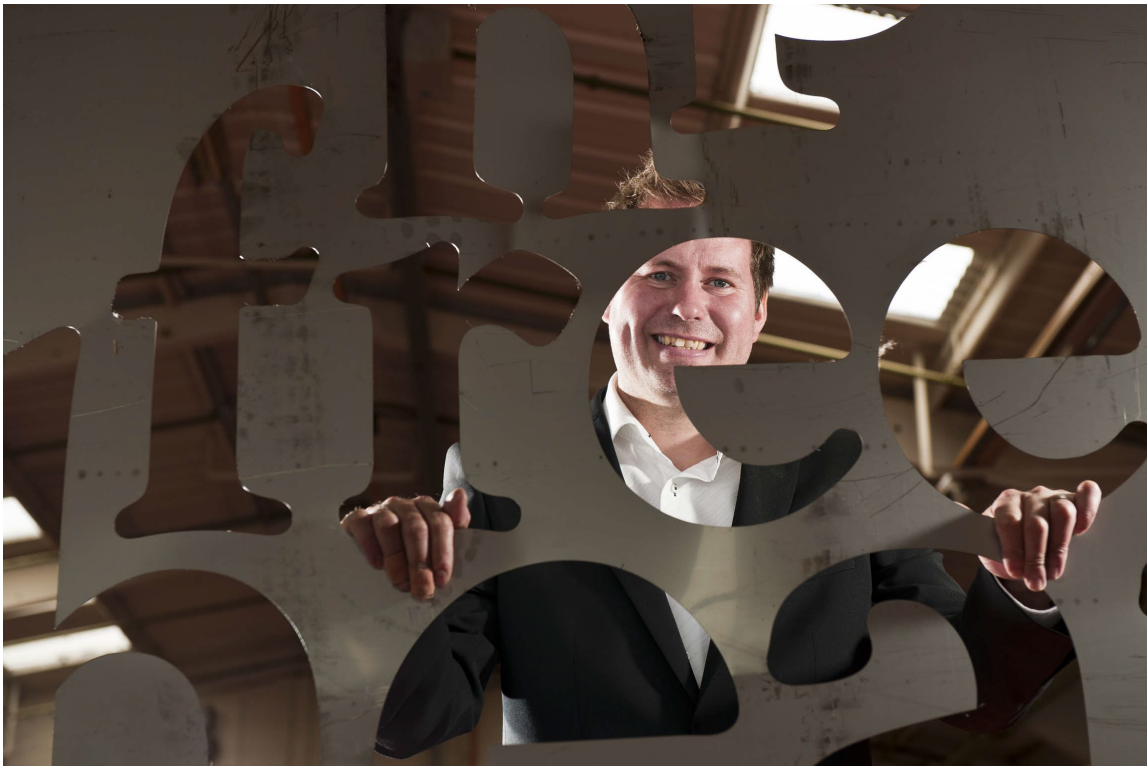


Making it in Leeds

News release from Leeds Manufacturing

01 July 2010



£600,000 Laser Cutting Investment Speeds Production

A £600,000 investment in the latest laser metal-cutting plant promises Northern companies an unbeatable combination of shorter lead times and competitive prices.

Accurate Laser Cutting has been established on the Stourton Business Park in South Leeds, with the latest Trumpf laser cutting machinery, scheduled to operate 24x7, and eventually creating up to 12 new jobs.

Yorkshireman Mike Briggs, who has been involved in the industry since leaving university and served his apprenticeship at the former Kirkstall Forge, heads up the new venture.

As senior engineer for a rival laser cutting machinery manufacturer, he previously managed a 30-strong team of service engineers, but faced relocation to the Midlands as the company restructured its UK operations.

Fortunately, a meeting with two former engineering colleagues revealed their successfully established laser cutting operation in the midlands and the idea for a northern operation was born. Accurate Laser Cutting in Dudley has grown swiftly to an annual turnover of £1.5m and the Leeds project brings recent capital expenditure to a £1.2m total.

According to Mike Briggs speed will be of the essence in growing the new business. "While there are other laser cutters in the region, the new Trumpf machine is real state of the art and will allow us to guarantee quotes within a few hours of enquiry, followed by quality components delivery a maximum of three days from receipt of order. A true sub-contracting service.

"The new machine can handle all metals at thicknesses ranging from heavy duty machine parts to almost microscopic pieces akin to costume jewellery with complete accuracy," he says.

Team Effort For Business Start-Up

Accurate Laser Cutting, Leeds, was set up in a remarkably swift few weeks although an unsuccessful trawl of potential premises threatened to jeopardise the investment at one stage. Key to starting the business was the power supply required to run the state of the art laser cutting equipment.

At Stourton Business Park, he found landlord Simon Kunz, of Wharfedale Property Company, had maintained the up-rated power supply for heavy machinery at his own cost and was willing to discuss flexible rental terms for a 6,500 sq ft unit, in addition to an office refurbishment.

"We couldn't have found a better landlord," says Mike Briggs, adding that Khosrow Bidari, senior business development officer for Leeds City Council's Locate in Leeds service, had played an important role in helping them identify the new premises. And finally, Stuart Murray at law firm Chadwick Lawrence managed to complete the whole deal in just three weeks.

With UK lenders still reluctant to take risks with new businesses, financial backing has been secured from, French bank Societe Generale. Mike and his partners have also been able to negotiate extended warranties and flexible payment terms on equipment, which will ease demands on cash flow as the business gets off the ground.

"Setting up a new business is always risky but in the current climate it takes real conviction. Leeds and the surrounding city region is a strong centre for manufacturing and will provide an excellent base for Mike and his team as they cut their teeth in the North," said Khosrow Bidari.

Ends

Photography: Cutting edge: 1. Accurate Laser Cutting's Mike Briggs sees a clear future 2. Mike Briggs with an example of the detailed laser cutting achieved by the firm's state of the art machinery

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