

THE INNOVATOR

Spring 2001

A quarterly publication of...



Innovation Through Common Sense

Company Focus... Evolution from welding shop to precision sheet metal job shop

You have read how BEGNEAUD was founded as a welding/fabrication company in 1978. Originally, products were manufactured by cutting numerous pieces of metal and welding those pieces together. Since then BEGNEAUD has continued to evolve utilizing their *Innovation through Common Sense*. This evolution meant seeking out alternative fabrication techniques. These alternative methods are often used as a way to improve on a customer's design and give them the highest quality product using the most effective processes available. Many times the best solutions are alternatives to welding, or at the very least, a compromise between high tech solutions and welding.

**BEGNEAUD never settles
for status quo.**



Rolling utility table ►
with wood, using
sheet metal technology

One key alternative to welding is the use of the press brake. Every time a bend is made a weld is eliminated, and so is the time it takes to make and finish the weld. Through the years, BEGNEAUD has purchased several TRUMPF press brakes. Each new machine is more advanced than the one purchased before, thereby consistently improving our technique and turnaround time.

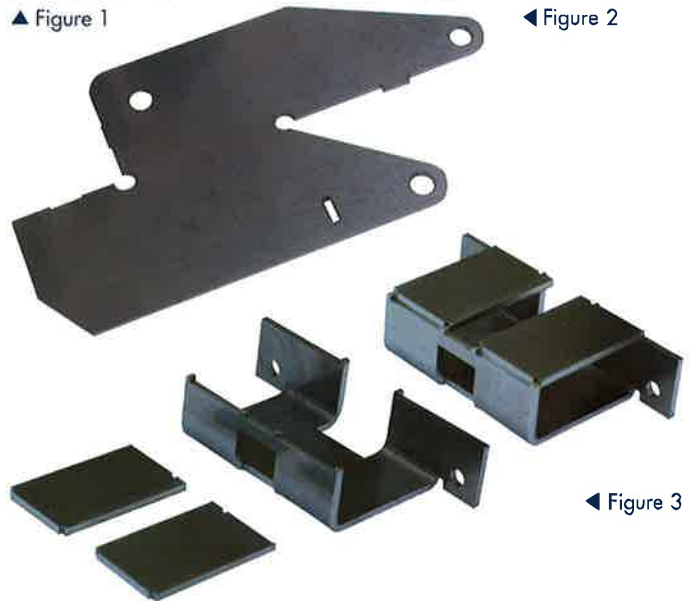
Other options to eliminate or minimize welding are puzzle locks, slot and tabs and notch and tabs. The puzzle lock method, as shown in Figure 1, is used to register two



▲ Figure 1



◀ Figure 2



◀ Figure 3

pieces of metal together. This method can eliminate welds completely. The slot and tab method, as illustrated in Figure 2, and the notch and tab method, as illustrated in Figure 3, are used to position the metals for accuracy and consistency. These methods also increase the speed of the assembly. All of these methods are effective because the "self-fixturing" pieces of a part are only capable of fitting together one way. They also improve the quality and stability of the seams between the two parts being joined. Welding may or may not be necessary, depending on the type of seam being created.

Rolling utility tables BEGNEAUD created for internal use are a perfect example of fabrication without welding. The table design evolved from low profile carts that BEGNEAUD had been producing. The tables were manufactured from galvanized sheet metal, which were cut using the TRUMPF CNC punches and then formed using the TRUMPF CNC press brakes. Flanges were formed into the corners so that the bolts used to fasten the wheels could run through the flanges, which eliminated the need for any welding. The pieces were then bolted together. This

Company Focus... Evolution from welding shop to precision sheet metal job shop continued...

table and many other internal innovations, like their carts and sheet metal storage racks, are now a part of the BEGNEAUD industrial product line.



Rolling cart with plastic bin using slot and tab construction

Low profile cart using very little welding



Rolling cart

These sheet metal products can be reproduced fairly quickly. Each part can be laser cut or punched in multiples, sent through the

TRUMPF press brake for precise bends, and assembled using mechanical hardware. Because the TRUMPF CNC press brake has a computerized gauging system (or backstop) bends are extremely accurate throughout the entire production run. The production and assembly times are significantly decreased. Furthermore, when a bend is used to form an edge, the additional finishing typically necessary for welded joints is eliminated.

