

Plasma rivals LASER CUTTING

Investing in an ART HDP plasma cutter has allowed Riggs Sheetmetal, Gladstone, QLD, to break from the pack and emerge as a steel fabrication success story.

BY BARBARA SCHULZ
IMAGES BY BARBARA SCHULZ

Riggs Sheetmetal in Gladstone, QLD, is a privately owned company and a one-stop-shop offering metal profiling, metal pressing and fabrication services to local manufacturers in the mining, engineering, construction and processing industries. Currently, the company specialises in manufacturing parts for coal chutes in the mining sector.

“From a one-off custom design product to large repetition processing of componentry and manufacturing we have the skilled people and latest technology to enable us to supply our valued clients with a quality, accurate, fast and cost effective product,” says Managing Director and owner Graeme Riggs. “We offer waterjet and Hypertherm High-Definition plasma cutting, up to 220-tonne pressing, steel fabrication, pattern development and installation services.”

“Our aim is to provide quality products and service. Our name is our reputation,” he explains the company’s success story which spans over more than 30 years. “The key to our success is our people, experienced, local tradesmen and our quality machinery. In the end, our service is our cut.”

As a result, Mr Riggs decided to invest in an ART HDP 7500 High Definition CNC plasma cutter with a Hypertherm XD power unit, specifically designed for heavy-duty manufacturing environments, where power, precision, speed, quality, low cost, productivity and durability are demanded by business owners.

“Although we have kept the traditional name of a sheet-metal workshop, there is much more to our business than just a jobbing shop,” Mr Riggs says. “Our technologically advanced machinery can water cut and plasma cut anything from 0.55mm to 200mm thick steel. While the bulk of our cutting is 6-16mm, we have a number of steel plates of up to 50mm, and the ART machine covers the whole range.”

The HDP plasma cutter offers precise heavy-duty cutting of steel, stainless steel and aluminium and comes with a process area from 3700mm x 1900mm up to 15000mm x 3200mm.

Mr Riggs knows that in order to be successful in a highly-competitive industry you need to differentiate yourself from your competitors and deliver superior quality. “We decided to buy the ART machine for two reasons,” Mr Riggs explains. “First, I was impressed with the service and follow-up provided by ART prior to actually buying the machine, and second, it is a quality locally-made machine, which might come at a higher price-tag than some others, but





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The HDP plasma cutter delivers economic processing of high-standard cut components with an edge quality that is comparable with laser cutting; a feature which gives Riggs Sheetmetal the decisive competitive edge over its competitors. "We were competing with companies using laser cutters and so called better plasma cutters, but they all are not in a position that we are in –all we do comes down to the quality of the cut which rivals laser cutting in accuracy, and our customers are very happy with it."

Riggs Sheetmetal wins contracts with plasma-cut steel plates and holes because of the superior cut quality; Mr Riggs says he doesn't even require Hypertherm's acclaimed True-Hole technology, because the ART HDP CNC plasma cutter already delivers superior hole quality.

Moreover, ART's machines are easy to operate and the software and controller are intuitive. ART machines feature both touch screen and pendant control, providing a quick

and simple means of entering machine instructions, editing parts, moving, resizing and more, all at the machine or remotely from the PC.

"The machine is very user-friendly," Mr Riggs concludes. "The machine had to compete with laser cutters, the 'supposedly better machines'; but our plasma cutter allowed us to constantly grow the business and one of our major customers was so happy with our service that he has just bought our business to bring all his cutting in-house. If we had a machine that was no good we wouldn't be in the position we are in now."



For more information please visit
www.riggssheetmetal.com.au
www.advancedrobotic.com
sales@advancedrobotic.com

