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STANDARD**

# A FRESH APPROACH TO INTEGRATION

**When it comes to manufacturing, the concept of integration is not new.**

Any integrator can bring you the technology, but then it becomes a collaborative job of management and engineering to develop solutions and procedures to make sure everyone uses it correctly. Otherwise, your robotic solution runs the risk of sitting there unused because people can't make it work within their process.

All in all, it ends up being a pretty costly investment that you're not sure will bring the return you need to make it worthwhile.

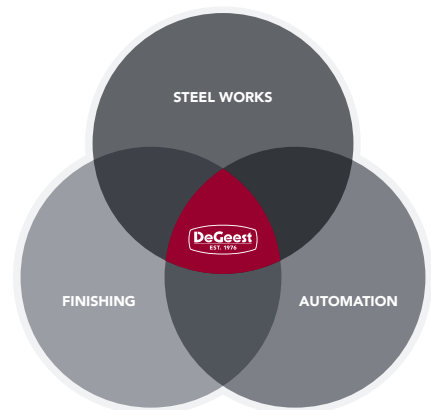
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## **One company took a different approach.**

DeGeest Corporation is a three-generation, family-owned and operated business near Sioux Falls, South Dakota. With its roots in fabrication, the company has expanded its capabilities and now has three primary service areas: Steel Works, Finishing, and Automation.

Perhaps the largest contributor to the company's growth has been its investment in automation. "Because of our experience living in a production environment, we're accustomed to creating automation solutions to help our team accomplish more," said Derek DeGeest, President of DeGeest, "creating automation solutions for our own production job shop we see what it takes to make automation work after the installation."

"As we started to do more finishing for our customers, we knew there had to be a way to bring automation into it – even though there has never really been a good solution for general manufacturing before," said DeGeest.





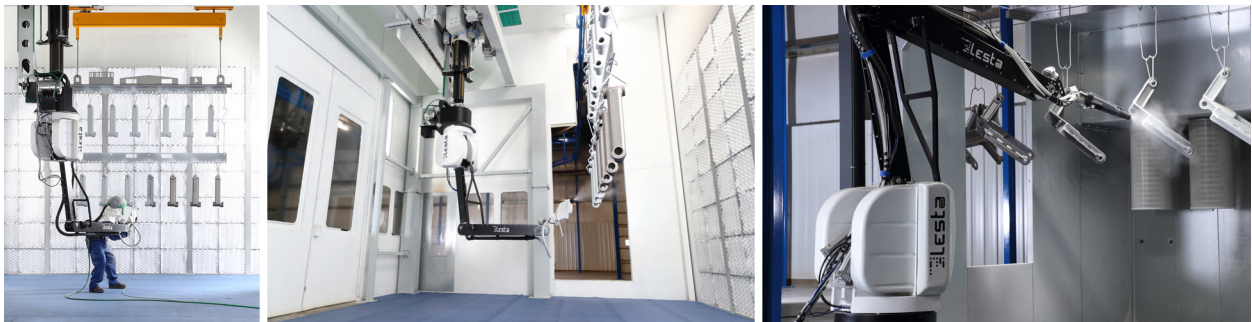
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### **LestaUSA is born.**

After a worldwide search of a better way, DeGeest found the solution he was looking for in Milan, Italy with a company named Lesta.

"It was too good to be true," said DeGeest. "Lesta had these self-learning painting and finishing robots that can be programmed to paint a specific part in just seconds. The robot is taught by an expert finisher already on staff, and then it repeats those same expert movements and trigger pulls on every part."

DeGeest was so impressed that his company forged a partnership with Lesta and has brought robotic finishing technology to the North American market under the name LestaUSA.



### **Robots are just the beginning. What about integration?**

DeGeest Corporation is using its own experiences to bring a different approach to integration.

"Because we live in a production environment ourselves, we're able to look at integration much differently," added DeGeest. "We're the people running these paint systems. We're the people loading and unloading parts. We've painted over and over and over again. So, we took that knowledge and scaled solutions exactly to the way we work. As integrators, we take the same approach with our customers."

