



TOTAL TOOLING = QUALITY x SERVICE<sup>2</sup>

## Press Release

From.  

Date of issue: 6<sup>th</sup> October 2017

Reference: 17-577-WNT-All British Precision

### WNT (UK) Ltd.

Sheffield Business Park

Europa Link · UK Sheffield S9 1XU

Freephone: 0800 073 2073

Freefax: 0800 073 2074

Free Tech Support: 0800 073 2075

Accounts: 0800 097 0095

Freephone (Ireland): 1800 932 255

[www.wnt.com](http://www.wnt.com)

## Upskilling to maximise investment potential

The fundamentals behind the success of Derbyshire-based sub-contractor All British Precision is its belief that it has to maximise what it has to make things better and be aspirational in all aspects of its business. Investment in the best available machinery combined with the experience and skills of its people are making this a reality.

Formed in 2012 through the 50/50 merger of Medicione and the engineering arm of Howardson Ltd; in the run up to this merger the two stakeholders in the business, Richard Allen and Ian Howard asked themselves the question 'how far do you want to go with this?' The response was to immediately begin an investment program in machine tools and people that would change the face of the business. "I had some customers that stayed loyal and followed me from Medicione, but the bulk of our first year of trading came from Dennis Mowers, which is part of the Howardson Group," says Richard Allen. "They accounted for a high percentage of our first year's turnover of £400,000, but we recognised that with investment and automation we could develop quickly and improve efficiency all-round."

The first evidence of this strategy was the arrival of a Star ST38 12-axis sliding head lathe. The versatility of this machine overcame many of the production issues with the Dennis Mower components. This machine was quickly followed by two further Star sliding heads, an SR32J and SR20J, which while focussed on mower production also provided free capacity to expand other sub-contract work. Working around Richard and Ian's passion to continuously improve not only All British Precision's performance, but aid customers in doing the same, further investment quickly followed with a move into larger

The WNT Group is a sales organisation supplying precision cutting tools to the metalcutting industry. TOTAL TOOLING = QUALITY x SERVICE<sup>2</sup> - this is the formula for total customer satisfaction. Through optimal service and an unbeatable product quality WNT is the ideal purchasing solution for the metal cutting industry.



WNT is successfully represented internationally in 18 countries and has its headquarters in Germany. It is part of an international group of companies with more than 5,300 employees worldwide.

For more information about the company, please visit [www.wnt.com](http://www.wnt.com)



capacity turn-milling. “When we invest it is to solve a problem and to create opportunities and that was the case with the turn milling,” says Richard Allen. “When we took delivery of our Mori Seiki NTX we realised that there wasn’t a lot we couldn’t do with it and it opened up many doors. The confidence we gained from this machine then led on to the arrival of another ST38, a Jones & Shipman cylindrical grinder and the first of three DMG Mori NLX 2500 turning centres with sub-spindles and Y-axis. The efficiency gains were incredible, with the NLX cutting cycle times dramatically, in one case from 13 minutes to 2.5 minutes on a bearing housing and eliminated the second operation.”

The decision to invest in what All British Precision saw as the best machinery and ‘go the extra mile’ for customers continued to pay dividends and opened up further opportunities for five-axis machining, so a further investment was made to include a DMG Mori DMU MonoBloc 75 five-axis machining centre, along with a DMG Mori EcoMill 1100 V vertical machining centre and an additional two NLX 2500 turning centres. “This complete package of machine tools allowed us to greatly improve our capability by removing excess operations and improving productivity. An example of this are the large rollers fitted to the Dennis Mowers; these used to require nine operations to complete with lots of manual intervention, we now achieve this in two operations, with much improved consistency. While the investment we have made has been significant, the returns are more than justifying it. From our initial £400,000 turnover in 2012 we are now targeting £1.5 million by the end of 2018. Our reliance on Dennis Mowers has reduced to around 40 per cent of turnover with the balance made up from customers across a wide range of industries.”

The arrival of all of this modern machine tool technology highlighted another issue for All British Precision, that being its gap in knowledge of modern cutting tool techniques. The jump from a maximum spindle speed of 7000 revs/min to now having 20,000 revs/min available meant that changes to machining strategies had to be made, otherwise the investment would be wasted. After an initial conversation with WNT that resulted in WNT’s Applications Engineer Billy Poore looking at one particular job, the potential gains that could be made through correct use of tooling were more than highlighted. “What we saw when Billy worked with us opened our eyes. We have a highly motivated team of people here, but they are diverse in their experience, with some having over 45 years working for the company [through Howardson Ltd] and other relatively new to the business. We therefore recognised that we needed to develop our tooling knowledge in order to capitalise on our investment. In effect we had to upskill.”



WNT (UK), through its business development manager Adrian Fitts, pulled together a day's programme that would be pitched at all levels of knowledge and Richard Allen committed to shutting down production for a day during its busiest period and taking every machine setter/operator to WNT's Technical Centre in Sheffield. "To basically switch off production for a day we had to see some real benefit from this, I recognised that if each team member brought one thing away from the day that might lead to a 1 per cent improvement, collectively it would be worth it. As it happened, everybody did learn something even the old hands admitted that it was a worthwhile experience. The result is we we're seeing significant improvements in metal removal rates through use of the new processes that were discussed on the day. It also had the effect of bring our team closer together, we all found it very empowering," says Richard Allen.

The day at WNT consisted of a morning in a classroom environment going through cutting tools from the basics to the latest machining strategies, providing information that was pitched at a level that everyone could engage in, with questions being asked by novice and experienced machinists alike. "With such a wide range of experience among the Team at All British Precision the challenge was to make sure everyone was engaged, the proof of this were the responses at the end, with even the most die-hard machinist commenting that they had learnt something," says Adrian Fitts. After lunch the theory was put in to practice in the WNT technical centre, with cutters being run at their optimum to prove what can be achieved.

As a result of the combined investment in machine tools and upskilling Richard Allen is confident that All British Precision can compete with anybody. "The work is available, we need commitment from customers to continue our investment, the machines we have mean that we can maximise available labour to reduce manpower costs." Following the WNT upskilling day All British Precision has made changes to how it operates, creating a new role of production controller, whose function is to standardise machining processes and reduce set-up times and manufacturing costs. We will continue to apply good engineering principles and practice across various disciplines including set-ups and machining strategies," says Richard Allen. "We already operate to aerospace standards and we will now look to formalise that with accreditation and, continue to drive efficiency any way we can. Our aim is to go that extra mile, do whatever needs to be done and deliver British engineering that we can be proud of."

Attachments:



Top left: Team members at All British Precision benefitted from improved tooling knowledge thanks to WNT

Top right: the turning section at All British Precision features the latest in sliding head and turning centre technology

Bottom: Machining centre work now benefits from five-axis capability at All British Precision



**Issued on behalf of**



Sheffield Business Park  
Europa Link · Sheffield · S9 1XU  
Tel.: 0800 073 2 073  
Fax: 0800 073 2 074  
e-Mail: [tony.pennington@wnt.com](mailto:tony.pennington@wnt.com)  
[www.wnt.com](http://www.wnt.com)  
Contact:  
Mr Tony Pennington  
Managing Director

**With compliments**



Agitate PR Ltd  
6 Sinclair Close  
Gillingham  
Kent ME8 9JQ  
Tel: 01634 261288  
e-mail: [nigel@agitatepr.co.uk](mailto:nigel@agitatepr.co.uk)  
[www.agitatepr.co.uk](http://www.agitatepr.co.uk)  
Contact:  
Nigel Jones