

Direct Company Support Scheme enhances Bifrangi's competitiveness

Bifrangi UK are an advanced manufacturing company providing a range of high end products into the automotive and power generation sectors. Its client base includes both Prime and Tier 1 suppliers and includes such leading organisations as Perkins, Daimler, Cummins, Iveco, New Holland and Guascor.

Whilst quality management has always been paramount in the business and appropriate procedures and processes were place, the company is continually improving in response to the increasing requirements of the automotive sector which can be specific and challenging.

In the previous year the company had undergone a reorganisation to better position itself to capitalise on future opportunities focussing on some significant growth targets. As part of its ambitious growth plans, the company placed an increased focus onto technology developments which had always been a key differentiator for the company's products. In addition, Bifrangi was also seeking to streamline and reinforce its working procedures and processes, further enhancing their customer focussed thinking and especially to strengthen their ability to rapidly and confidently pinpoint root causes of often complex engineering problems.

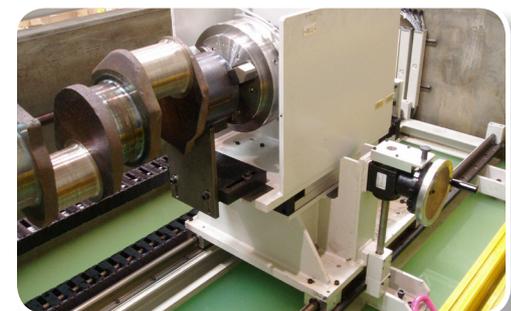
With financial support from the ERDF funded Direct Company Support Programme operated by the National Metals Technology Centre (NAMTEC), Bifrangi selected Brook Corporate Developments to work with them in bringing about these significant enhancements.

Using well established structured analysis techniques, Brook Corporate Developments undertook a detailed analysis of the company's procedures, helping define

improvements and bringing about a significant reduction in overhead and lost productivity. Using these enhancements, the improved processes were then proven by implementing them against four projects to improve productivity and quality in the manufacture of crankshafts:

- Reduction in distortion to help minimise straightening, post hardening, reduce scrap due to straightening cracks, elimination of a re centering operation and to present a better crank for grinding.
- Reductions in thermal cracking
- Improvements in surface finish techniques with the potential for marked performance enhancement
- Scrap reduction within the induction hardening process

The overall programme of support has yielded immediate cost savings with the internal projects presenting an estimated benefit of up to £100,000 per year with much greater potential in the future as the knowledge gained is cascaded throughout the company. Unquestionably, the demonstration and support of the application of the enhanced processes on tangible projects also cemented the knowledge transfer into the company.



Overall the project to date has improved our competitiveness and will place us in a stronger position to win new business.

**Mark Alcock, Technical
Manager, Bifrangi**