BEGNEAUD never settles for status quo. TOPS 600, the newest enhancement to their press brake equipment, gives them off-line programming capabilities, as they have with their lasers and punches. BEGNEAUD operators are now able to pre-program the press brake's computer system for jobs using a P.C. located in another area of the shop - while the machine is running another job. With sophisticated graphics also a part of this upgrade, the operators are able to walk through the bend processes before running the job and the system forewarns them of possible collisions and bend or angle problems.

Is BEGNEAUD completely doing away with welding as a fabrication method? "Not at all. The word weld is not a 'bad' word to us," explains Don Begneaud. "Just because we eliminate the weld 100% in some projects, we're not removing our welding capabilities. We recognize the value of welding and still use

it when it is the best solution for a project. Also, we have already made the first step into the world of laser and computer-controlled welding by purchasing the small TRUMPF Profiweld laser welder for fine detailed welding." BEGNEAUD clearly appreciates the foundation welding has played in their success and the continued role of welding in future projects. Technology and the basic tools of sheet metal fabrication must go hand in hand in developing the most efficient, innovative solutions possible.

Partners to Success

The demands we place on ourselves have forced us to be dissatisfied with "average" and aim for "excellence".



Don Begneaud
Owner/President, BEGNEAUD

BEGNEAUD has achieved many goals throughout the twenty-two years we have been in business. The equipment we have added in the shop and the technologies we have learned are only parts of our evolution process. The evolution from a welding shop to a precision sheet metal job shop has not been so much a search for welding alternatives as much as a progression toward more effective uses of both our mechanical and human resources.

The BEGNEAUD team has grown with the industry. We have enhanced our training techniques and raised our standards to stay in step with the higher expectations of our customers. Actually, most of the incentive for improvements have come more from within the company. The demands we place on ourselves have forced us to be dissatisfied with "average" and aim for "excellence."

The growth of our human resources has not been limited to training. I credit our open-mindedness to change as being a vital part of our continued success. Specifically, I believe our progression toward bringing women out of the offices and onto the shop floor has helped give us an added insight into the diversity of our workforce. Each member of the BEGNEAUD team contributes to the company's success. By helping them grow within the industry, we give them pride in themselves and in the company.

Expanding on progression, we were recently given the opportunity to directly educate a few possible future engineers. In January we were approached by Dr. Bill Dedo and the Cathedral-Carmel School Science Olympiad Team to assist them with their "Battery Buggy" project, we were excited and ready to help in any way we could. The time spent with the three young scientists brought the opportunity for hands-on education straight to the BEGNEAUD shop floor. We congratulate Sidney Sehon (6th grade), Matt Landrum (7th grade), and Nick Domino (8th grade), the three students who placed second in the regional competition at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette in mid-February. We wish them all the best as they go to the State competition on April 7th in New Orleans. We'll try to update you on their progress in a future issue of *The Innovator*.

In future issues, we'll also bring you details of our upcoming First Biennial Technology Transfer Seminar, TRUMPF User Group. BEGNEAUD is hosting this event April 26th and 27th. We are looking forward to welcoming other TRUMPF innovators to our city to share their ideas and fabrication triumphs.

Women on the Shop Floor

BEGNEAUD prides themselves on being innovative in all areas of sheet metal fabrication . . . the latest technologies, the most advanced fabrication processes, and the best trained workforce . . . man or woman. Most BEGNEAUD plant personnel are hired as "flexo-operators." These individuals are trained to work in all production areas - including lasers, presses, punches, and finishing.

There is a mutual respect, whether you are a man or woman.

'man's world', but the guys have always treated me with respect and didn't mind showing me things here and there," says Martina. Since then Deborah Adkins, Terry Blackstone, Roxanne Hymel, Amanda Lantrip, and Myra Robin have joined Martina on the shop floor. As with other BEGNEAUD team members, each woman has found her niche within the shop and usually focuses much of her time in that area, functioning as backup for the other areas.

There are no special standards made when hiring women. In fact, given the strict BEGNEAUD hiring criteria, it's difficult to get a job with BEGNEAUD whether you are a man or woman. Women don't operate under different work standards either. Everyone in the shop helps one another with difficult tasks. Safety guidelines are in place and special equipment is used to ensure that no one does any unnecessary lifting.



