

# Franklin Bronze picks up overseas jobs

This article was submitted by the company.

While businesses around the region and the world were affected by the global pandemic in 2020, Franklin Bronze Precision Components was deemed essential to the businesses it serves in industries such as defense, food, agriculture and transportation and, therefore, has remained open and operating throughout the COVID-19 shutdowns.

There is some good at Franklin Bronze that has come out of the coronavirus crisis. The company secured reshored manufacturing jobs that were overseas prior to COVID-19.

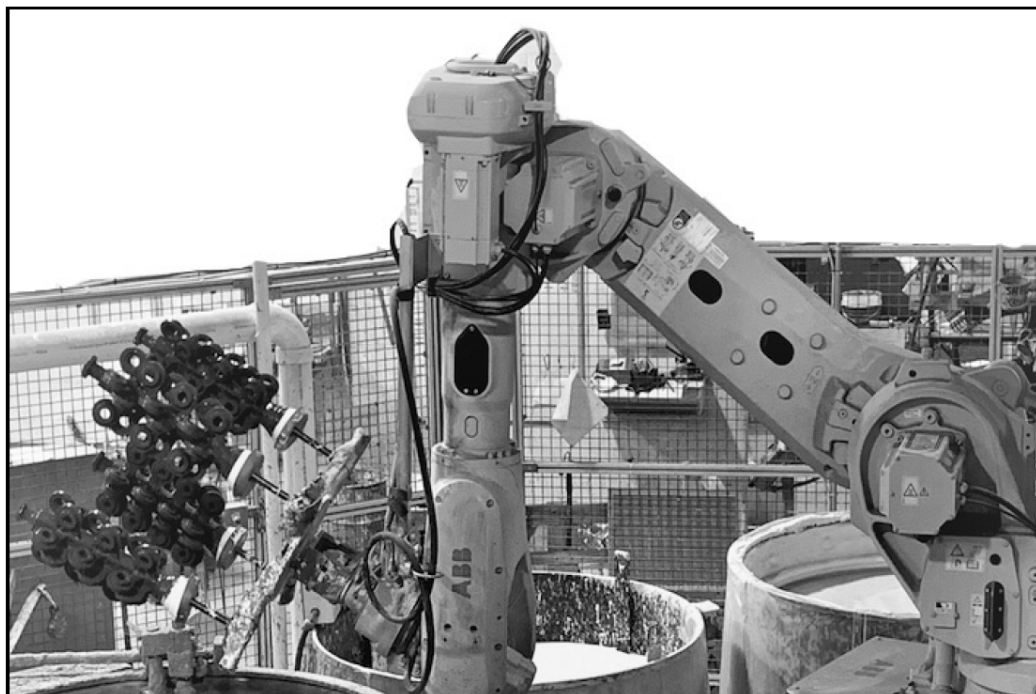
The virus highlighted the risks associated with overseas supply and the benefits that could be gained including close customer collaboration and responsiveness.

## Work environment

Following CDC guidelines, Franklin Bronze continues to provide a safe working environment for its employees.

Work station dividers were installed near work stations where a 6-foot span of distance between operators was not possible. Employees are required to wear face masks to keep themselves and others safe. Daily cleaning of surfaces is completed before, during and after shifts.

Our team members have maintained a focus, dedication and commitment to support our customers and Franklin Bronze mission. The health and well-being of our em-



Franklin Bronze invested in its robotic automation work by replacing a robot arm and introducing Laser Level Adjustment.

ployees, customers and suppliers is of the utmost importance.

## Unprecedented year of investments

The year 2020 marked the largest investment year at Franklin Bronze. Investments were made in equipment to improve, expand and modernize the Franklin facility.

There will be a continued investment in robotic automation with a Robot Arm replacement and the introduction of Laser Level Adjustment, the first of its kind for investment casting companies.

A new shell knockoff machine for stainless steel castings was added to the compa-

ny's investments, as well as a pre-heat furnace and furnace power supply re-hose project.

The company installed a new auto wax press to expand its capacity and for faster production of wax parts. It also upgraded both wax rooms with new chiller stations.

A new FBPC branded company van was added to deliver investment castings. The branding on the van was done by another local company, Clark Graphics.

Franklin Bronze acquired a laser SLA 3D printer that will produce rapid prototype parts and complete short runs of investment castings.

The printer will enable the company to run small jobs in a much shorter timeframe

than a full production run.

"The addition of this 3D printer to our facility allows us to quickly prove out design changes without needing to alter the tooling each time. For instance, making a gating change can be proved before cutting into the tool," said Neil Kruse, senior IC process engineer.

The new 3D printer is able to construct parts quickly and accurately with high precision and resolution, Kruse said.

Another investment at the company was the replacement of an air compressor in the shell room.

The machine is a 5HP screw air compressor that will provide more efficient processing.



New work station dividers were installed to keep employees safe when a 6-foot distance wasn't possible to keep operations moving.



A new van was added to the company's fleet last year. Branding work on the new van was done by a local company, Clark Graphics.

## Embracing digital

The COVID-19 pandemic has changed the way we live and do business — much of the company's work is now done online.

In many ways, Franklin Bronze's digital presence has built stronger relationships with its partners. In-person technical support has moved to phone and video.

The company has posted

videos on its YouTube channel that highlight the benefits of investment castings.

In the videos such as "Castings in our Everyday Lives" and "10 Advantages of Investment Castings," the company extolls the benefits of copper's virus-killing properties and promotes its antimicrobial bronze door handles, knobs, brackets and fixtures.