



Planet Products
corporation

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The **8** important questions you must ask before choosing a machine shop to produce your precision parts

Do you worry about bad parts, late delivery, poor quote turnaround times, and resolving issues immediately? Before you use someone because their price is the lowest, do some homework. **A low-ball price on a machined part is only a bargain IF the shop has the capabilities and systems in place to make the part correctly and deliver it on time.**

We urge you to ask each machine shop the eight questions bolded below. At Planet, we encourage comparisons with other precision manufacturers. If you find another vendor who can match us in quality, delivery, and responsiveness—use them!

Here are eight critical questions to ask the machine shops you are considering:

1. What quality control processes are in place and how often are audits performed to ensure quality does not decrease?

How Planet answers this question:
We are ISO-9001 registered, a quality process mandated by our large clients. We audit internally every six months and ISO audits us every nine months. These mandatory checkups keep our employees sharp, quality consistently superior, productivity high, and costs low for our clients.

According to a Dun & Bradstreet study, companies like Planet Products who follow the stringent ISO guidelines have a:

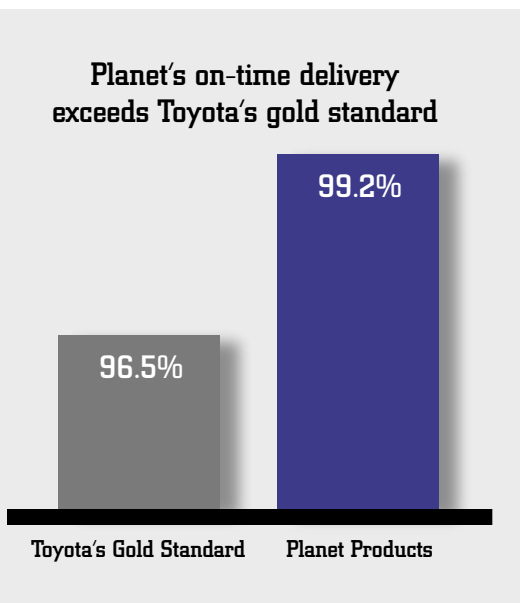
- 30% reduction in customer claims
- 95% improvement in delivery time; and a 20% increase in on-time delivery
- reduction in defects from 3% to 0.5%
- 40% reduction in product cycle time

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2. What is their on-time delivery record and what specifically do they do to assure you that your parts will be accurately produced AND on time?

How Planet answers this question: The industry gold standard in delivery has been set by Toyota at 96.5%. **We are proud to show that Planet's on-time delivery is 99.2%!**



Our ERP system tracks progress and traces every step in the production of parts, alerting our project managers when something looks out-of-the-ordinary so the issue is resolved before it becomes a problem. As a result, we get your parts to you on time.

One of the secrets to our success in on-time delivery is our large inventory and type of equipment. This increases capacity for our customers and

provides a "safety net." All of our CNC machines are Mazak and use Mazatrol software. Because of this, we enjoy higher productivity since our employees are familiar with running all machines and software. This speeds our customers' jobs up, resulting in on-time (and even early) delivery.

Our size and experience contribute to our stellar delivery records! We have over 70 employees. Adding more people and/or a partial shift to a project when early delivery is critical is also one of our strengths.

3. What kind of equipment do they use that will guarantee the close tolerances your job requires?

How Planet answers this question: We use state-of-the-art coordinate measuring machines (CMMs). Our two CMMs **are fully automated, which provide more efficient results and makes them infinitely more accurate in holding tight tolerances.** If your needs include close-tolerance parts, we recommend the one piece of equipment you must insist your machine shop use is a fully automated CMM. We invested in two automated CMMs so our customers' jobs are not slowed down when one is being used on another job. The sizes of our CMMs are 48 X 80 X 40 and 25 X 39 X 25.

We're in a category by ourselves. An area where Planet particularly excels is the manufacture of close-tolerance parts. **We can hold true**

position to .001 and diameter tolerancing to .0004 on ID/OD. The grinding tolerances that we can hold are +/- .0001 on ID/OD.

(Above measurements all in inches.)

HOW TIGHT ARE THOSE TOLERANCES?

Compare this: the diameter of one strand of human hair is .0025 inches

4. What type of specialists do they employ and what is the tenure and experience of their machinists and other employees?

How Planet answers this question: The Planet Products' staff numbers 70 and includes:

- Nine staff engineers
- Two welders
- 20 machinists
- Four quality control technicians
- Two process engineers



- Two electrical assemblers
- Four mechanical assemblers
- Electromechanical and hydraulic testing specialists
- Two service technicians
- Full-time IT support
- Four purchasing experts and a specialist in International Shipping and ITAR regulations

The average tenure is 15 years. This benefits our customers because experienced machinists make better quality parts.

5. What special equipment do they use and what is unique about their facilities that assures you they can produce the quality of part you need?

