

Partridge Ventilation Ltd

AMADA machines help Partridge Ventilation steam ahead

Redruth-based Partridge Ventilation, a leading specialist in high-end kitchen ventilation systems, has installed an automated AMADA laser cutting machine and AMADA 7-axis press brake in order to take its business to the next level. Replacing a plasma cutter and a lower specification press brake from another manufacturer, the AMADA machines have made a vast difference to throughput rates. For instance, a batch of extraction canopies that previously took 5-7 days to complete, now takes just 3 hours.

With three generations of the Partridge family designing and installing kitchen ventilation systems, the company possesses a wealth of knowledge that vastly exceeds its competitors. Furthermore, Partridge Ventilation offers a committed and enthusiastic approach, with the company's ideology focused on project delivery and client satisfaction.

This strategy has enabled Partridge Ventilation to engage in long-term partnerships with prominent firms nationwide and overseas. The company has a close and long-established relationship with Loungers PLC, together with other high-end customers such as ASDA, Rick Stein, Tesco, National Trust, Marks & Spencer, Turtle Bay, River Cottage, Paul Ainsworth at Number 6, Holiday Inn, Jamie Oliver's Fifteen Cornwall, Marco Pierre White and Gordon Ramsey, to list but a few.

With such a pre-eminent client list, meeting the high-quality and diverse needs of these customers requires ongoing investment in the latest manufacturing technologies.

"In short, our business is growing, which is why we decided to upgrade our sheet metal production capabilities," states one of the company's leading Project Managers, Oliver Partridge. "We were running machines such as a guillotine and a plasma cutter, as well as an older specification press brake. Although satisfactory in terms of output, we knew that an injection of the latest technology would provide a springboard for our business."

Partridge Ventilation reviewed various potential suppliers of profiling and press brake technologies over a period of 12-18 months, leaving no stone unturned.

"We examined the market thoroughly and found AMADA to be on another level," says Mr Partridge. "In particular, the AMADA care package was superior to others, which is a big deal for us being located in Cornwall, where machine tool service can often be a bit thin on the ground."

"We wanted speed and quality of work, and we certainly got them," says Mr Partridge. "The time required to make a batch of kitchen extraction canopies, for example, has been reduced from around a week, to just 3 hours."

Many of the extraction hoods produced on the AMADA machines are processed from 1.2mm stainless steel. However, the company also puts its newly installed capability to the test on products such as heat recovery systems, fire-rated duct work and stainless steel wall cladding, for example. On occasions, the laser cutter has been used to process mild steel up to 16mm thick.



"Word has spread pretty quickly about our AMADA machines," says Mr Partridge. "In fact, we've even started taking on some subcontract work, which in effect becomes a new revenue stream. Although this is not our speciality – we are ventilation engineers – it could well become a growth area for the business in future."





The new AMADA HFE3i-1003 press brake at Partridge Ventilation has had an equally significant impact on operations.

“We’ve saved both time and material in our bending section,” says Mr Partridge. “Importantly, such is the capability of the AMADA press brake that we now make many products in one-piece, instead of producing several components that have to be riveted together. It’s changed the way we work entirely.”

Ease-of-use is another major factor. Whereas previously the company relied on its two press brake ‘experts’, thanks to the AMADA VPSS 3i Bend and Blank software, Mr Partridge says he can now ask almost anyone on the shop floor to bend a batch of parts – and they will all be of the same high quality.

While some runs extend to 40-off, many of the extraction hoods produced at Partridge Ventilation are bespoke. In addition, hoods can extend from 1.5m to 11m in length (and longer if required), so having the flexibility of a laser cutter is highly beneficial.

With the automated AMADA LC-3015F1 now in place, standard parts such as tops and filter banks are profiled in advance and stored flat, ready to bend whenever necessary. As a result, lead times are minimised, which in turn keeps customers happy. The whole ideology at Partridge Ventilation is focused on project delivery and client satisfaction, a strategy that has enabled the company to engage in long-term partnerships with prominent customers, as previously mentioned.

“Customers are benefiting in so many ways from our AMADA machines, not least the improvement in cut quality.” says Mr Partridge. “The cut edge produced by our AMADA laser is far better than our previous plasma-cutting method. Plasma cutting produced burrs – that we would have to remove – which are simply not present with laser cutting.”

The current market for kitchen ventilation solutions is described by Mr Partridge as “very buoyant”, particularly among catering firms and restaurant groups, which make up a large percentage of the company’s customer base.

“Our strength is in the exceptional level of service we provide and the way that we integrate with the client’s team,” he says. “This is supported by the level of repeat business achieved through recommendation and word of mouth. In addition, we’re a family-run business that operates with transparency, which our customers like, while our experience and willingness to stay abreast of the latest technologies, such as those provided by AMADA, also stand us in good stead. Ultimately, we invest so that we can deliver a better product to our customers.”