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ASPHALT REPAIR EQUIPMENT

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THE PROBLEM

Falcon initially approached BLUCO with multiple concerns including fixturing, material handling, and space restrictions with regards to the production of their trailer frames. Once BLUCO paid a visit to their location with our hands-on travel demo trailer, it became apparent that safety, quality, productivity and waste elimination were a big part of Falcon's search for a better solution. Falcon manufactures 3 types of trailer frames - single axle, tandem axle, and tri-axle. At the time Falcon reached out to BLUCO, they had a single fixture that could accommodate 1 of their trailers but not all 3. Wishing to expand capacity, Falcon was in the search for a fixture installation that could handle all 3 of their trailer frame types along with the ability to manage custom frames.

THE SOLUTION

After presenting Falcon with CAD concept designs, and during an on-site visit with BLUCO's demo trailer, it became apparent that manipulation of the tooling for both lifting and rotating was needed. BLUCO introduced the ALM positioner to Falcon, and the perfect solution was born. The combination of the ALM positioner with the BLUCO tooling would allow them to load, weld, rotate and release the part from the fixturing while increasing safety and reducing production times.

Once the concept and quote were completed, Falcon shipped the part to BLUCO's Validation Center to prove out the solution. At the Validation Center, Falcon operators, using their actual part, experienced and evaluated the ALM/BLUCO installation.



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1. Tell us a little bit about your need(s); what you were seeking to accomplish/improve?

With any project that Falcon tackles, we look to positively impact as many of the following 5 measureables as possible:

- 1) safety and environmental
- 2) quality improvement
- 3) material savings
- 4) productivity improvement
- 5) waste elimination

The preliminary grading of this frame fixture project was that it would positively effect points 1 thru 5.

2. Were there other solutions you considered? If so, why did you not choose them?

We evaluated two other units. Unit A was not customized for our application it was purchased "off-the-shelf" and you get what you get. Unit B was the lifters only – it did not include the fixture with clamps, spacers, etc. They were not very responsive to our questions or our needs.

3. How many BLUCO/ALM units do you presently own/rent? Are you looking to purchase more in the future?

We own the frame fixture from BLUCO/ALM. We recently added a rent-to-own lift from BLUCO which we use for hopper wall production. We will probably purchase another welding table in the next 6-12 months.

4. What would you pick as the top benefit of using ALM positioners?

The safety aspect for our employees is the key benefit for the positioners. Our old fixture was more of fixed jig with the working surface at ~48"; it could not articulate up and down. This would cause ergonomic concerns as our people were loading steel pieces up to this working surface. The ALM positioner allows us to move the fixture up and down to levels for the employees to safely lift steel rails and parts.

- Interview completed by Jim Jurgens, VPO

5. What would you pick as the top benefit of using BLUCO modular tooling?

The top benefit that we've seen for the modular tooling is the ability for our team to move quickly loading their pieces to predetermined, marked locations. Further, these locations are "true" from a quality perspective. Our old fixture did not have marked locations and after many years of use, the quality was not always true.

6. What has been the impact on your productivity?

So far, we've seen an increase in productivity of 25% and fully expect that to grow the longer we use the installation.

7. What has been their impact on your worker comfort?

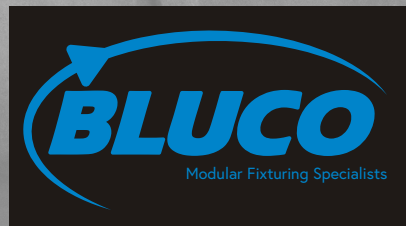
I think our employees would tell you that the fixture has been much easier to work with and thus has been more comfortable for them.

8. How was your experience working with BLUCO?

Todd from Bluco has been great to work with. The first time he came to our facility, he arrived with the trailer of tooling along with his lap top with Solidworks. We did not get that treatment from any other vendor. Todd's level of communication afterward included several calls, emails and a webinar with our operations team.



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