



Lincoln Electric is the world leader in the design, development, and manufacture of arc welding products, robotic arc welding systems, plasma and oxy-fuel cutting equipment and has a leading global position in the brazing and soldering alloys market. Headquartered in Cleveland, Ohio, Lincoln has 48 manufacturing locations, including operations and joint ventures in 19 countries and a worldwide network of distributors and sales offices covering more than 160 countries.

A HIGH-PERFORMANCE SOLUTION WITHOUT THE HIGH COST

Challenge: The Lincoln Electric Nameplate Must Represent the Strength of its Brand

The Lincoln Electric Company, a worldwide manufacturer of industrial and consumer welders and equipment, was faced with several common problems manufacturers experience in today's competitive global marketplace. They needed to update the look of their welding equipment and maintain consistent branding across all product lines, while at the same time, reducing manufacturing costs in order to remain competitive and increase market share. Because they believed it was the only durable substrate that could withstand the welding environment, Lincoln Electric had been using metal for most of their nameplates. The problem was that it was expensive and in some cases, exposure to salt water caused the metal to corrode. Lincoln brought the problem to Visual Marking Systems hoping to reduce manufacturing costs, while still maintaining the high quality their customers had come to expect.

SOLUTION: Durability Found in Polycarbonate

The challenge was to find a material that could withstand the harsh welding

environment and at the same time, deliver cost savings to Lincoln Electric. The answer... polycarbonate! Our design engineers worked with Lincoln Electric to choose the correct gauge and finish of polycarbonate material that would be functional yet convey the corporate brand across Lincoln's entire line of welding equipment for both the consumer and industrial markets. The polycarbonate material was tested for both weld sparking and salt water corrosion, and the material passed with flying colors! It was also determined that the 45 degree bending capabilities of the polycarbonate overlay and adhesive application allowed for easier access to the equipment for repairs.

RESULTS: Production Costs Reduced by 30 Percent

The switch to polycarbonate enabled Lincoln Electric to reduce production costs on the graphics for their welders by 30 percent. By using the more versatile material in place of metal, VMS not only reduced Lincoln's overall costs for the overlay, but also added design options to the nameplate, including the use of transparent inks to create clear windows for LCD displays. A wider variety of finishes, ink and color choices were now available to showcase their new

corporate image on their equipment, help improve the look of the product and preserve the company's corporate branding across their wide range of products. The improved performance and durability of the overlay stood up to weld sparking and eliminated the possibility of corrosion caused by salt water. Additional savings were achieved by reducing the required hardware and inventory—using adhesives to secure the overlays eliminated both the need for fasteners, as well as the manufacturing operation of fastening the overlay to the equipment.

The challenges Lincoln Electric faced are common for many manufacturers in the 21st century. Visual Marking Systems works with its customers to create solutions that meet those challenges. VMS is a high-performance printer to America's hardest working companies—let us help you achieve your goals. Contact VMS and tell us about your product identification problems.



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