

"The Sharper Edge"TM

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Microblade's new plant: 30% more space and high efficiency production

Microblade Limited, Kinetic's sister company in Sheffield, England, has moved into its new facilities. The move went smoothly, and production has settled into a "business as usual" routine.

The plant is a model of modern design, brilliantly lit with sodium vapor lighting and planned for maximum efficiency. What's more, because we've

always found a pleasant environment important to producing quality products, we've done our best to make the plant colorful as well as clean.

As Frank Rabjohn, a Microblade machine operator, says, "We all appreciate the clean, bright atmosphere—even the machines have been scraped and painted in light colors. The place is spotless. We're finding that the

quality of the surroundings improves the quality of life during our workdays. It encourages people to take pride in their work and their workplace. We can already see that the new plant is going to be a very productive move for Microblade."

All details aside, this plant is really about more streamlined production.

(Continued on back)



Robert Huebner, Kinetik's shipping department leadman, carefully packing a shipment of multi-block bottom slitter bands.

Our shipping department keeps you sharp

It's one thing to produce a perfectly beveled, perfectly sharp-edged blade. It's quite another to get it to you in the same, perfect condition. The job requires care and precision.

Sure, some manufacturers throw their knives into a standard size cardboard box, fill it with a few thousand styro-foam peanuts, and wish the shipment well as the freight company hauls it away.

But the world is a tough place. And as the peanut filled box passes from hand to hand, the knives rattle around and bang against each other. By the time the customer receives the order, the blades can be nicked and unusable. If the production manager was hoping the delivery would save the day, he has to think again.

The routine we've just described is an all too familiar one. That's why at Kinetik our shipping department takes extra care to see that your knives look the same when you open the box as when we closed it.

Here's what we do. We coat the knives with oil and then dip them in a liquid plastic, which forms a sealed package around the blades. The oil prevents rusting, and the plastic protects the blades from nicks and chips. You can store your knives in their plastic packages for 5-10 years, and your blades will still be like new when you break open the plastic covering.

Next, our shipping department builds a wooden box that fits the size and shape of your order. We don't use standard size boxes because we don't want our knives rolling around inside like loose marbles. Our shipping clerks—the unsung heroes of this story—craft pine boxes that hug their contents.

The plastic coated knives, which have been carefully wrapped in newspaper, are then fitted snugly into the pine box like puzzle pieces. There's no excess room for the contents to move around and damage itself in transit.

Assuming that your order has undergone the normal rigors of transit, you should get undamaged, well sealed knives. And it shouldn't matter whether the box has traveled fifty miles or ten thousand. You can use the knives immediately or store them with confidence.

The wooden boxes our people construct are works of art in themselves, but more importantly, they do the job. How do we know? Our freight damage claims are virtually non-existent.

And there's never an extra charge for our shipping service because we don't think of it as an "extra." When we've produced a precision knife, our job is only half done. Getting that knife to you in perfect condition is the next step in the manufacturing process. It's all part of serving you the right way.

Microblade

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The new facilities offer us several advantages.

First, it centralizes our operation. In the past, our production process was split between two facilities. Lathe operations, drilling, and heat treating took place in one location while grinding was done in a nearby, second location. Now, however, we have incorporated all of the production processes under a single roof.

Our centralized location gives us more flexibility—we can match workers to machines when and where the need arises. This versatility helps us better keep pace with orders and uses our people more efficiently.

A second way the new plant increases our efficiency is through its design for better material flow. Everything—from storing raw materials, to heat treating, to packing finished orders—has been planned with high efficiency in mind. We can manufacture saws better and faster because of the way the plant is designed—in fact, we are already finding increased productivity per work hour.

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And speaking of work, the plant is teeming with work these days. It now takes two full shifts to keep up with demand. We want to thank all of you who recognized the quality of our company's products and have supported them so well. We won't disappoint you.

We are increasing our plant and office staff by 20% to serve the growing demand. We want you to know this because we want to assure you that as we get bigger, we won't change the way we do business. Our new plant should serve you even better than the old Herries Road plant. As demand grows, so will our service.