HERKAL: Expanding the Boundaries of Steel Fabrication

Since 1999 Herkal, a steel fabricator from Peshtera, Bulgaria, has been making waves in the steel construction industry, not only locally, but abroad as well. With a name like Herkal, meaning “Metal Horse” in the local language of Aromanian, Herkal feels that they are just that, an aggressive force within the industry.

Owned by Dimitar Kochev, company founder and General Manager, Herkal is a family business with strong values and an eye on the future. In 2002 Herkal made the decision to move from compressor maintenance into structural steel fabrication utilizing manual processing. With the capacity to fabricate just over 400 tons a year manually, Herkal knew that the only way to stay competitive in the fast paced market was to automate production. With the valuable engineering support of the specialists from Euromarket – the authorized Peddinghaus distributor in Bulgaria - and after a trip to Peddinghaus Corporations’ global headquarters in Bradley, Illinois in 2008, Herkal made the decision that Peddinghaus was the automation answer they had been looking for.

“By automating our production we have reduced human error and costs; because with manpower, the costs are uncertain. At the end of the day what we can achieve with Peddinghaus is the ability to provide unique projects and be considered competitive against serious players in the industry,” said Dimitar Kochev, General Manager and founder of Herkal.
Today, Herkal has over 20,000 square meters (215,278 square feet) of land to fabricate over 10,000 tons of steel annually; and for Herkal, no job is too big or too intricate. Utilizing five Peddinghaus machines, Herkal is able to take on projects from not only their home country of Bulgaria, but have expanded to producing 80% of their work in exports.

Herkal has realized that to grow business exponentially, exporting is a necessity. Dealing with customers from Asia to Africa to Australia, Herkal has become a global company in the past five years. Herkal realized the importance of being close to customers and being on their “time”. Since starting their relationship with Peddinghaus and seeing the 24 hour service provided, Herkal has opened an office in Australia to satisfy their customers’ needs in various time zones. Herkal believes in having a close relationship with each of their customers and is proud of what they have accomplished in the past five years.

Utilizing a Peddinghaus ABCM-1250 coping machine, an FDB-2500 plate processor, a DG-1100 band saw, a PCD-1100/3B drill line, and Fabripunch plate duplicator, expanding into a global market has been a smart step for Herkal to keep their machines busy and producing profit. With each machine running a forty hour work week, Herkal has kept the Peddinghaus machines busy to meet the tight timelines for their global clientele.

Apart from quality, accuracy, and the rugged build of the machines, service was the other piece in the Herkal puzzle. Providing the “best service in the country” for “Peddinghaus has made a fantastic partner for Herkal over the past 5 years.” Herkal also mentions that their experience with service is great, because throughout their time with Peddinghaus, they have needed very little service to keep their machines running and their profit flowing. Dimitar stated that, “without Peddinghaus it would have been impossible to afford the projects we have done in the last 5 years, we could never get this accuracy, quality and speed manually.”

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