

Reliability, Performance and Value Make Nexus Machining Center a Winner

As the #1 producer of glass tableware in the world, Libbey runs its production facilities 24/7. Products manufactured here include drinking glasses, vases, glass plates and bowls for consumers and an array of restaurants, hotels and airlines. Critical to the plant's operations is its machine shop, which must recondition molds quickly to keep the factory humming.

Each item Libbey makes requires from 24 to 60 molds for production and backup tooling. "Molding molten glass at 2300° F, these molds take a lot of abuse," said Walter Britton, machine shop supervisor. "About 90% of our work is mold restoration to original specifications out of 431 stainless, nickel/aluminum/bronze alloys, or cast iron. Along with a high level of performance, we absolutely require machine reliability."

Libbey's existing vertical machining center was already proving unreliable. But, with a severely restricted budget, Britton figured they could only afford a "low-priced" model from a domestic builder. However, when they sat down with Mazak to discuss the new Nexus verticals, they found that many options on the low-cost

machine were standard on the Nexus VCN-410A vertical machining center. This narrowed the cost gap to the point of insignificance.

In the bargain, Libbey was able to benefit from technology advances built in to the Nexus Series machine tools. Spindle speed is raised 20% and horsepower increased 25%. Tool-change time was cut almost in half, meaning very real increases in metal removal. The Mazatrol CNC combines conversational with EIA programming and powerful 3D graphic simulation to optimize tool paths and cycle time.

Libbey has a history with Mazak support through earlier installations of an FJV machining center and Quick Turn 20 turning center. Britton comments, “We’ve found Mazak service to be impeccable. Calls are returned promptly and technicians are on-site quickly. We know this machine will be here 10 years from now. We believe we’ve got a Cadillac machine at a Chevy price.”



Mark Gruner (left) and Walter Britton (right) and the Nexus 410A vertical machining center at Libbey Inc.

