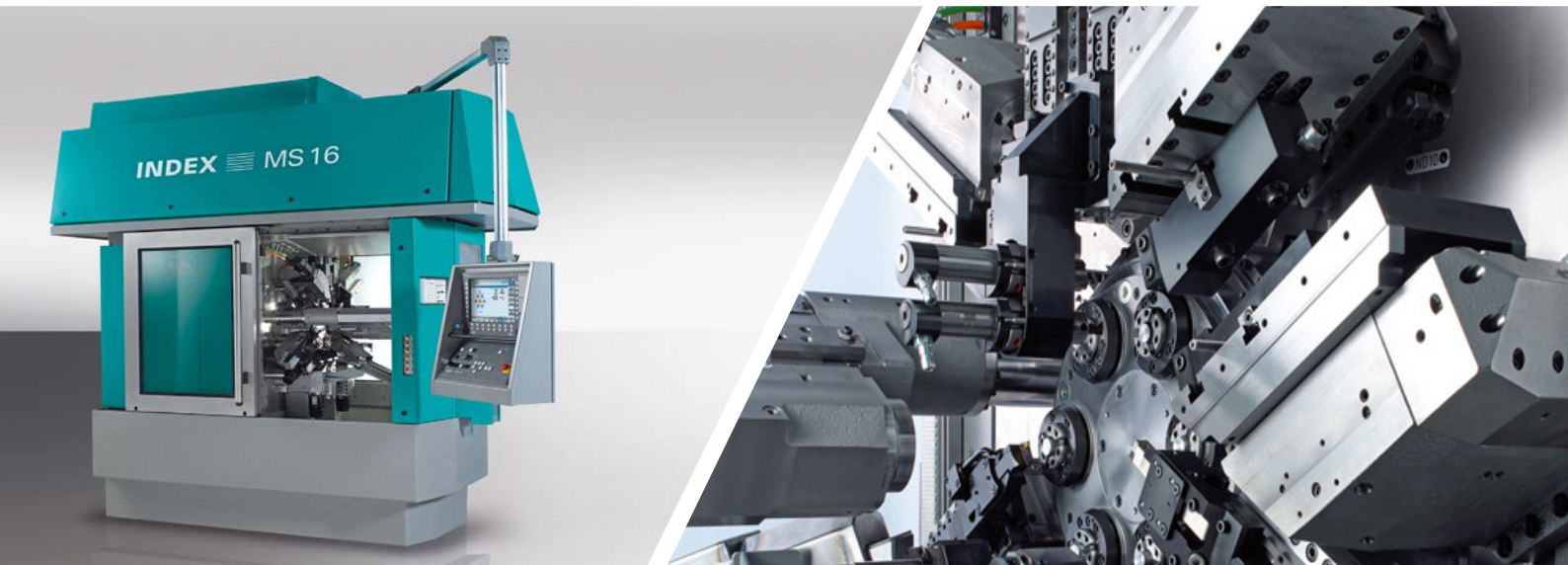


## **SUCCESS STORY**

Precision and reliability – Laubscher AG, Switzerland





## Successful partnerships

### Successful partnerships

**The customer/supplier relationship between the turned parts manufacturer Laubscher and INDEX began a few years after the foundation of the INDEX-Werke in 1914. A very trusting partnership has developed over a long period of time, extending to the development of new machinery – which has been to the benefit of both companies.**

Do you know of an independent turned parts manufacturer that has been doing business since 1846? The answer is: Laubscher Präzision AG in Täuffelen am Bielersee. After 168 years, it remains the oldest independent company in Switzerland in this sector and even one of the first industrial companies. Since there were no suitable turning machines available for purchase in the mid 19th century, Laubscher took on the task of building them himself. Soon after, around the year 1900, Laubscher introduced machine production and focused entirely upon the production of turned parts which at the time were supplied primarily to the watch industry in the Swiss Jura region. Laubscher's precise turned parts were and still are sought after – the operations of suppliers in Täuffelen satisfied the needs of other industries too. Laubscher also became the worldwide leading manufacturer of gramophone needles for shellac records. Further success stories include products such as compass needles as well as parts used in the 1970's for mechanical typewriters, calculating machines and accounting machines.



### INDEX MS16

Manfred Laubscher and his INDEX MS16

**>> [www.index-traub.com/en/products/multi-spindle-automatics/ms16-ms16-plus/](http://www.index-traub.com/en/products/multi-spindle-automatics/ms16-ms16-plus/)**

## Precision and reliability

Times change, so do products. Today Laubscher supplies many turned parts for hydraulic components used in construction and agricultural machinery as well as locking cylinders for doors and the hugely important precision turned parts used in medical equipment. Small, high-precision watch parts remain a major constant feature of the product range: Screws, spring housings, bezels and push pieces represent almost 30 percent of the company's sales revenue. Every single one of Laubscher's customers expects ultra-high precision. They require tolerances within the  $\mu\text{m}$  range. Manfred Laubscher, Managing Director of Technology, reports: "For us a tolerance of 1/100 is extremely generous. The standard tolerance is more like 6  $\mu\text{m}$ . Where necessary we can also achieve long-term accuracy at less than 4  $\mu\text{m}$ , such as for the small round spring housing used in automatic watches." It is natural to believe that a company that has been around for 168 years bases itself upon long-term values and business relationships. Manfred Laubscher describes the basis for his company's reliability: "It is extremely important to us that we supply the ordered parts in the required quality, within the specified deadline and at the agreed price. This has been internalized by all our employees." Smiling, Michael Laubscher also explains that another success factor is the know-how that has built up among the workforce over the years, enabling the company to make the "impossible" possible. "This is a basic prerequisite for maintaining the ongoing advantage through high precision and quality."

