SUCCESS STORY

Honing in on the challenge of autonomy

Founded in 1923 in Switzerland as a mechanical repair shop, STRAUSAK, today a subsidiary of ROLLOMATIC HOLDING SA, served the watch making industry until diversifying its product range in the early 1970's. Since 1973, the company has been producing high precision tool grinding machines for the textile, electronics, automobile and aerospace industries. Active in 23 markets, STRAUSAK delivers more than 500 grinders each year to customers around the world.

For several years running, STRAUSAK's 5 Axis CNC-Tool Grinding Machine, known simply as U-Grind, has been providing customers with a reliable, efficient and highly accurate system for their grinding and re-sharpening needs. Designed essentially for small batch sizes, U-Grind's limited tool charging capacity restricts its autonomy to shorter working cycles, a problem for the growing number of customers wanting to run their machines throughout the night.

"The challenges facing STRAUSAK were many: automate U-Grind so that it had the necessary capacity — and autonomy — to run unattended, while maintaining the same high level of precision and flexibility, says Alexandre Condrau, Managing Director at Strausak. It was also important not to add cumbersome extensions that would increase its surface area on the shop floor. And finally, a robotic solution had to be simple enough for operators to run by themselves."

"Integrating a 6-axis machine with its own commands and without taking lots of space is a true puzzle", explains Pierre-Alain Badoud, Director of R&D at STRAUSAK. But that's exactly the solution the company found with Stäubli's TX60L series, an option to the U-Grind that has been available since June 2015.

Customer benefits:

- Performance and autonomy
- Time savings with high-speed robot arm and fast load/unload times
- Greater flexibility with wide range of motion
- Easy operator access/no additional floor space with integration into U-Grind machine enclosure
- Autonomy – facilitates large uninterrupted production batches
- Easy to use with robot commands integrated into core software

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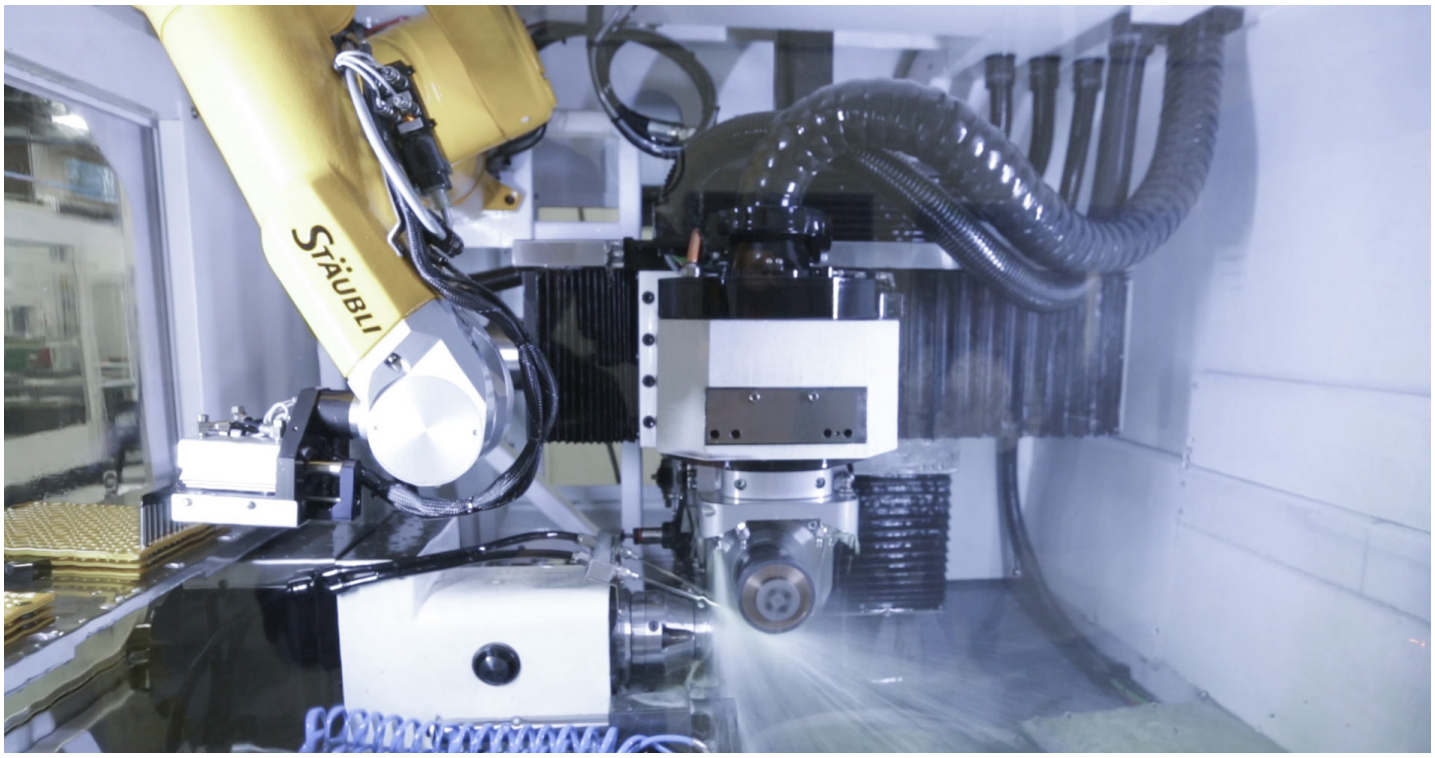

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Because the robot is totally integrated into the machine enclosure, it doesn't take up additional floor space. It also sits outside the machine working area, giving operators unrestricted access for set up.

The TX60L has a considerably wide range of motion and its fast load and unload capacity makes it perfect for unattended, large batch production. "Only Stäubli, with the model TX60L, worked for the space we wanted, with the flexibility and precision we needed", says Badoud.

Thanks to the hands-on technical assistance provided by Stäubli, the team at STRAUSAK saved considerable time during the integration phase of the robot. "Very quickly we arrived at the level of autonomy we wanted", says Badoud. Clients also save time: the fast load and unload times of the robot arm allow U-Grind to work more efficiently and with fewer interruptions.

Another noteworthy benefit for STRAUSAK customers, including Helical Tool in the United States, is the robot ease and simplicity of use. All the necessary commands for the robot are seamlessly integrated into STRAUSAK's core software, which the clients already know. The result is an efficient, high-speed machine that is easy to use, can be adapted to customer specifications, and increases output by facilitating uninterrupted production runs in large batches.

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