



In the Shop with Your Buddy Bot

Digital machining moves downmarket

As mainframe computers were displaced by less expensive microcomputers, computer-operated machines used to shape wood, aluminum, and other materials into precise shapes are being replaced by inexpensive robots. Like PCs, they provide only the abilities that most users need at a cost that makes them accessible.

Early adopters have already glommed onto ShopBot Tools, the solution for boat builders, cabinetmakers, auto repair shops, and home improvement buffs.

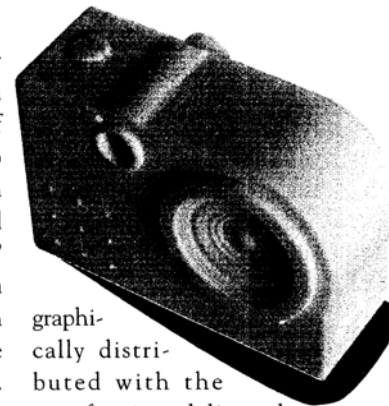
The brainchild of scientist Ted Hall, who started ShopBot as a hobby and has seen it grow into a significant business, the \$5,000 machine is far less expensive than the traditional computer-numerical

control (CNC) mills that have six-figure price tags. ShopBot can guide tools with an accuracy better than a hundredth of an inch—they're already used by one major aircraft manufacturer, which realized that the accuracy afforded by the more expensive CNC machines for some jobs was overkill.

Consider the

savings: Rather than having a warehouse full of inventory, an auto parts store can keep metal and plastic "blanks" that are fed into a ShopBot, which then makes the exact part needed. Development time drops. Inventories are slashed and cost savings can become immense.

Just as the printing industry is moving into print-on-demand, where the presses can be small and geo-



graphically distributed with the specifications delivered electronically, we will see parts made on work sites.

In a field that may soon be crowded, ShopBot is leading the way, bootstrapping itself by providing CNC machines that can be driven by any PC, however cheap or obsolete.

By giving whole industries just what they need and no more, ShopBot Tools has brought robotic manufacturing to a new market—and at a cost that, just a few years ago, would have been scoffed at as impossible.

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