

Experience, Talent & Care About Craft: Schuller Machine & Tool Ltd.

By Drew Kozub

WITH MULTI-AXIS MACHINERY, CNC EQUIPMENT, and programmable tailstocks, the machine shop of today is closer to a technologically-advanced laboratory when compared to the tooling and machining shops that were powered mostly by human muscle just half a century ago. Modern equipment helps complete the job efficiently, with greater volume; however, that equipment still needs to be run by experienced, talented, tradespeople who care about their craft. This is something Schuller Machine & Tool Ltd. prides itself on.

John Schuller runs the family-owned-and-operated company in Scarborough, ON and has worked in the industry for 36 years. He started as an apprentice and now runs his eight-employee company, which includes six people working in the shop, plus himself and an office employee. Fabricating moulds and parts from plastics, steel, and high-temperature alloys, Schuller says his customers' trust is built on the quality of work produced by his team.

"I take great pride in the work that comes out of our shop, and that is, of course, due to the skill of the guys who work there," says Schuller. "We have good guys, and I wouldn't want to do without any of them. Some are CNC experts, others are general machinists, but they are all very good and know their jobs well."

Schuller Machine & Tool was founded in 1956, thanks to the ambition and determined drive of John's father, Fred Schuller. Fred served his apprenticeship as a tool and die maker in Austria and came to Canada in 1951. After working at local shops, he decided to strike out on his own.

The company's start was humble, as Fred would drive around, place to place, looking for customers. His work ethic was immediately appreciated by these early customers, as he was known to take on a job, work through the night, and finish his project to deliver the next business day.

John remembers his father's first shop as a small place, where the winter cold would seep in through a hole in the wall, which was used to feed bars into the lathe. The few guys who worked there would crowd around a single wood stove, but everyone worked hard and the business grew.

Today, Schuller Machine & Tool manufactures high-volume tooling and moulds down to individual prototypes. The company's clients represent an eclectic mix of industries, from pharmaceutical, to electrical, to cosmetic, and employees work on everything from components for high-speed packaging, to lipstick moulds, to MRI machine components. Despite the variety of industries served, John says all customers recognize Schuller Machine & Tool's expertise to take them from concept through creation.

"We know our customers' tooling and processes in detail, and that's part of what keeps them with us," says Schuller. "But our main customers also rely on us to do design work and



TOP RIGHT & ABOVE: Mould components, including some 3-D machining, made by Schuller Machine.

TOP LEFT: One of 16 chuck bodies made for a transfer machine.

DIRECT LEFT: The whole crew at Schuller Machine.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Schuller Machine & Tool Ltd.
10 Skagway Avenue, Toronto, ON M1M 3V1
Tel.: (416) 261-7131, Fax: (416) 261-9336
www.schullermachine.com

troubleshooting. We are also a job shop, where we quote on parts and drawings that come in. They call and I jump. We have a great relationship with our customers."

Just as Schuller's customers find value in his company's history and expertise, John has found value in his involvement with the Canadian Tooling & Machining Association (CTMA). His company has been a member of the association for a few years now, after changing from a more broad industry association, and John says he has been very happy with the benefits that came with that change.

"Being a CTMA member is a chance to keep in touch with the industry and other shops, so you stay up-to-date," says Schuller. "We've taken advantage of programs offered by the CTMA, like the one they offered for CNC machinists. It's important to have someone lobbying for our interests, and I think they do a great job. It's very much appreciated, and I am honoured to be part of that." ■