

Fletcher-Terry's New Alta⁹⁹ Automated Substrate Cutter helps significantly improve production output

Overview & Challenge

Jeff Stover, President of ArtGrafix, a large art supply retailer in Beacon Falls, CT, needed to minimize waste and maximize employee time on his production floor. In a typical day, Jeff's employees cut over 500 large pieces of mounting boards made of materials such as foamboard, gatorboard and PVC. Every cut that isn't perfect is time and money wasted. Because of the large amount of material being cut each day, ArtGrafix had experienced a great deal of waste – material that was cut incorrectly and became scrap during the finishing process. It was negatively impacting the bottom line and delaying customer shipments.

A big contributor to the waste was operator fatigue. ArtGrafix employees spend 6-8 hours every day standing on the cement production floor cutting these materials. "Standing for that long on a hard surface was tough on my employees. They would get tired and begin to make mistakes, which slow down production," said Jeff.

Jeff had been a loyal user of Fletcher-Terry's 3100 substrate cutter for almost 15 years. He's always been happy with Fletcher Terry's quality and excellent customer service and the Fletcher 3100 had served him well. As ArtGrafix has grown however, Jeff needed an automated, heavier-duty machine to support his increased production and need to cut a more diverse line of materials. *continued* ▶



"We cut an average of 500 boards a day and since we've had the Alta, we've had 500 perfect pieces a day cut."

- Jeff Stover, President, ArtGrafix





Benefits of the Alta⁹⁹

Alta⁹⁹ is a revolutionary substrate cutter that will give you a flawless cut on the most rigid materials with the push of a button.

- Cuts a variety of materials up to 99" (3.05 m)
- Lead screw drive mechanism powered by ½ HP motor
- Double blade cutting method produces a smooth accurate cut after one pass – no need for a secondary process
- Adjustable cutting speed control dial
- Two position laser sight guide mounted on the cutting head to illuminate a cut line on the substrate

Material Cutting Performance

- Corrugated Plastics: up to ½" thick (13mm)
- Foamboard: up to ½" thick (13mm)
- PVC: up to 10mm thick using "double" blade knife holder
- Aluminum sheets: up to .080"
- Aluminum Composites: Up to 4mm

The Fletcher-Terry Company is one of the most diverse designers and manufacturers of equipment and hand cutting tools in the world today. Through the innovation of our engineers, we have been granted over 90 patents which have produced leading edge tools for cutting and scoring glass, matboard, foamboard, PVC, corrugated plastics, aluminum composites, aluminum sheet, MDF, banner materials and other flexible media. Our world headquarters is located in Farmington, CT.

Solution

Because of Jeff's long-term relationship with Fletcher-Terry, he was asked to be one of several beta test sites for Fletcher-Terry's new Alta⁹⁹ Automated Substrate Cutter. "When I saw the capabilities of the Alta, I was happy to be a beta test site for it. It fit well into my high production environment and it promised to keep operator fatigue at bay," said Jeff. He found that with just a push of a button, the Alta⁹⁹ provides a consistent, smooth and square cut. Almost immediately, Jeff saw a significant decrease in operator error and fatigue and a significant increase in his overall cutting production.

"Our Alta⁹⁹ runs constantly for 6-8 hours every day," Jeff said. His team can now create a consistent and smoother cut every time. "The Alta simply makes better cuts." Its lead screw drive mechanism, powered by a ½ HP motor, allows users to cut heavier materials at a constant speed through the material giving a much better quality cut than with any manual cutting process. "What's better," Jeff says, "it is a lot less taxing on my people – the Alta takes the fatigue factor out."

The Alta can cut a full 8 foot board and because every board is cut perfectly every time, there is no more waste from bad cuts. "We cut an average of 500 boards a day and since we've had the Alta, we've had 500 perfect pieces a day cut."

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The Alta⁹⁹'s motor cuts heavy material with constant pressure at a constant rate of speed giving a better result every time. As a result, ArtGrafix has been able to diversify their business by taking on tougher jobs that in the past, they would have had to turn down. It's been great for business. "Companies will see a return on their investment very quickly. Their bottom line will benefit from reduced waste, a higher quality cut after just one pass, and higher employee satisfaction and productivity," said Jeff.

For a machine this big and powerful, the footprint is relatively small, dimensions are: 128" (3.5m) high, 79" (2.0m) wide and 72" (1.83m) deep. However, Jeff used the wall mounting feature because of limited space in his production area. ■



The Fletcher-Terry Company