

Kiwa Footprint and Cutting Power Surpasses Arizona Manufacturer Expectations



Alicat Scientific is an ISO® 9001 manufacturer of mass flow meters, mass flow controllers and pressure controllers, for gases and liquids. Based in Tucson, Arizona, Alicat Scientific has been designing and manufacturing precision instruments since its beginning in 1991.

Alicat understands that there is seldom an "off-the-shelf" solution to a dilemma. The unique design and measuring technologies of Alicat flow and control products allow their instruments to be used in applications where competing devices may not have the flexibility or durability to survive. You can find Alicat in everything from mining projects to NASA space programs to environmental monitoring and even artificial heart machines.

Alicat was first introduced to Methods in 2015 when they purchased a used vertical machining center from a customer and the Methods Phoenix Service team helped them install the machine. A year later Greg Camron, Machine Shop Manager, was looking to add a new machine to help keep up with the surge of orders that they were experiencing. "Business was skyrocketing and lead time went up 6x," said Greg. During his research into a new machine to add to the shop Greg met with Tony Harrod, Sales Manager for Methods – Phoenix, who talked to him about getting a horizontal, the KMH300A, as it was perfect for the part he was cutting.

"I was skeptical about the capability of the KMH300A because I was told that a 300mm machine can't cut stainless, but the small footprint for being able to handle our part was a huge game changer for us," said Greg. "We decided to take shot with the KMH300A and trusted Tony when he said it would be able to handle the job, and the results blew us away."

The first Kiwa was delivered to their facility within one week of the order being placed and was cutting just one week after install. Six weeks after install the KMH300A was performing way beyond expectations cutting 316 stainless at 140 in/min and 303 stainless at 200 in/min and dug Alicat out of the production hole they were in. The immediate production drove Alicat to purchase another KMH300A immediately and then another two KMH300A with Pallet Pools a year later.

"Since switching over we have shorted our time per part by about 50% and are now running 24/7. We have three shifts and have no problem letting the Kiwas run unattended knowing that they are going to keep going without any issues."

As Alicat has continued to grow and expand, the Kiwas have been able to keep them from falling behind in production and keep up with sales. The small footprint is perfect for their small shop environment where floor space is at a premium.

The productivity and reliability of the Kiwa KMH300A paired with the unmatched service team at Methods Phoenix has made Methods the go to supplier for all of Alicat's needs. "Nobody can match the service department at Methods. We have had other machines where we called for service and were told they would send someone in two weeks. With Methods, if it's an easy fix they walk us through it on the phone or if it's a hard one they come out quickly. We have even called for parts and received them within 24 hours. They recognize the importance of not letting a machine stay idle."

The Kiwa KMH-300 Series are 300mm horizontal machining centers that offer an integrated full rotary B-Axis and a reliable FANUC Oi-MF control. The machine features excellent chip evacuation and easy access for set-up / maintenance. A spindle oil cooling system and coolant-through ball-screws are standard. The KMH-300 has a compact footprint of 140" in. x 107" including the chip conveyor. Standard features include dual 320mm pallets, roller guideways, 15HP/15,000rpm Direct Drive big plus spindle, and a 30 tool ATC.

