

## Craftsman Invests £300,000 In Pursuit Of £6M Sales

Precision engineering company Craftsman Tools has invested £300,000 in extending its Otley manufacturing base and storage facilities in pursuit of a £6M annual turnover target.

Craftsman grew 2011 sales by 39% to £4.8M and is on course for similar growth in the current year, with around 40% of sales going abroad. The investment has so far added four new jobs, taking the skilled workforce to over 60, with another two further apprenticeships this year.

The new premises and equipment were helped by grants totalling £15,000 from Leeds City Council's business growth fund, set up to support capital investment and job creation.

And a range of new products, including those developed with the aid of a £200,000 research and development grant from the Technology Strategy Board, was launched at MACH in April.

Visited by Secretary of State for Business, Dr Vince Cable, the stand featured equipment designed to provide improved stability during machining; and a portable hardness tester for on-site components inspection, developed in partnership with Cameron in the USA.

The company has a client list spanning the globe including major international players from a wide range of industry sectors such as Sandvik Cormorant, Sulzer Pumps, Yamazaki Mazak and Doosan distributor Mills CNC, as well as a partnership with the Advanced Manufacturing Research Centre at the University of Sheffield.



A leader in the tool -holding and work -holding markets, Craftsman has added 5000 sq ft to the shop floor, allowing existing space to be used as a dedicated apprentice training area and creating room for a new Doosan DBC110S horizontal boring machine. This will provide a substantial increase in production capacity and is already generating significant interest from companies in the oil, gas and power generation sectors.

The new machine will enable further development of Craftsman's zero -point fixture systems, increasing the size of parts that can be machined. Existing work -holding ranges are currently experiencing increased interest from a number of high profile UK customers.

Further efficiencies will be achieved at the Otley base with the introduction of a new and automated vertical storage system .

Meanwhile, investment continues at Craftsman's Chevin Tools operation in Chicago, essentially a sales and distribution centre for products manufactured in Otley.

Phil Cole, head of Leeds City Council's business and enterprise service said:  
"Craftsman is a great example of a modern manufacturing company competing

successfully in international markets, investing in skills and creating high value employment. We're delighted to be supporting them"

## **Ends**

**Photography:** Craftsman Tools managing director Robert Johnson (right and business development manager Tim Thorburn with new products in the company's new extension.

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