

New Automated Laser Cutter Means Increased Productivity and Higher Quality for Dolphin Sails

Dolphin Sails, one of the largest manufacturers of sails, covers and awnings in the UK, has just installed a new Blackman and White Mastercut heavy duty automated flatbed cutting machine which is both improving productivity and saving costs.

The Mastercut is a versatile machine which has a multi-tool head that holds both a knife blade and a laser cutter so one machine can be used for cutting a wide range of materials without having to change tools.



Dolphin's managing director Mathew

Vincent commented "We use the latest high-tech composite and laminated fabrics for our sails, tensile awnings and covers. Even though they're laminated, they are woven textiles, and if they're cut with a knife the edges then have to be sewn to prevent fraying. The laser cutter heat-seals the edges of the material as it cuts which means not only can we cut fabrics faster, but it eliminates the need for sewing the material edges, so dramatically reducing handling time."

The Mastercut has a 3.2 x 14 metre flat bed which means Dolphin is now able to handle



much larger patterns for all their sails and covers. The laser cuts with an accuracy of $\pm 0.02\text{mm}$, and as it's not in direct contact with the material, it means that even though it operates at speeds up to 1100mm/second, there's no dragging of the material so cutting is far more accurate than with a knife. Fully automated nesting algorithms allow patterns to be laid out to

the exact material width in seconds saving time and reducing wastage even further.

Vincent added, "Although we've only had the new Mastercut a few weeks, we've already experienced savings of 2-3% on material costs due to the increased accuracy, and as these

materials are expensive, the savings are significant. Being able to cut and heat seal materials simultaneously speeds up production and reduces labour costs. It means we have increased our productivity at the same time as providing the very highest quality sails, awnings and covers for our customers.”

Ends

More about Blackman & White

With over 45 years' successful business in the design and manufacture of cutting machines under its belt, Blackman and White is the only UK manufacturer and a world class leader in the field of industrial flatbed cutting machines. Blackman and White cutting machines are used across a wide range of industries including marine, automotive, aeronautical, printing, construction and upholstery sectors, Their cutters and plotters range from the Orion, designed for light to medium duty, to the Mastercut heavy duty platform. Blackman & White's innovative Mastercut Versa-Tech series provides laser, knife and routing capabilities cuts thin metal including aluminium, rigid board, Foamex, acrylic and wood up to one inch thick with accuracy greater than 0.1mm. Available with blade, laser cutters or routers, BW Cutters are exported to Europe, the Middle and Far East and throughout the USA.

For further information visit www.blackmanandwhite.com

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