

Case Study

Nu-Texa Frictions Ltd

Background

Nu-Texa Frictions Ltd primarily provides brake linings, pads and clutches for the commercial vehicle sector, including buses and trucks and has recently diversified into products for VW vehicles and mountain bikes.

The main product line of commercial brake shoes can be split into two ranges: new and reconditioned. The reconditioning is more labour intensive with the need to clean and strip down items as received, but also has challenges regarding the cleaning materials required and disposal of used consumables.

Challenge

Through an initial introduction from the Wirral Chamber, Nu-Texa Frictions worked with the Horizons teams to investigate how they could overcome several challenges that could create risk for the company now and in the future.

Initial visits and meetings resulted in a Statement of Work focusing on the actions and next steps to provide the most value for the company and support in de-risking operations considered more urgent than generally upgrading their current plant or systems.

Delivery Partner



Solution

A key aspect of the support was collecting and recording process information related to grinding an inner radius on pads, a crucial activity crucial that Nu-Texa Frictions carries out. An older machine was utilised to support this activity, but it has now worn to the point where in-depth skills and experience are required to compensate for this.

Nu-Texa Frictions is home to a strongly invested and loyal workforce that brings many advantages. However, the Horizons teams were able to view their challenges through a fresh perspective, offering non-biased recommendations and facilitating the internal transfer of knowledge that led to a reduced reliance on specific individuals within the workforce and consequently de-risking this process.

This was reinforced by pinpointing areas that underwent significant changes, embracing new technologies, and implementing new working practices designed to enhance the process and mitigate risks moving forward.

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The traditional printing method relies on manual triggering as the part is fed in front of a print head. Although the original intention was to provide jigs to ensure that printing was consistent, it soon became apparent there was an opportunity for radically improving the whole process.

Nu-Texa Frictions recently invested in new printing equipment for printing designs onto their products, which has become not only a commercial driver but has improved the safety of their teams, following the legislative requirements needed.

In addition to this equipment, the company has also acquired a hand-propelled linear feed bed to use alongside an existing rotary feed, creating a universal mount for the print head and optical trigger. The Horizons teams designed and developed the proposed mount using additive manufacturing (3D printing techniques) that will increase productivity, efficiencies and the overall quality of their printing.

Impact

The remedial work for improving and de-risking the grinding machinery has created an opportunity to upskill new staff on specialist machinery that is critical to the output of their products. It has also provided a baseline repository of knowledge regarding operations that can be referenced and built on over time.

Introducing a universal mounting system for the print head will enhance printing capabilities, speed, and quality. By optimising this process, Nu-Texa can allocate more team members to focus on this task.

Now that the Horizons teams have demonstrated new methods, techniques and advantages of emerging technologies to Nu-Texa, the company is in a better position to build on its existing programme for addressing the company challenges with greater experience, understanding and confidence whilst removing an immediate threat, allowing resources to focus on other areas.