



Injection Moulding

Case study: Plastic board, Holmgrens Plast, Sweden

Applications in Plastics

- Cutting/Finishing
- Glueing/Sealing/Dispensing
- Flaming/Painting
- Assembly
- Packing/Palletizing
- Inspection/Quality control
- Machine Tending

Holmgren's Plast is involved in injection moulding different types of plastic products, including construction of child trolley-boards that snap onto the back of prams – a product the global market can't get enough of.

INCREASED PRODUCTION

Holmgrens Plast manufactures two types of 'boards' for its customer Lascal: the KiddyBoard and the BuggyBoard. The boards attach to the rear of a pram or pushchair and are best described as platforms on wheels, used for transporting older children behind younger ones. Since the introduction of the boards in 1999, production has been unable to keep up with demand, in more than 20 countries.

In 2001, to help Holmgrens keep up with the demand, three ABB 6-axis robots were introduced into the production to supplement the existing 3-axis robots, says Kenneth Klint, production manager at Holmgrens Plast in Småland, in the south of Sweden.

The installation of the 6-axis robots has had far-reaching effects on the company. "We have become more technical, he says. We have learned how to be more efficient and it has saved us a lot of money."

"Our investment in three six-axis robot cells saves the wages of about 12 people each year," he says. "At the same time we have increased production by 100 percent, so we employ the people doing other things which are more interesting for them. It was quite a boring job, and the quality is also a lot higher than it was with manual sampling. The robot does the same thing every time."

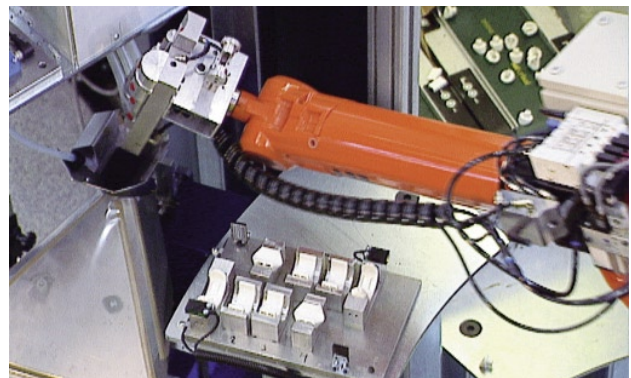


Holmgrens Plast has also improved customer relations as a result. "Our customer feels a lot safer. We feel a lot safer. They feel that production is under control," says Klint.



Since investing in a six axis robot, the only difficulty for Holmgrens Plast is the degree of education in programming required to operate it, but he says ABB is working with Holmgrens Plast and with other companies to make the programming easier. "We are now looking at the next type of robot cell to help us make the next generation of plates for trolleys going into production later this year," says Klint. The next investment will be in using robots for cutting out and packing the trolleys.

"We are now making 250,000 trolleys a year and that's as much as we can produce. Every plate coming off our production line is a sold one so we are trying to speed up capacity by 100 percent. And our customer tells us he will be able to sell them all."



Facts about Animex, Sweden

Animex AB, founded in 1985, offers system solutions and peripheral equipment to the plastics industry including everything from handling raw materials to prepacked components. Xflex is the name of the module based system for flexible automation.