



Pictured here: Examples of M&T Machining Ltd.'s Feeler machines on the shop floor, and samples of the custom machining work the company produces.

M&T

maintains a busy shop floor with good customer service

M&T Machining Ltd. of Ottawa, ON, has had an excellent start to 2013, and enjoyed substantial growth in 2012. The company has grown to include 28 people on its team, and currently runs two shifts. Co-founder and vice-president Ted Hudson believes the company's success comes primarily from its reasonable prices and on-time delivery.

"Doing what you say you are going to do goes a long way," says Hudson. "When we commit to something, we do it. I'd sooner turn work away than make promises I can't keep."

And what the company does spans a wide variety of projects. "We make parts for x-ray machines, robotics, seismographs, bomb disposal equipment – basically, a little bit of everything in all kinds of different segments," says Hudson. "In a city like Ottawa, you have to be a real job shop."

The shop was launched 15 years ago by Hudson and business partner Marcel Lacelle. "We were both strong in different elements of the business, and it was a good fit," recalls



Hudson. Lacelle now takes care of sales, while Hudson manages HR, accounting and purchasing. It's a balance that has kept the shop running effectively and successfully through good and bad economic times.

M&T's 12,000-square-foot plant currently includes 10 machining centres, five turning centres and two CNC saws. Although the shop includes a variety of different machine tools, the majority of them are now Feeler Machines. Six of the machining centers are Feelers,

including two that were purchased almost two years ago now from Methods Machine Tools, Inc. through local dealer Legere Industrial – the Feeler VMP-580 and the VMP-800 vertical machining centers.

These machines assist M&T in the broad variety of work it does, including prototyping, small batch and large batch runs. "We do quite a mixture – ones, 25s, 50s, 100s, even some thousands," says Hudson. "It's not like being in an automotive area. In Ottawa you have to be versatile. We work on everything from plastics to stainless, aluminum to steel. There are some shops that will only do aluminum, which means they generally have slower turnaround times than we can offer."

Hudson credits the Feeler Machines with allowing him to manage this work. "The Feelers allow us to be as flexible as we are. There is another shop not far from us that has another type of machine, and they can't do stainless. They use the same tooling as we do, but the spindles on their machines just can't handle it."

The tolerances M&T work to run anywhere

from a couple of tenths up to 5 thou, and Hudson says the Feelers serve their needs well.

"Feelers are dependable – certainly better than others we've tried – and the pricing is very reasonable. It's just a good machine all around. To us, it's the best dollar spent. Also, they use Fanuc controls, which are also well supported here. Here in Ottawa it is particularly good because we have Legere Industrial right here, only about five miles away. That really helps. The fact we use mostly Feelers in our shop means that we can swap out parts, if necessary, or get parts from Methods quite quickly."

Methods has also made a real effort in recent years to make their Feeler machines easier to operate.

"There is a lot of good in the design changes Methods has made," says Hudson. "The company has done a lot to improve the machines and make them better for the operator, which has been good. The ergonomics are better – it's easier to load and unload the machine because you don't have to reach in so far to do so. But just putting wash downs in them and small

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items like that make it easier for the operators to work with."

The FEELER VMP-Series includes the VMP-580, VMP-800 and VMP-1100 models with 10,000 rpm spindles ranging from 15 HP – 25 HP. The VMP-580 machine is also available in an APC pallet changer version. The VMP-580 features linear guideways, and the VMP-800 and the VMP-1100 machines have linear guideways on X and Y-Axes and boxways on the Z-Axis. X-Axis travels range from 580mm – 1,100mm (23 – 43 in.), Y-Axis travels range from 420mm – 610mm (16.5 – 24 in.) and Z-Axis travels are from

510mm – 600mm (20 – 23.6 in.). The VMP-580 features a 24-tool automatic tool changer and the VMP-800 and VMP-1100 machines use a 30-tool automatic tool changer. A FANUC Oi-MD control is standard on the VMP-Series machines.

Hudson notes that he will soon likely be investing in new Feeler Machines again. "We will likely be replacing a machine we've had now for 10 years. It doesn't matter what type of machine you have – after 10 years, the electronics are going to be out of date. That's the challenge of having a more expensive machine – you have to run it that much longer to get the return on your investment. By the time you retire the machine, you are running a dinosaur shop."

M&T are doing what they can to keep current for their customers' needs. To learn more about what they can offer, visit www.m-and-t.com. To learn more about Methods Machine Tools, Inc., visit www.methodsmachine.com or go to www.legereindustrial.com to learn about Methods' Canadian distributor. **M&T**