

Qual-Fab Rides the Waveform



When you're in the business of welding and quality is literally a part of your company's name, you're expected to deliver quality with every weld. Qual-Fab, Inc., located in Avon, Ohio (about 20 miles west of Cleveland), fabricates custom-welded structures for steel processing and other industries. The welds produced at Qual-Fab are typically made from stainless and nickel alloys, usually for use in high-temperature, corrosive environments.

Qual-Fab maintains its commitment to quality by using pulse Waveform Control technology from Lincoln Electric. The Waveform technology can be tailored to specific materials, thicknesses, wire alloys, wire diameters and shielding gases – all to move product through the plant faster and at a higher level of quality.

Gary Vanek, president of Qual-Fab, launched the company in 2000. But he learned many years before that about the importance of taking charge of the welding process and using the right equipment for the job at hand.



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"My interest in welding started way back when I was 13 years old," he says. "I wanted a mini-bike, and my parents wouldn't buy me one because they thought it was dangerous. So I said, 'Then how about buying me a welder. I want a Lincoln welder – a little buzz box – and I want to make one.'"

Vanek says Lincoln Electric's Waveform technology – and the degree of quality it delivers in the welding of steel and alloys – represents a quantum leap from the capabilities available of prior decades.

"Today, you can control the amount of penetration, and the weld quality can be reprogrammed to repeat," he says. "The programs that are written today for the materials we're welding are continually improving. The process is totally different from the bare wire that somebody came up with years ago. And that technology enables us to continue to develop our welding skill level and improve our quality. And to compete worldwide, we have to find a way to do it that is efficient and gives us the consistency that we need." Qual-Fab uses Lincoln Electric Power Wave® and Flextec® welding power sources and Power Feed® or Flex Feed® wire drives.

Matt Schatz, welding supervisor at Qual-Fab, maintains that Lincoln Electric's Waveform technology has consistently improved efficiency. "With some of these Waveform processes," says Schatz, "we've cut down on our root passes, just because of the ability to control heat input and travel speed."

In addition to the technology itself, Lincoln Electric's customer service approach has also been a valuable resource for Qual-Fab. "If we have any questions with setup or anything else, or if we just need some reassurance about something, the customer service has been very helpful," says Schatz. "It cuts our time down when we can just make a phone call and ask certain questions. And there's always an answer, very promptly."

Between state-of-the-art waveform technology and unparalleled customer service from Lincoln Electric, Vanek has managed to deliver a level of quality that sets Qual-Fab apart from other fabricators.

"We look at the internal part of a welded tube that we would make," he says, "and with these types of parts, to see the penetration and the consistency that we're getting today is far better than it ever was years ago."