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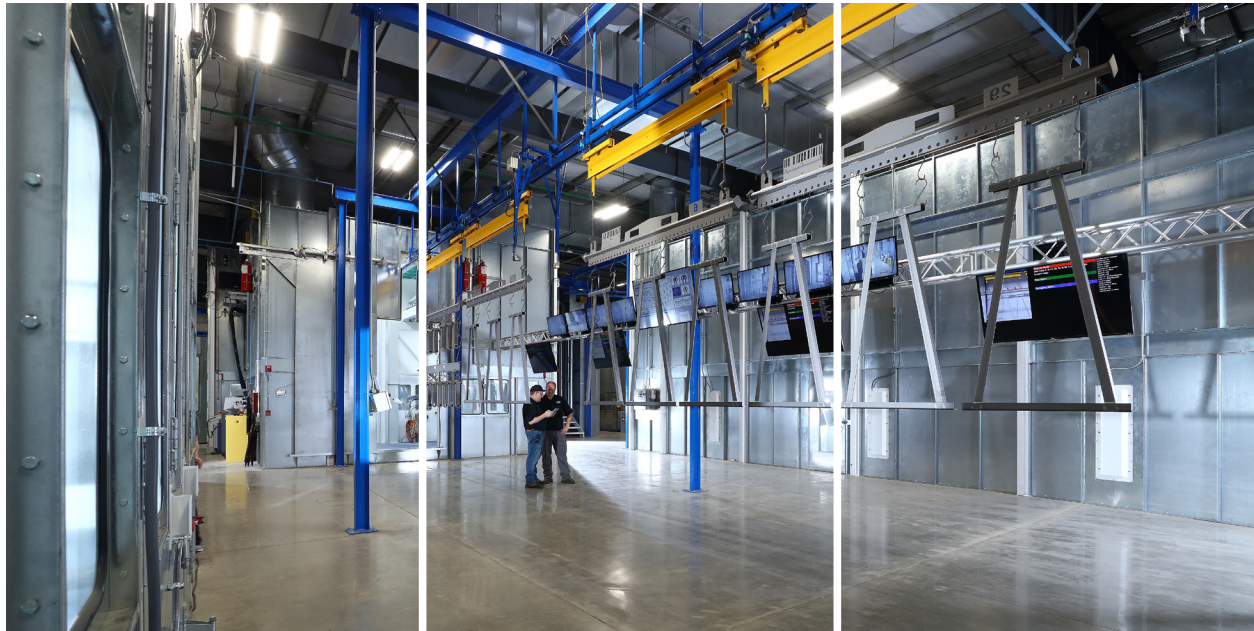




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With many integrators, the solution starts and stops with the robot and its specific task. Instead, DeGeest team knows what it takes to make automation and robotic solutions successful after an installation. They educate the team who will be using the system through hands-on-teaching, an educational video library, remote access, and phone support.

"At our own shop, we start by asking how we'd want this to work if we built the system for ourselves," said DeGeest. "As integrators, we look at a customer's entire system from our experience as operators and system integrators and analyze it to make sure it's built the way we would use it. That leads to much higher adoption."



### **Don't let automation intimidate you.**

You often see industrial finishing robots in huge systems like automotive manufacturers and say, "We don't just paint the same part over and over so finishing automation won't work for us."

Now there is a robotic solution that makes sense. And, an integrator who understands where you are coming from. Working with an integrator, especially in finishing, should go well beyond the "Here's your robot that sprays... we're done" approach.

"That's simply not the case with us," said DeGeest. "We take into account your people and your processes. We dig in to understand your pain points. We understand what you need it to do and how you need it to work. In other words, we walk a mile in your shoes. Then we deliver."





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### Bringing additional technologies to make a better system.

"Because we're using finishing automation in our own production environment, we're also passionately involved in making the entire process and application itself better through other means," said DeGeest. "For example, we developed software solutions for managing and displaying all jobs in a paint system for operators and management. We also found additional technology in the European finishing market that uses less paint and powder while creating a more consistent finish. So that's been a part of our holistic solutions where appropriate, along with other efficiency products that we distribute such as Polifluid, NitroTherm and Pulver Control. We go well beyond just the robot."



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Derek DeGeest, President of DeGeest

### The best place to start is simply to start.

Integration isn't a black or white process. There are many grey areas and you need to find an integrator who will get into those grey areas with you.

"We're using what we're selling," said DeGeest. "We weren't happy with what we could get or the steps that came after getting it. So, we went through our own trials and tribulations at DeGeest and created a better solution for our type of industry application."

Is there a perfect time to put automation and integration to work? No, so don't think you need to wait for that moment. Start the conversation. Ask who can get you to the other side of that void in your process. Done right, robotics in finishing can bring a lot of efficiencies to your bottom line. ■

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