Take 'Em for a Spin

NEED FAST, RELIABLE DEBURRING OF SMALL PARTS?

By Steven R. Alviti
Bel Air Finishing Supply

The proliferation of automated metal cutting equipment such as CNC milling and turning machines, coupled with automatic feeding capability, high spindle speeds and sophisticated micro-tooling, has driven continuing increases in machining productivity despite the complex geometries of many parts. Driven by miniaturization and labor saving features, development of these new machining systems has dramatically lowered manufacturing costs by enabling production of more parts with less labor input.

Unfortunately, many manufacturers that have implemented such systems see production savings offset by outmoded deburring practices. It may be hard to believe, but there are still shops that have high-paid employees looking through microscopes and using hand tools such as X-Act-O knifes to deburr small parts. Whatever savings were realized in machining—and any potential profits—are lost because old habits still die hard and because many shops don't put any thought into how they will deburr all the parts their new machining systems produce.

On the other hand, some machine shops have discovered and are using small, self-contained high-speed mass deburring equipment that is ideal for the cellular deburring of parts. These companies are quoting jobs more competitively and improving their profit margins on jobs they do win.

STIFF COMPETITION

Reliable, cost-effective deburring is becoming more and more important as quality and delivery demands from customers and potential customers continue to escalate. Parts manufacturers now cope with a situation where the per-piece size of orders for parts is smaller and the capability to provide rapid delivery is the price of entry into the market. Materials being machined are becoming more sophisticated, with greater use of many new superalloys, titanium alloys and stainless steels. Smart shop owners have made the investment in machining equipment and sharpened their skills in machining these materials, yet many continue to neglect making improvements in the deburring process.