

Custom Supports Give Machine Shop Freedom & Flexibility

Just In Time CNC Machining, Inc. was relocating to a new facility and looking for a lifting solution that would be flexible as the company continued to grow. The materials processed here range from large production runs to smaller runs or prototypes, which means they handle a wide variety of size and weight. Due to the layout of the facility, Just In Time (JIT) was looking for one crane system that would service several CNC machines and the full selection of products without interfering with the current flow of materials.

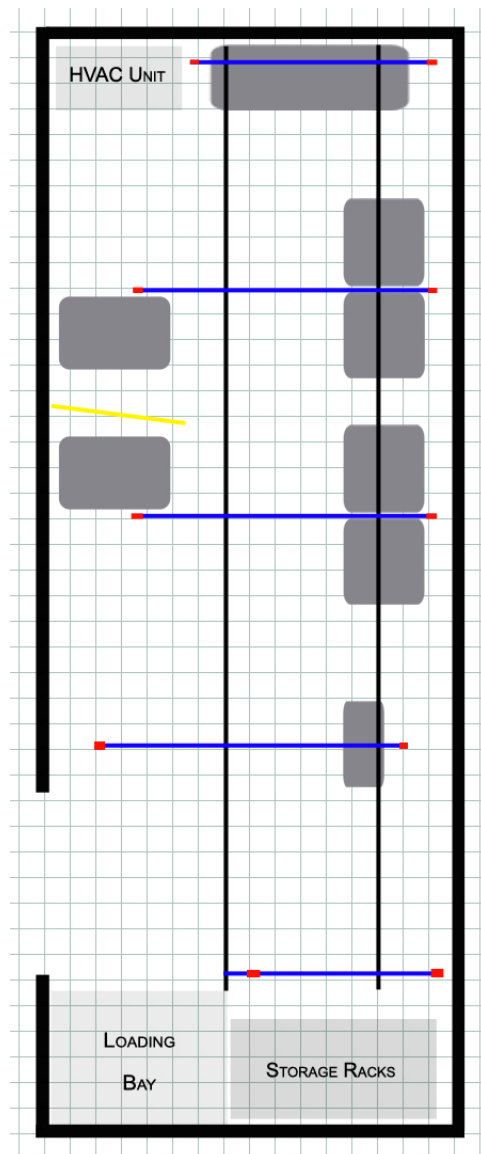
The building they were moving into was leased, and ceilings were very high, which made the application less suitable for a ceiling mounted system. The location of building columns, CNC machines and loading bays provided plenty of obstacles to work around, and made fitting one floor supported crane system into the facility a significant challenge.

The Gorbel Solution

JIT purchased a Gorbel freestanding work station crane with three 23-foot long, 1000 pound capacity aluminum bridges.

The supports for the system were staggered to allow the system's 124' runways to cover the length of the building and remain centered over each of the area's CNC machines and work bays (indicated by gray boxes in diagram at right). The system included extra long headers (blue) to help the positioning of the support columns (red), which were placed behind, beside and in between existing obstacles. The last support header was shorter than the rest with the runway track cantilevered. By making the track cantilever off of a column that was inside the runways, a wide open path to the loading bays could be maintained for fork lift traffic.

For two additional machines not served by the work station crane, a lightweight aluminum jib crane was mounted to a building column to handle products between the two machines.



The Results

The customer was very happy with the Gorbel crane, and the process of custom designing the system. “Through the whole process of moving our operation to a new building, the Gorbel work station crane was probably the most simple, painless thing we did,” said Jim Alexander, Owner of JIT Machine.



Since installing the crane, JIT has added two more small machines which are covered by the crane system, and has enjoyed a highly productive, injury-free workplace. “It’s great having the multiple bridges, because if one is busy, we’ve still got two available and you’re not waiting on someone to finish. The workers really liked the Gorbel system since day one. Productivity is very good, and we haven’t had any lifting injuries since we’ve been in this building.”



Though they currently have no plans for relocating, JIT is happy knowing that if they ever move again, they can take the Gorbel crane with them. “That was certainly a factor in buying this system,” said Alexander. “We can move it or change it to fit whatever our future needs may be.”