## Best prerequisites

The entire process chain is befitting at Laubscher – from the indoor climate conditions in the production hall to the machine tools used and the utilization of the right tools and cooling lubricants. A glimpse into the modern production hall is enough to ascertain which machines play a pivotal role in the production process: Automatic lathes from INDEX. As testified by the high number of installed INDEX and TRAUB machines (of which there are currently around 40), there is a special relationship between Laubscher and INDEX.

## "The INDEX MS16 is a machine that the market needs."

The key characteristic is continuity. Manfred Laubscher explains: "I know about the early days from what my grandfather told me. Laubscher purchased the first INDEX machine – an INDEX 12 – in the 1920's. My grandfather discovered it when he traveled to Germany and he advised the management board to buy one. Laubscher decided to purchase this fixed headstock lathe from INDEX as the machine offered advantages compared with other common sliding headstock lathes. It was delivered by train and horse-drawn cart." After 1945 Laubscher stepped up its collaboration with INDEX. The company went on to purchase the 18, C29 and ER lathes from INDEX. Laubscher was initially cautious when CNC technology emerged. Manfred Laubscher remembers: "Previously we were not known as drivers of innovation, although this changed radically. Today we sometimes purchase machines when they are still only available as a blueprint."



## Range of parts

Laubscher manufactures a broad range of turned parts.

>> [www.index-traub.com/en/products/multi-spindle-automatics/ms16-ms16-plus/](http://www.index-traub.com/en/products/multi-spindle-automatics/ms16-ms16-plus/)

## Highly cost effective

In 1994 the investment in the ABC range from INDEX marked an important milestone. The company was able to drastically reduce the piece times using these CNC production turning machines. An ABC machine – which is still part of the INDEX product range today – makes it possible to process three tools at the same time. Manfred Laubscher is still impressed: "This was sensational and we were among the first to invest in this technology. This helped us take a gigantic step forwards." Another cornerstone in Laubscher's success was the introduction of the multi-spindle automatics in 1998. "We hesitated about this technology for a long time," explains Manfred Laubscher: "Other turned parts manufacturers were years ahead of us. However this changed overnight when INDEX brought the complete CNC multi-spindles onto the market. We recognized the MS32C as an opportunity and made a purchase." As is the case with most of the business transactions between Laubscher and INDEX, the company Springmann Werkzeugmaschinen in Neuchatel was involved in the introduction of the multi-spindle automatics. Head of Sales Philippe Dubois explains: "Springmann has been the exclusive agent for INDEX in Switzerland since 1920. Therefore it was our role to support Laubscher with the introduction of the INDEX multi-spindle automatics. At the time this was a large and courageous step for Laubscher, especially since the 32-mm bar capacity of the machine was too high for typical Laubscher parts, all of which measured less than 10 mm in diameter."

## More than just a customer/supplier relationship

The first steps in multi-spindle machining also marked the start of an even closer relationship. Over many years the two companies – and their employees – have grown to know and appreciate each other. Furthermore, Mr. Laubscher is one of the most knowledgeable experts when it comes to the market for turned parts and the increasing requirements of the machines. Therefore it always pays to listen carefully to what he has to say. As such it was no surprise that INDEX acted upon Mr. Laubscher's suggestion to develop a small multi-spindler – the INDEX MS16C. Manfred Laubscher explains: "The trend in the market is clearly moving towards smaller and more complex parts. In the medical technology sector, operating techniques require minimum invasion. Some of the devices must be tiny yet highly precise." As he knows exactly what the parts should cost he can derive an acceptable machine price. These considerations were included in the development of the INDEX MS16 and a pre-production machine was thoroughly tested in Täuffelen. The INDEX MS16 soon aroused a lot of interest among other turned parts manufacturers. During his presidency at the International Turned Parts Industry Association he invited a number of his colleagues to visit his company in 2012. He explains: "Our visitors all agreed that the INDEX MS16 is a machine that the market needs – and is a good basis for the future collaboration between Laubscher and INDEX."



**Laubscher company building**

Laubscher Präzision AG in Täuffelen am Bielersee.

Laubscher Präzision AG  
Hauptstrasse 101  
CH-2575 Täuffelen, Switzerland  
[info@laubscher-precision.ch](mailto:info@laubscher-precision.ch)  
[www.laubscher-precision.ch/de](http://www.laubscher-precision.ch/de)

*better.parts.faster.*