

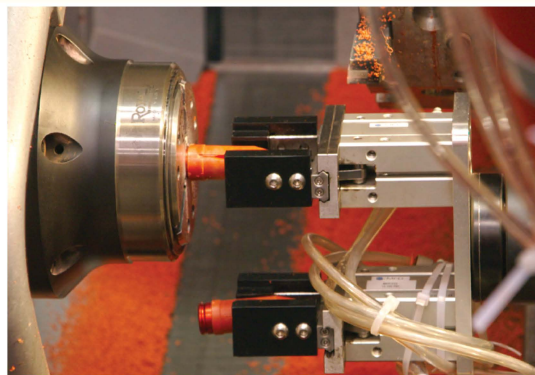


How Injecton Molding Company Reached an ROI in 5 Months

Tuthill Plastics Group, a full-service injection molding company, deployed Sawyer in its Clearwater, Florida factory in December 2016, and by May the following year, the company already saw powerful results.

Results

- Able to run three shifts per day
- Achieved ROI in five months
- Improved part quality by reducing length defects by 98 percent
- Enabled employees to take on more value-added tasks



The Challenge

As a custom machine shop, Tuthill often has very short product runs, making the implementation of automation very challenging. Richard Curtin, president of Tuthill Plastics, noted that finding technology that could add value and deliver a return in short runs seemed like an impossibility. To compensate for the lack of automation, Tuthill has used its employees to fill the gaps on the factory floor, taking on very tedious and repetitive processes that require precision and patience.

The Solution

In December, Tuthill deployed Sawyer, which is operating three shifts per day, five days per week to pick parts from a conveyor belt and precisely place them into a computer numeric control (CNC) machine. Not only has the robot allowed Tuthill's employees time to focus on more complex roles in the factory, it has improved part quality significantly. Part placement is extremely critical to the machining process at Tuthill, and Sawyer's force-sensing abilities has reduced a length defect in the parts by 98 percent.

With Sawyer, Tuthill has seen a rapid return on investment. By eliminating the need for human labor in this CNC machining process, Sawyer is filling a position that cost Tuthill about 10 cents per part with an employee.

The Future

Given the success of the current machining process, Tuthill has extended the run on this project through October 2017 with Sawyer at the helm. The company plans to deploy the robot for other repetitive, low-skill jobs on the factory floor, and is considering adding more Sawyers to its lineup in the coming years.

Watch Sawyer in action at Tuthill:

<http://rethinkrobotics.com/tuthillplastics>

rethinkrobotics.com

27 Wormwood Street
Boston, MA 02210
Telephone: (617) 500-2487

inquiry@rethinkrobotics.com



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