



## Harwin plc, Portsmouth

# One-hit production competes with low-wage economies



Cam auto's all over the UK are being replaced by multi-axis CNC sliding-headstock lathes, as OEMs and subcontractors realise that they can harness the machines' one-hit, lights-out production capabilities to compete with low-wage economies.

A recent convert is connector manufacturer, Harwin plc, Portsmouth, which has invested in seven Star sliders over an 18-month period. At the same time it sold off more than 20 cam-operated lathes, leaving 50 or so on site to be replaced over the next four to five years.

The production output from six of the Star lathes, all entry-level SB-16 bar machines, equals that of the previous 20+ cam auto's.

The seventh CNC slider, a Star SR-20R11, was bought specifically to produce a family of 20 high-voltage posts which form part of a new, 90-degree, co-axial connector developed by Harwin.

The latter machine has resulted in a 60 per cent saving in the cost of machining the connector posts compared with the price previously paid to a subcontractor, which was manufacturing the components in two or three operations. As a result, it was having difficulty holding tolerance, and delivery was often slow.

On the Star multi-axis lathe, the post is reliably mill-turned from 16 mm or 20 mm brass bar to the required accuracy in a single visit to the machine.

*the name in sliding-headstock technology*

**"We achieve a 60% saving over the subcontract cost of machining an electrical connector post"**

**Ricky Phillips  
Turning Shop Manager  
Harwin plc**