

The Schaller Group . . . Success in a Big way.

The Schaller Group (Detroit, MI) serves its customers in many ways. Through Schaller Tool & Die Company, it engineers and builds progressive and transfer dies. Schaller Corporation produces metal stampings and assemblies. And Regal Prototypes, Inc., provides short run and prototype sheet metal parts.

The company traces its roots back to 1945 when Justin Schaller founded Schaller Tool & Die Company. At that time, Justin was 52 years old — an age at which a lot of people begin thinking about the number of years until retirement. Well, Justin Schaller was thinking about anything but retirement.

Justin had emigrated from Switzerland to the United States when he was twenty-one. For the next 31 years he worked for a number of companies, including General Electric, National Cash Register, Pratt & Whitney and General Motors.

Then, at age 52, Justin decided he really would like to build a business of his own, and Schaller Tool & Die was started in a 1500 square foot building that had been a restaurant. Justin stoked the coal stove himself to keep warm.

Over the next 30 years, the company experienced steady growth and built a reputation for quality and innovation. By this time, Justin's three sons, Justin, Roger and Al had joined the company.

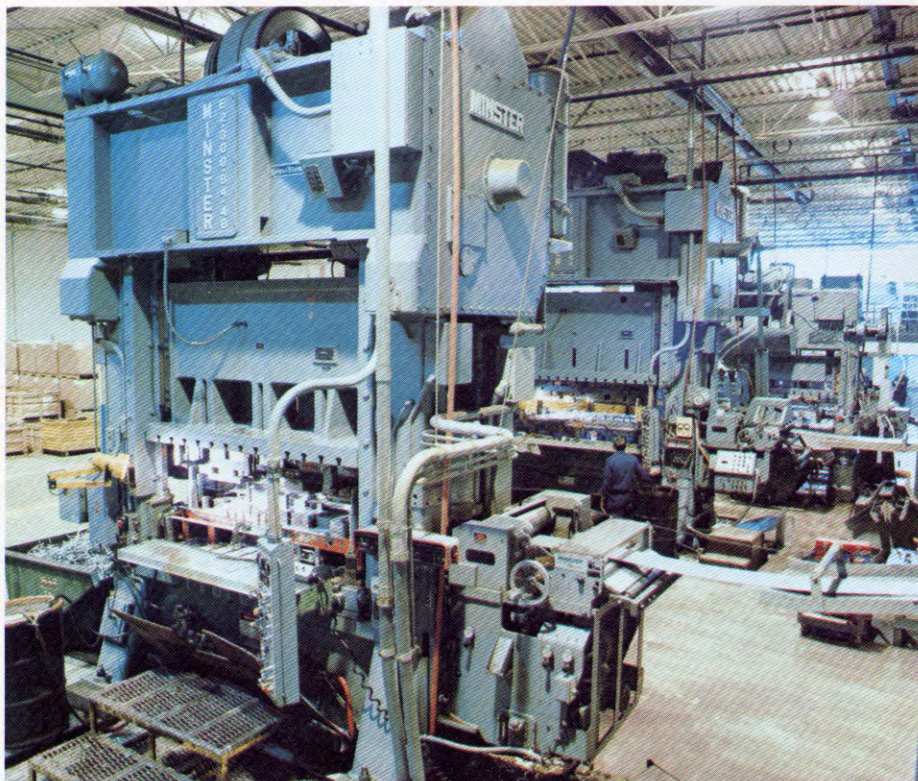
In 1975, the decision was made that to continue strong growth, Schaller must become involved in more phases beyond die design and building. An investigation was made and resulted in the purchase of Regal Prototypes.

At the time, Regal had a contract for low volume aircraft parts which were made from very thin metal and required a high degree of precision forming. Within a few years, a better way to produce these parts had to be found because the customer would be needing two to three times the current production volume.

Schaller Tool & Die responded with better tooling, but a press was needed that could turn out the required volume and hold close tolerances.

Roger Schaller relates how the search for a new press began. "We had been in the die business for over 30 years at that time, and we had learned that Minster presses ran our tools the best and gave the least problems. We wanted to go with the best, so we looked to Minster. We made a trip down to Minster to investigate, and that visit convinced us that the Minster organization and its products would provide the best value for us."

With that visit, Schaller purchased a 75-ton Minster OBI and began producing larger volumes of aircraft parts. That effort was successful, and it began to look as though demand for these parts would be expanding even more.



A No. 7 OBI, P2-150, E2-300 and E2-400 produce at Schaller Corporation's Plant #1.

In anticipation of this, Schaller very shortly ordered a 150-ton Minster P2 "Piece-Maker" for delivery in 1981. They planned to use the P2 as a large-bed, single operation press for producing the aircraft part.

But even before the press had been delivered, Schaller found out that the expected aircraft expansion would not be there. So Schaller added a 6-20 Minster Rack & Pinion Feed to the order and began looking for automotive stamping work . . . more by necessity than choice.

The logical move at this point was to form a separate production company whose prime concern was the production stamping customer. Schaller Corporation was formed in April, 1982, to meet that need.



The new Schaller Corporation Plant #2 houses the new E2-1000-144.

The idea for this move really began a year earlier with the placing of an order for a 108" wide Minster E2-400. Says Al Schaller, "In looking at the work that was out there, our strategy was to first achieve the large press capability and then fill in below that, as required. By 1984, we had added an E2-300 with a Minster Electric Feed capable of 100 strokes per minute."

In the meantime, Schaller had gotten the contract for a stamping job which could be accomplished in 108" of bed width, but it required 1,000 tons! Schaller devised a tooling method that allowed the part to be produced in the 400 ton E2 by having only part of the die stations active on each stroke and feeding a progression on every fourth stroke. With this method, Schaller was able to deliver parts to their customer on time, but they knew they would have to invest in bigger press capacity to do the job efficiently.

Says Al Schaller, "It was on our way down to Minster to check out the E2-300 that we began talking with our Minster representative about our need for a large press. He said, 'Let's sit down at Minster and talk about exactly what you'll need.' At that meeting, we outlined the specifications of the 1,000 ton, 144" wide E2 that's here today . . . to the best of our knowledge, the largest eccentric shaft, progressive die press in the world today." And along with that, by the way, is a Minster Electric Feed capable of feeding material up to 44" wide.

It's obvious that the Schaller Group is big on ability . . . not only in the stamping area, but also in die design, die construction, prototype work and response to customer needs. Minster is proud to be part of Schaller's success . . . and proud to hear Al Schaller say, "When we need a good press to make our stampings, we've got to have a Minster."



These automotive "B" pillars are currently being produced on the E2-1000.