "Basically we use their tools for polishing into hard to reach areas to 240 grit. Finding tools that offer the right speeds is only half of the reason. They are simply the right tools for the job.

"I also believe that nobody can be a good fabricator unless they can polish to standard, mirror and architectural finishing."

They have worked at The Roundhouse, Camden's performing arts venue and most recently a state of the art bus terminus in Chelmsford.

"Satisfied customers are our best advert," adds Ray.

All angles covered

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fort. Additional features include low-noise gears and abrasion-resistant carbon brushes. An easy-grip thumb wheel for adjusting the speed over a large range of settings is also provided, while the ventilation shaft across the entire machine enables a constant volume flow, which has increased by 30% compared to previous machines.

The K-series has five products in either straight or angle grinder configurations.

Says Suhner (UK) Managing Director Ulrich Ruetsch: "While grinding has come under pressure from other processes, it's still a key production technique – providing a level of surface finish which is hard to achieve by other methods. Spurred on by these challenges we've worked hard to improve the performance, productivity and cost effectiveness of the K-series."

According to Ulrich Ruetsch, much of the company's new product development takes place in tandem with the customer.

"Our technical sales engineers can pinpoint needs that are not always identified by the customer, simply by observing the grinding process and understanding the eventual aims.

"Under our policy of continuous product development the K-series delivers even greater performance yet it provides additional important benefits to the user."

Added Suhner (UK) manager Andi Mumford: "The K-series is one of the most compact electric tools on the market. The ergonomically designed handle lies very comfortably in your hand. The easy-to-operate thumb wheel for setting the speed and the safety ON/OFF switch both enable safe and relaxed operation. In the angle grinder, the additional handle can be fixed in three different positions."



