

Cranes increase efficiency

When many people hear the word 'crane' the image that comes to mind is a very large piece of equipment used at a construction site or dock area to lift tens or even hundreds of tonnes.

The trend in the manufacturing and warehousing industry, however, is towards the use of workstation cranes. These are much smaller and can be in a mono-rail, gantry or jib configuration, depending on the area the crane needs to cover. These types of cranes are ideal for use with the work cell (or station) model many lean companies use.

"The cranes actually serve two purposes in this type of environment," said Bomac engineer Tate McFarlane. "First of all, they increase worker safety by reducing the amount of manual lifting and moving that needs to be done. I see more and more people realising that even lifting a seemingly lightweight object repetitively can do in their backs.

"Cranes also increase efficiency in a work place by making tasks easier or faster to complete," he said.

A good example is that of a local door manufacturing company that approached Bomac Engineering for a materials handling system to reduce injury risks to workers loading CNC routing machines.

Bomac engineers designed an Altrac overhead gantry crane with a vacuum lifter that could feed the three existing machines from a single, central loading station. The job of loading the panels went from a two-person job to one, freeing up the second worker to move further along the production line where more workers were needed to accommodate the increased capacity.

Not only did this system help protect the backs of their employees, it also increased their throughput enough to negate the need for a fourth machine. While



the new CNC machine would have cost \$250,000, the crane and vacuum lifter system was less than 1/5 of that price.

Bomac was founded in 1984 by the same engineers who originally created the products and continue to work on their ongoing development. Our standard products meet most needs and are designed for the purchaser to install and extend as needed. However, if our standard products don't quite meet your particular needs, Bomac has the in-house resources to design and engineer exactly what you do need.

Altrac cranes are Australian made, designed and sourced. Bomac Engineering is an Australian owned company. All products meet or exceed Australian and European safety standards.

For more information visit www.bomac.com.au to download the "Guide to Workstation Cranes". ■