



Ultra Precision, Haverhill

35 m/min rapids cut cycle time by 10 per cent



In 2006, Star Micronics uprated the rapid traverse in the linear axes of its entry-level SB-16C sliding-headstock lathe from 20 to 35 m/min.

It placed the machine so far ahead of the competition that one subcontractor with more than 10 sliding-head lathes from another supplier decided to purchase two SB-16Cs, despite the drawback of having two different machine / control combinations on the shop floor.

The company was Ultra Precision, Haverhill, Suffolk, 40 per cent of whose turnover derives from sliding-head turning.

Managing director Geoff Quick explained that there was no alternative to changing supplier, as the Star lathes were able to produce shaft-type, alloy

steel components for the consumer industry 10 per cent faster than other equivalent sliding-head lathes.

The investment was prompted by a new contract that now involves mill-turning up to 200,000 components per month across a family of 20 components, a quarter of which up to 16 mm diameter are machined around the clock on the Stars.

Said Mr Quick, "We found that using maximum feeds and speeds in-cut wore the carbide tips too quickly, which was a false economy as we kept having to stop the machines to change tools.

"Slowing the cutting parameters improved the situation considerably and we were able to compensate by taking advantage of the very fast axis movements between cuts on the Stars.

the name in sliding-headstock technology

"The 10% cycle time advantage made all the difference to the financial viability of the contract"

**Geoff Quick
Managing Director
Ultra Precision Ltd**