

BUSINESS STRATEGY & GROWTH

Sheet Metal Fabrication; A Necessity.

By Leyla Hussein • 31 May 2022



The first time I stood on a fabrication shop floor, the owner had to raise his voice over the press brakes to make his point. He waved a hand at the racks of folded steel around us and said, almost annoyed, that nobody out there has any idea how much of their life is held together by this stuff.

He was right. [Sheet metal](#) is one of those things that is everywhere and noticed nowhere.

You are reading this on a phone or a laptop that depends on it. Titanium, aluminium, copper, brass, stainless steel, all of them can be rolled into thin sheets and formed into almost anything, which is exactly why fabricated metal turns up in so many places. The cutlery in your kitchen drawer. The washing machine humming in the corner. The plane that takes you off to somewhere warm. Different shapes, different sizes, same quiet necessity.

On a building site the range is enormous. The small pieces, the nuts and the bolts, sit alongside the large ones, the balconies and handrails and fences and ladders, and together they hold a structure up and make it safe. Take fabrication out of the picture and modern buildings would be neither as sound nor as ready for the moment something goes wrong.

Look around your own kitchen and you will almost certainly find a sheet of steel pressed into service. Large stainless-steel panels wrap the outside of fridges and washing machines. Walk down any high street and you will see the same material dressed up as cladding on the front of a building.

Not just things that stand still

What surprises people is how much of it moves. The automotive and aerospace worlds lean on fabrication heavily. It goes back to the nineteenth century, when metal was cut and shaped to modify racing cars and engines for the grand prix, and it never stopped. Today it might be a single swapped part or a full rebuild that rearranges an entire engine. The people restoring vintage cars rely on it constantly to give old bodywork a second life.

Aerospace asks even more of it. The British aerospace sector is advanced manufacturing at its sharpest, turning out high-tech components for the big aircraft names, and its demands are precision and endurance. A part has to hold its tolerance whatever the temperature, the humidity or the stress thrown at it. Harness components, the large enclosures that form the body of an aircraft, the chassis pieces, all of it fabricated to a standard that does not allow for guesswork.

Then there is the world you are looking at right now. In computer electronics, sheet metal is cut, bent and stamped into the enclosures and housings that protect delicate equipment from wear. It can be tailored to a user interface, with cut-outs for buttons, cable connectors, fans, switches and LED panels. It is popular in that world for a simple reason: it is low cost, high quality and quick to turn around.

Where we come in

At Hayward Miller we work with [a client who manufactures](#) high-quality general and precision sheet metal components and fabrications. They handle the full journey, from prototype through to volume production of thin sheet metal work, and they shape the service around what you actually need.

If any of that is useful to you, I would rather you got straight to the people who do it. Drop them a line and they will take it from there.

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