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“A Gamblin’ Man Wins Big with Datron.”

The meteoric rise of IntelliCAM Custom Products in Greenville, Wisconsin could be attributed to entrepreneurial prowess, a bit of blind faith in Datron CNC equipment ... or a combination of both. One thing for sure, is that the company’s success is a direct result of decisions made by owner, Trevor Welton.

After six years of working for a manufacturer of electrical controls, Welton left the company with nothing more than an understanding of the industry and a desire to do things differently. So, in 1993, he launched his own venture with a single engraving machine and 150 square feet of shop space where he produced identification tags for machinery. A mere 2 years later, Welton acquired a local sign shop and set his sights on penetrating the architectural signage market. But, in 1999, it was Welton’s pivotal decision to procure a Datron CNC machine that ignited a growth spurt that continues even today. *“It was a big leap, a big gamble for me, but within six months, we were running it eight hours a day,”* Welton said.

It wasn’t just the capital expenditure that seemed like a gamble. Welton also had to grapple with the risk of becoming only the third US customer to own a Datron (there are now hundreds). In the end, he was convinced by the quality of the product and the fact that Datron had maintained a 30-year track record of success to become a mainstay of European manufacturing. But, Welton’s “gamble” quickly paid off and soon he added another Datron machine that delivered a one-two punch to the company’s bottom line. *“After purchasing the Datron machines, our productivity increased by 60% and jobs that used to take a week to complete were finished in two days! Most importantly, the Datron has been pivotal in allowing us to expand the scope of the jobs we pursue.”*

Indeed, it was just months later in 1999 that Welton bought the engraving division of a local graphics company and then turned his attention to securing larger contracts where he could leverage the now comprehensive capabilities of his burgeoning company. Soon IntelliCAM became one of just two companies identified in a national search to compete for a chunk of a \$45 million Fox Cities Performing Arts Center project. Even Welton’s competitors knew why IntelliCAM was eventually selected. *“He has state-of-the-art equipment and is able to make very high-precision parts more efficiently than we can,”* said Dan Aritt, President of an industrial manufacturing company based in Minnesota.

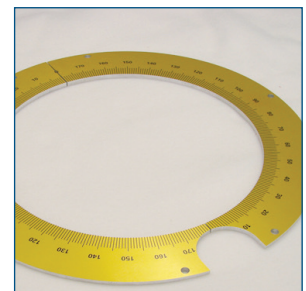
But, it was John Bergstrom and Kathi Seifert of the Performing Arts Center Board who had a real say in the matter. *“We started with a budget and references for two national firms (to produce signage), but IntelliCAM did a better job and gave us a total concept package.”* said John Bergstrom, chairman of the PAC board. Bergstrom recalled agreeing with PAC’s Kathi Seifert, who made the final decision on vendors. *“Kathi said, ‘The quality of work that IntelliCAM does is in line with the quality of the facility we’re trying to build.’ ”*



IntelliCAM produces Control Panels, Decals, Metalphoto, Nameplates, Scales, Rating Plates and Stainless Steel parts.



Datron CNC’s allow the user to mill panels with overlays already on eliminating alignment issues.

