

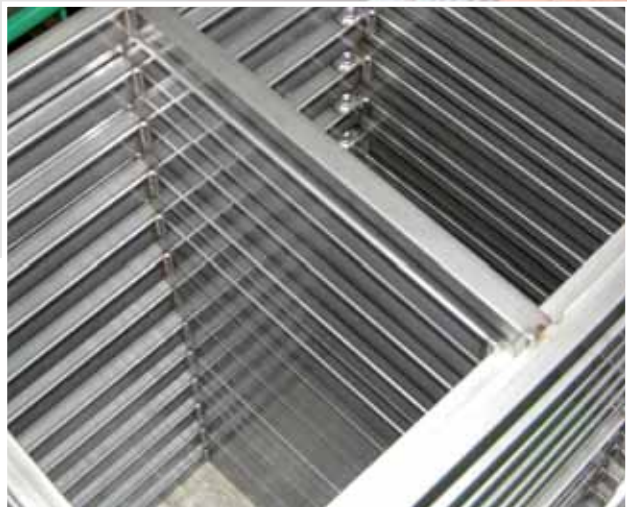
Iwasaki Co. Ltd, Japan, has changed its activity from being a simple sub-supplier in a single sector to that of an OEM supplier

The courage to **change**



When Iwasaki Co. Ltd of Osaka, Japan decided to purchase the first lasertube system that the BLM Group had sold in the Far East back in 2003, it was a challenge for both the customer and the supplier. Nevertheless, the determination of Iwasaki to introduce an ADIGE lasertube system in its production cycle proved to be the determining factor. Iwasaki is a typical small Japanese family-run business with 50 employees, established in 1926 as a sub-supplier of components and accessories for office, school and hospital furnishings. It is understandable that the lasertube was a natural target for anyone who cuts, bends, welds and paints tubes, but not in a country in which the lasertube culture still had to develop.





Well-placed trust

BLM and Iwasaki first met at the BLECH trade fair in Germany and from then on, after only a few months, a system was ordered and delivered in 2004. Six years later, we can now give a full report on the business, starting from when the banks had doubts about financing an investment for a production system that was going to be imported from Italy, to end up with the big leap from being a producer of furnishing components to a good and proper OEM supplier, which regardless of the last few difficult months has been **working three shifts a day** with good use of the systems.

The investment and trust of the bank were soon repaid inasmuch as Iwasaki has become a study case of SMEs in Osaka being invited to participate in conferences organized by the bank and the local business association as a **model of technological innovation for the development of new sectors** and to overcome the negative economic situation.

Specific brand

Innovation and change are part of Iwasaki's culture, which can be seen in the steel sheet processing line and paint shop where targeted investments have been made in high-tech. A culture that the LT702 tube lasercutting system has enhanced, allowing Iwasaki to change from being a simple sub-supplier in a single sector to being a good and proper OEM supplier that is able to **design and co-design components in tube and steel sheet** in many target sectors, optimizing the machining and welding processes. An example of this is the production of stainless steel cabins for the pharmaceutical sector or for the electronics field, which are far from the furnishing sector it was once concentrated in. This leap to being an OEM supplier has lead to a specific brand being created to highlight the versatility of the products offered and the know-how: Steel-work.

Even after 6 years, there are not many small and medium enterprises in Japan that can boast such a profound and successful **change in strategy and process**. This is the most important aspect in a scenario where it seems that more than a lack of resources is the lack of insight and courage to make changes. Not at Iwasaki Co. Ltd.

IWASAKI CO.,LTD

4-25 MIDORIGI 1 CHOME

SUMINOE-KU

OSAKA JAPAN 559-0022

Tel. +81 6 6685 8786

Fax +81 6 6681 3994

www.steelwork.jp