

# Devoted to the Wire

## Xact Wire EDM owns the following Sodick Machines

AQ300L (1)  
AQ537L (4)  
AQ327L (3)  
K1CN (1)

### Information on Xact

Xact's headquarters in Waukesha, WI is designed specifically for wire electrical discharge machining. This facility is equipped with the latest technology.

Their second facility, in Cary, IL, adds additional capacity and provides convenient service to their Chicago area customers. This facility is also fully equipped with the latest technology and experienced personnel. Both locations have the capabilities to comfortably handle sizeable production runs, yet are flexible enough to machine an individual part.



## Many Shops Have Multiple Capabilities - Xact Wire EDM Corp. Prefers To Xcel At One - Wire EDM

### Unique Shop

Xact Wire EDM Corp is a unique job shop due to their devotion to Wire EDMs. They have been in business for over 26 years and their focus remains Wire EDMing. While other job shops try to do it all, Xact prefers to maintain their specialty; this enables them to perfect the art of Wire EDMing.

Xact is headquartered in Waukesha, WI and also has a fully equipped branch in Cary, IL. The company has 18,000 square feet in WI and another 5,000 in IL. John Dora and Jeff Gubbins established Xact in 1984 and have seen nearly every Wire EDM application from virtually every industry possible. The tooling they have worked on has been used to make everything from mobile phones, car parts to medical devices. Xact also does numerous stamping, trim dies, molds and extrusion die jobs. Dora mentioned that they have machined parts for Mars rovers and satellites.

Xact has formed a unique partnership with other job shops both large and small. There are times that shops are over capacity, so they come to Xact for some help. "We want to partner with them as an extension of their own capabilities and not be the competition," states Gubbins. "If they go to another shop, they might be sending the work to a competitor. With us, they have

the peace of mind that we only do EDMing in our shop."

Xact likes to function as an extension of their customers' capabilities. They partner with their customers by offering expertise, capacity, cost effectiveness and advanced capabilities.

Today, Xact has over 55 employees working three shifts. They are considered to be one of the largest Wire EDM shops in the country with over 40 EDMs.

### Investing in New Equipment

After only purchasing the same brand of equipment for a number of years, in 2004, Xact decided to do some research into other brands. They compared 3 additional Wire EDM manufacturers, other than their current brand. This comparison resulted in their decision to purchase three Sodick Wire EDMs in 2005. From that point, Xact has purchased six more Sodick EDMs. Xact has seen a drastic improvement in productivity since the purchase of their first three Sodick EDMs. Gubbins is especially happy with Sodick's speed and lesser maintenance requirements. He mentioned that Sodick Wire EDMs have linear motors; these motors have insured no loss of accuracy. The first one was purchased in 2005 and has been a huge benefit for them. Gubbins stated that "another big benefit of the linear motors is that

there is no lube or cleaning", this helps his employees stay focused on their projects with minimal maintenance or cleaning.

The linear motors positioning method is also very accurate, quiet, fast and vibration-free. The linear motors have an indefinite life expectancy which allows Sodick to offer a 10 year positioning guarantee on their equipment. Sodick was proud to say that a customer has never invoked the 10 year positioning guarantee since the linear motors are that reliable.

Dora was especially happy with the machines Automatic Wire Threader. He stated that he's "never witnessed as system so reliable". Unlike other EDM Manufacturers, Sodick has developed a unique super jet threader that incorporates a water jet and guide pipe to overcome even the most difficult threading application.

### Another Reason Why Customers Choose Xact

Xact uses the latest computer-assisted design and computer-aided manufacture (CAD/CAM) software. This helps the company read and translate the customers' CAD files, eliminating many questions on the front-

end of jobs. On the back end, Xact has sophisticated inspection equipment; including video inspection equipment, a laser Doppler displacement meter, CMM's and more. This enables them to never send a part out of the shop that hasn't been thoroughly inspected. They are also ISO 9001:2008 certified.

### Learning Curve

One of the challenges Xact faced when they switched to a new brand of equipment was the operator's learning curve on the equipment. Dora mentioned that their operators were a bit hesitant when they were informed that Xact purchased new Sodick machines, as most of them had not worked with a Sodick before. However they found the machines very easy to use.

Sodick offers a comprehensive training program that is included with the purchase of any new machine. A Sodick corporate trainer went to Xact when the machines were delivered and a number of Xact operators were sent to the Sodick Schaumburg, IL facility for training courses. Dora stated that once the operators completed their training and the machines were installed, the operators found the machines easy

to use and were completely satisfied. Both inexperienced and experienced machinists were able to quickly learn the machine. One Sr. member of Xact's implementation team, who had 22 years of EDM experience at that point, had high expectations and found the machine intuitive and the people at Sodick eager to help.

### Conclusion

Xact made a big commitment to switch brands and purchase three machines at once. The lessons they learned could be applied to obtain output from three machines rather than the typical one machine installation. Xact had a high degree of confidence in the equipment and they wanted to spread the implementation costs over multiple machines.

5 years and 9 machines later, Xact is still pleased with their Sodick EDMs, and their linear motors are still going strong. They are now able to take on more jobs that prior to purchasing the Sodick's they were unable to. Owning Sodick machines has made it possible for Xact make parts of numerous sizes, widen their customer base and maintain their position as one of the top EDM shops in the country.

## Top 10 What Xact's Operators Like About Sodick

1. Usable Speed: The best combination of cutting speed and cutting accuracy.
2. Linear Motor Drives: Fast Axis Speed, reduced set-up time.
3. Automatic Wire Threader: Highly reliable, very fast.
4. 15" LCD Screen: Large, powerful touch-screen is easy to view and allows for flexibility.
5. NC Code Flexibility: Powerful feature that allows for customization.
6. Rise/Fall Work Tank: Makes it easy to load, see and set-up workpieces.
7. Machine Network: Allows programs to be sent directly to the machines and sent between machines.
8. Sales Staff: Professional and honest.
9. Support Staff: Friendly, eager to help, caring, knowledgeable and easy to reach.
10. Most Importantly: Sodick listens to us and is willing to incorporate our improvement ideas by customizing the control features for Xact.

# Sodick

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