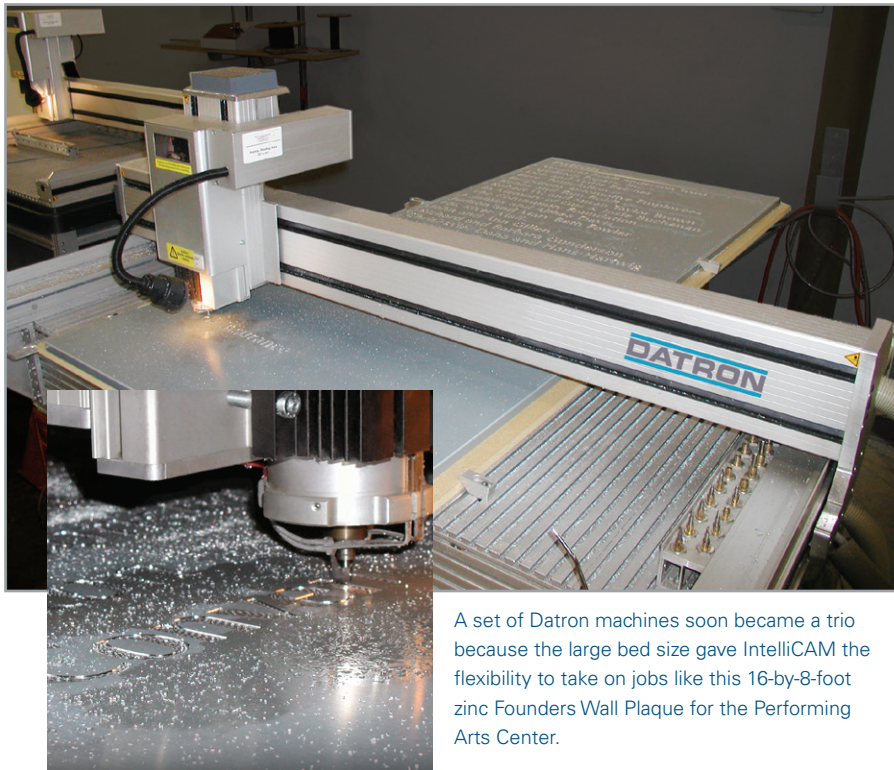
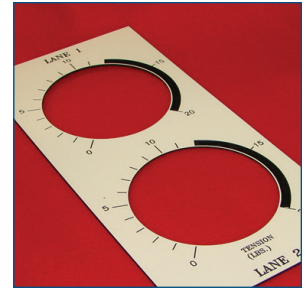


Datron’s ability to mill irregular shapes enables the production of scales and dials.

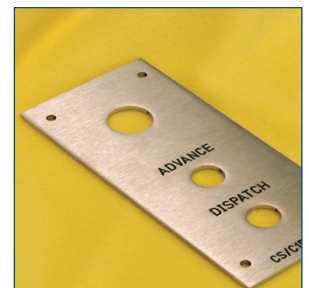
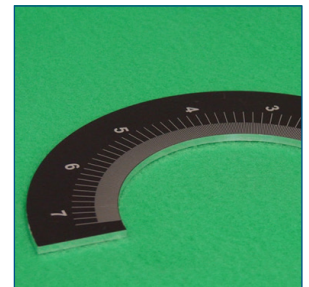
In all, IntelliCAM had just two months to complete the project that included 29 engraved zinc panels for the building's exterior signage, the "Founder's Wall," a 16-by-8-foot zinc panel, nearly 400 way-finding signs that appear throughout the structure and smaller donor plaques. To get the job done, Welson went to two eight-hour shifts to keep the two CNC routers busy for a combined 32 hours a day.

The largest and most prominent part of the project, The Founder's Wall, was designed through a combination of the Datron controller and Type 3 software. Type 3 is designed to easily reproduce texts and patterns on industrial parts with the help of a standard PC and scanner. Ultimately, the machining process called for a 6mm shank, micro-grain, carbide engraving tool with a 30° half angle .030 tip. This tool was run at 35,000 RPM and reached feed rates of 40" per minute. A second pass was made with a .005 tip engraving tool to sharpen the corners of the lettering. Both passes were cooled with Datron's ethonol-mist coolant which evaporated and eliminated the need to degrease the final part.

Following the completion of the Performing Arts Center project, Welson sought ways to leverage the versatility of the Datron machines as a means of entering other vertical markets. One logical direction was to delve further into the production of control panels. *"We were already doing panels, but the Datrons make production seamless ... they rout them, automatically change tools and engrave them and the alcohol coolant that they use eliminates secondary operations like degreasing."*



A set of Datron machines soon became a trio because the large bed size gave IntelliCAM the flexibility to take on jobs like this 16-by-8-foot zinc Founders Wall Plaque for the Performing Arts Center.



Indeed, the flexibility of Datron CNC Machines has resulted in over 1,200 installations worldwide within industries requiring superior production of EDM electrodes, hot stamping and embossing dies, 3D mold making, rapid prototyping, 3D precision engraving, front panels and the production

of automotive and aerospace parts. It is with that knowledge, and his own positive experience, that Welson added a third Datron machine in 2003. *"I figure the sky's the limit with these machines, they have tremendous capabilities and maximum uptime."*

Today, IntelliCAM occupies an 8,000 square foot building located in Greenville, WI and has reached beyond the local market to establish themselves as a solid source for identification products on a national level. Despite tremendous success that hinged on key decisions at crucial times, Welson is modest about his role, *"I'd be bored if the challenges weren't there," he said. "(The business) will go as far as our imagination and marketing goes, and I'll be along for the ride."*

