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— CATHARINA DAUM

## Bickel's got it down pat

**Bickel Blechtechnik in Oberderdingen is putting its bets on panel bending by TRUMPF and has used the world's first TruBend Center 5030 since December 2014. In the meantime this machine is offering new manufacturing options to customers throughout Europe.**

If Jürgen Bickel thinks about panel bending, then he is reminded of his beginnings as a building fitter in 1983. He launched his company with a TRUMPF copy nibbler, a pre-owned guillotine shears and a manual panel bending machine. In December of 2014, panel bending had caught up with Bickel once again. He was the world's first customer to obtain a TruBend Center built by TRUMPF. Decisive for Bickel Blechtechnik are the system's many options for use. And ultimately the company had long since parted ways with low-margin, mass production orders. Jürgen Bickel and his team are making good marks again with customized solutions realized as prototypes and in series production.

The flexibility of the TruBend Center, even when dealing with small parts, results from the unique machine concept. TRUMPF is the only company in the industry to offer an additional vertical axis at the parts manipulator.

### » The panel bending technology in the TruBend Center 5030 offers us new options.

This opens the way to diversity that was previously unachieved. This is because the manipulator can fix the workpieces at differing positions. In this way parts with negative bends and very narrow profiles can be manufactured. Even when using standard tools, the TruBend Center offers a large variety of sizes and shapes: extremely short side lengths, deep boxes, small profiles and, over and above this, parts with formed sections, recesses and widely diverse radii. Also the concept for machining perforated sheets is well thought out. Suction cups or optional magnetic clamps, built for flexible positioning, hold the sheet firmly in place.

"The panel bending technology in the TruBend Center 5030 offers us new options," Bickel confirms. "This has also inspired our collaborative partners to go into modern design." Many sheet metal components are now graced with a crowned front surface. A part taken from a housing demonstrates how well panel bending technology and die bending can complement each other. The TruBend Center first performs the radius bending operation to create the crowned face. After that, a press brake shapes the legs exactly to specifications.