Dawn Comeaux, Executive Assistant
Stephanie Richard, Customer Service

Amanda Lantrip,
Punch/CAM Operator

Martina Joseph, Flexo Operator
Roxanne Hymel, Laser Operator

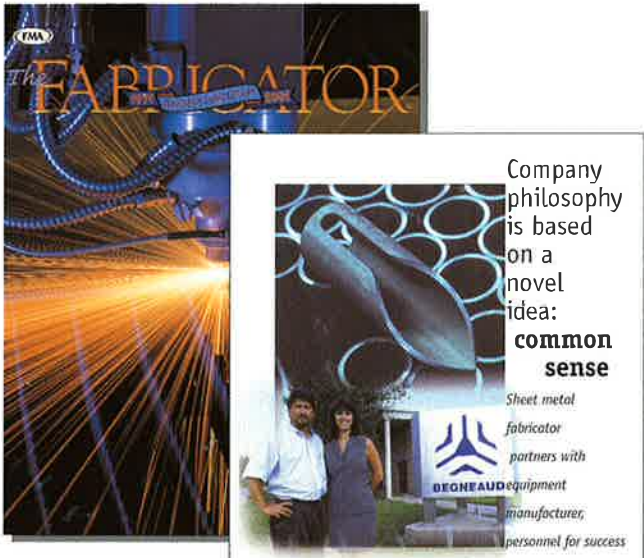
It was perhaps best stated by Deborah Adkins, the newest woman hired to work in the shop, "If all these other people are running it and they learned it, I can learn it too." Now that's the BEGNEAUD attitude

The Lingo

"**Press Brake**" a device designed for straight-line bending.

The BEGNEAUD Touch

BEGNEAUD was recently featured in the February issue of The FABRICATOR®, an international fabricating magazine.



Company philosophy is based on a novel idea: common sense

Sheet metal fabricator partners with manufacturer, personnel for success

By Bill Kemper, Contributing Writer

Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is based in Lafayette, Louisiana, the heart of Cajun country. The small town has a big reputation for its sheet metal fabricators. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

Innovation Through Machines
Begnaud has had years of experience in the sheet metal fabricating industry. In 1978, it started as a small family-owned business. Over the years, it has grown and expanded its capabilities. The company's success is due to its innovation and its commitment to quality. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

Company Philosophy
The company's success is based on a simple philosophy: common sense. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service. The company's success is due to its innovation and its commitment to quality.

Photo: Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc.



Workers and machine operators keep their plants in the best of health and ready to take on any challenge.



Workers and machine operators keep their plants in the best of health and ready to take on any challenge.

Quality Control
Quality control is a top priority for Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. The company uses state-of-the-art equipment and processes to ensure that every product meets the highest standards of quality. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

Customer Service
Customer service is a top priority for Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. The company is committed to providing excellent service to all its customers. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

Employee Training
Employee training is a top priority for Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. The company invests in its employees and provides them with the best training and development opportunities. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

Community Involvement
Community involvement is a top priority for Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. The company is committed to giving back to the community and supporting local initiatives. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

Environmental Stewardship
Environmental stewardship is a top priority for Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. The company is committed to protecting the environment and reducing its carbon footprint. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

Continuous Improvement
Continuous improvement is a top priority for Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. The company is committed to constantly improving its processes and products. Begnaud Manufacturing, Inc. is a family-owned business that has been in operation since 1978. It is a sheet metal fabricator that has a reputation for its quality work and its customer service.

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Special Congratulations

Congratulations to Rene' DeMoura CMfgE, Vice President of BEGNEAUD, on his recent Manufacturing Engineers Certification through the Society of Manufacturing Engineers. Be on the look out for an article on Rene's most recent accomplishment in the next **Innovator**.

Calendar of Events

April 25 - 29	Festival International de Louisiane Lafayette, LA
April 26 - 27	The First Biennial Technology Transfer Seminar, TRUMPF User Group, Lafayette, LA
April 29 - May 1	Sheet Metal Forum, Las Vegas

Employee Anniversaries

April	Martina Joseph	4 years
	Roxanne Hymel	2 years
	Chris Guilbeau	3 years
May	Myra Robin	2 years
	Blaine Baudoin	9 years
June	Rene' DeMoura	16 years
	Bryan Lagrange	1 year
	Doug Begnaud	19 years
	David Reynolds	4 years
	Julia Bellard	12 years

Member of:

Greater Lafayette Chamber of Commerce

MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Drivers)

SCHOOL 2 WORK

LAFAYETTE EDUCATION FOUNDATION

UL (UNIVERSITY OF LOUISIANA) ALUMNI ASSOCIATION

FMA (Fabricators and Manufacturers Association)

Innovation Through Common Sense



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