



Neon Integral de México Takes Router to the Bank

Product Spotlight:
Gerber ADVANTAGE Router 600

Neon Integral de México
Mexico City, Mexico

"The market is demanding routed work, and we made the decision to be more competitive," stated Juan Pablo Fonseca, industrial engineer for this large sign company of approximately 200 employees. Its two factories are responsible for up to US\$4 million in annual sales. With numbers like these, this statement doesn't sound like one from a company that needs to worry too much about staying competitive, does it? However, smart companies of all sizes know that it always pays to keep an eye on your competitors.

Neon Integral de México in Mexico City has been using a router since July 1997. The equipment of choice was the Gerber ADVANTAGE Router™ 600 (AR600) with a work area measuring 6-foot 8-inches by 10-feet (2 by 3 meters). Some of the options include a 7 horsepower spindle motor and Gerber's T-Vac™ vacuum table. The proud owners are also anxious to add a swivel knife assembly for cutting vinyl and masks.

Neon Integral de México has been producing custom exterior signs and awnings, and interior signage, since 1985. Much of the interior signage is for well-known department store chains.

The department stores usually request square, flexible-face signs with vinyl on them. Fonseca stated, "Since this type of sign accounts for 60% of our production, we rout the square signs to achieve more accurate measurements at a faster speed." Although most of the routed signs are interior, some exterior signs are routed in acrylic (like backlit letters routed to fit into a light box), aluminum, plate, or copper.

The company's first large routing job required an average output of 20 signs a day for a major bank with several branch offices. Aluminum signs and flexible-face signs were created for the exterior façades, and plastic or wood signs were displayed inside the banks.

Before purchasing the router, Fonseca's group had to cut the signs and dimensional letters by hand.

"Our work was more artistic than accurate; we can cut more precisely now," he observed. "It used to take much longer to produce one letter because we had to draw a template, transfer it onto the plate of aluminum or whatever, and cut it. The template had to be transferred onto the plate each time. All we have to do now is cut, and many of the people who were doing all that hand work are free to work on other things." The company has reduced labor costs by 50% due to increased productivity.

However, productivity has not come at the expense of quality – quality has, in fact, improved dramatically.

Fonseca explained, "Our customers are much more pleased because the work looks almost flawless – even close up. Before, you had to look at it from a distance or you would see mistakes. We've reduced our delivery time from four weeks to much less."

He went on to say that he and his coworkers appreciate the AR600's 3D capability, and that its accuracy allows quicker assembly time with no rework. He concluded, "We have the liberty to create new things. You can create whatever you imagine quickly and easily. One of our newer employees learned to use the router in only a week. We're very happy with the router and with Gerber's people here in Mexico."

Visit the Neon Integral de México web site at www.neon.com.mx. The company can be reached by calling (525) 357 0564.

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