

Getting It Right With A Work Station Crane Before Production Started

When John Morley decided to open Regal Granite & Marble in 2004, he did his homework first. He selected top raw material providers, chose his location carefully, and researched his equipment purchases. Having been in the industry for many years prior to opening his own business, he was aware of the risks associated with handling the heavy, fragile material, and wanted to minimize the risk. "I knew that in order to handle the granite slabs and move it from one place to another I needed a crane, and I wanted a Gorbel," said John.

John's granite and marble workshop is 40' long and 20' wide, and features a bridge saw as well as a CNC machine.

The granite & marble slabs he works with range from 2' x3' and 100 pounds to as large as 5' x10' and 1000 pounds. He purchased a freestanding Gorbel work station crane with a 2000 pound capacity aluminum bridge to cover the work cell and service both machines. Along with the Gorbel crane, Morley purchased a Demag hoist with suction cup tooling to grip the slabs.

When the full slabs are brought into the shop, they are first cut on the saw, and then moved by crane to the CNC machine. Later, it is picked up again and put onto a cart to be finished.

With the multiple movements of a single piece, John evaluated the risk of moving the material by hand. "I know some people don't use an overhead crane, but I think they are crazy," Morley said. "I've seen it done both ways, and I wanted to get it right from the start. That's why I installed the Gorbel crane before I started production."



"There's so many problems that the Gorbel system solves. " Among them, he said, are safety, damage reduction, and efficiency. "Some people think the crane doesn't make you money, but the truth is it could save the business. If we have one guy hurt his back and be unable to work for the rest of his life, that's an injury settlement that would be very costly, and it's a reality in this business. We want our people to stay healthy."



Reducing the risk of damage was another way that Morley says helps the Gorbelt crane pay for itself. “The countertops can be very unstable, especially with a hole cut out for the sink. You need to lift it properly so it doesn’t break. Some pieces are worth a few hundred dollars, other pieces could be valued at \$7,000 – and that’s just the cost of the raw material. If you break something that you’ve already invested time in, it could be a huge loss.”

Last and certainly not least is the efficiency of labor the Gorbelt work station crane provides. “With a slab that weighs up to half a ton, I’d need a whole crew of people dedicated just to moving it around. All I need now is one person to lift it.”

After six years of business, Morley is happy to report that his investment has definitely paid off, with no injuries or product damage related to handling the slabs with the crane. “The Gorbelt crane is a great piece of equipment, and it certainly has paid for itself.”