How Planet answers this question:
The equipment in our 54,000 sq. ft. facility includes:

- Five state-of-the-art Turning Centers
- Seven state-of-the-art Machining Centers
- 2-axis to 5-axis capabilities
- Two Coordinate Measuring Machines (CMM) with PC-DMIS software from Brown & Sharpe
- CAD/CAM system with 3D capability software that takes a part from Cad to Cam
- A fully staffed tool room offering the latest in tool-setting equipment
- Full-service electrical panel shop
- High-pressure hydraulic Testing Room
- Clean Room facilities for building and testing of food and medical equipment

Our complete equipment list is six pages—we are happy to send it to you.

Our plant floor is an air-conditioned, controlled, clean environment. We believe this is very important to our clients. In a healthy environment, our employees are less apt to make mistakes. In addition, in an environmentally controlled building like Planet's facility, materials don't expand or contract. Tolerances are held better, resulting in providing correctly machined parts the first time.

6. Are they experienced in producing parts from different kinds of materials and will they advise you on advantages of one material over another?

How Planet answers this question:
For our diverse customer base, we have machined parts to extremely close tolerances using standard and exotic materials: carbon steel, aluminum, plastic, stainless steel, titanium, Inconel, Delrin, and even 12G Nylon.

Did you know that 12G Nylon expels moisture and could replace cast aluminum fabrication? Any lightweight part that you need to stay dry is a candidate for this material. **Planet is one of the few companies in the country with the capability to precisely machine 12G Nylon.** Whether your parts require special materials or use ordinary metals or plastics, our staff of four purchasing

specialists have experience and business relationships with suppliers that will provide the best price and fastest delivery.

7. What systems do they use to keep track of projects so quality parts are delivered on time?

How Planet answers this question:
In the not-too-distant past, machine shops could keep a project organized and on schedule with simple spreadsheets.

But today, the complex business of inventory control, purchasing, order management, shop floor control, cost accounting, and scheduling, along with our commitment to ISO standards, now requires more sophisticated tools to keep a project on track and on budget.

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For many companies trying to meet diversity-vendor requirements, locating qualified suppliers is not easy. Planet Products is a registered Woman-Owned Business, (WBE certified) and is happy to complete the paperwork you require to be recognized as a diversity supplier for your company.

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Our e-manufacturing ERP system (we use Lilly's Visual Manufacturing System) allows the monitoring of operations over a computerized network throughout every step of a process. This system helps us fine-tune our production activities, control costs, and manage resources.

We know, in real time, the status of your order, the production of your parts, and when your order will ship. Today's machine shops can only remain competitive in today's ever-changing market with sophisticated ERP software.

8. What is their response time for quoting and customer service issues?

How Planet answers this question: **We pride ourselves on rapid quoting.** Because we have four

full-time purchasing specialists who work closely with our team of manufacturing engineers, we can respond very quickly to a non-complex RFQ, frequently verifying material availability, price, and delivery dates within two days. More complex jobs take more time; however, we proactively keep you in the loop as to our progress on the more complicated quotes through periodic e-mails or phone calls. What this means to you is one less item requiring a follow-up on your part since we reach out to you with a status report during this process.

We have a company-wide rule: a customer's non-urgent phone call must be returned within two hours or, if the call is received after 5 p.m., by 9 a.m. of the next business day. Our automated

phone system provides an emergency option that will page someone to return an urgent call within one hour.

Our immediate response mirrors our urgency in resolving your change order or solving your problem. We have the capacity and flexibility to react because of our size, type of equipment, and experience. Our engineers, technicians, purchasing specialists, and project managers react quickly to make sure your job is completed correctly the first time and delivered on time and on budget.

Please phone us at 513/984-5544 to discuss your precision machining needs.

Recognized Around The Globe For Ground-Breaking Machine Design

For more than 50 years, Planet Products' **Food Automation Division** has been an innovator in precision equipment design. As an international supplier of equipment for packaging processed meats and ready-to-eat foods, our outstanding sanitary designs have been recognized and honored. We were the American Meat Institute's 2004 Supplier of the Year, selected for our significant contributions to the meat and poultry industry.

Our success in sanitary equipment design, build, and assembly led to the development of equipment we produce for the medical industry. Our **Atlas Vac Division** is a leading manufacturer of tray sealers, blister sealers, discrete product handling equipment and process automation for medical device,

pharmaceutical and hygienic consumer product applications. In addition to standard product lines, Atlas Vac can customize a sealer to customer specifications.

Building custom machines for Fortune 500 manufacturers is the expertise of our **Build To Print Division**. We employ electrical control experts to address programming and control issues, and are experienced in CE testing for compliance with European Standards. If you need turnkey solutions, our engineers can design, manufacture, assemble, test, and certify—per customer specifications.

Whether you need tight-tolerance machined parts, standardized tray sealers, or a custom machine, Planet

Products is available to quote your job. Please contact us at 513/984-5544 or sales@planet-products.com. We encourage site visits to our Cincinnati facility, and enjoy showing off our line of products and the precise work we do for our customers.

A complete list of contact names by division and photos of our equipment and parts can be found at www.planet-products.com.



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