

# From Local Tool Grinding Shop to International Manufacturer - The History and Evolution of Cuttermasters



Across the global manufacturing sector, tool-grinding technology remains a foundational yet often overlooked discipline. Behind the precision of aerospace components, automotive systems, and industrial machinery lies a quieter process: the sharpening and maintenance of cutting tools. As computer numerical control machining expanded through the late twentieth century, so too did the need for reliable, workshop-based grinding equipment. In this specialized field, certain brands developed steady followings among machinists. One of them was CUTTERMASTER, a name later associated with the Canadian manufacturer Cuttermasters.

Cuttermasters was founded in 2000 in Canada by Jeff Toycen. Before the formal establishment of the company, Toycen had been working since 1994 on engineering projects that incorporated direct current motor systems. During that period, operating under Toycen Industries, he focused on DC motor-driven products, gaining technical familiarity with variable-speed control and torque management. That early background would later shape the direction of Cuttermaster's machine designs, particularly in terms of grinder performance and heat reduction.

When Cuttermasters began operations in 2000, the company positioned itself within the machinery and machine-tool design sector. It specialized in tool-and-cutter-grinding

equipment used in metalworking, machining, woodworking, and fabrication. During its early years, the company concentrated on adapting and refining grinding systems for professional workshops. By 2004, development had begun on a modernized tool grinder based on the original CUTTERMASTER end mill sharpener, a machine first patented in the United States in the late 1970s.

The resulting product line, known as the CUTTERMASTER Professional series, was introduced as an updated interpretation of the earlier end mill sharpener concept. End mill sharpeners restore the cutting edges of milling tools, extending tool life and reducing operational costs. According to these estimates, about 35,000 Cuttermaster machines are in use, with about 7,000 in the USA. For the Professional line, the intention was to incorporate modern tooling needs while retaining compatibility with traditional sharpening techniques.

In 2010, Cuttermasters had a workable DC control system in place for the grinding systems. The interest among woodturners also led to the introduction of the Tradesman DC Bench Grinder around the same time. The Tradesman provides a variable-speed grinder and a DC motor controller, designed to eliminate excessive heat buildup during precision grinding operations. Bench grinders are a mainstay in the tool room and maintenance environment; indeed, the variable speed provides the operator the flexibility they need for the suitable rpm for materials and grinding wheels.

Then, in 2015, the Tradesman Machinist Version received a United States patent for aspects of its DC drive system and for its integration of CBN precision-plated grinding wheels. CBN, or cubic boron nitride, is known for its hardness and thermal properties, making it well-suited for grinding applications. The patent recognition of this grinder design firmly placed it in the world of IP, particularly through its DC drive system and emphasis on speed control.

Further product revisions followed. In 2017, Cuttermasters released updated versions of the CUTTERMASTER Professional grinder and introduced the Tradesman Machinist Grinder for machine-shop environments. These updates expanded the Tradesman line beyond woodturning and into broader machining applications. Throughout this period, Cuttermasters maintained engineering operations in Ottawa, Ontario, with distribution facilities in Smiths Falls, Ontario, and Ogdensburg, New York, supporting customers in Canada and the United States.

A significant turning point occurred in January 2020, when Cuttermasters acquired the CUTTERMASTER Professional trademark. In June 2020, the company purchased the complete CUTTERMASTER inventory from Conquest Industries, also known as Cuttermaster. The acquisition consolidated brand ownership and production under Cuttermasters. After this acquisition, the company embarked on redesigning its products, leading to the creation of the Journeyman JXT. The product features an articulated DC motor installed vertically to increase grinding versatility.

Post-2020, this firm has further clarified its brand. It has claimed to be the sole manufacturer of the CUTTERMASTER Professional lineup and “Journeyman.” Though the classic American-made CUTTERMASTER, popular in the latter half of the 1970s, still operates out there, this revamped version is now produced and assembled in Canada. It is sold through channels such as MSC, Grainger, Fastenal, Motion Industries, Travers Tool, and Blackhawk Industrial.

Additionally, Cuttermasters’ clients vary and represent a broad range of customers who need a portion of the company’s services. The clients include individual machinists, machine shops, universities, research institutions, the defense sector, and various industries. Cuttermasters’ services have been used by notable brands such as NASA, SpaceX, Tesla, Boeing, the U.S. Navy, and the Canadian National Research Council.

From its origins as a Canadian tool-grinding enterprise in 2000, the company has grown into an internationally recognized manufacturer, with tens of thousands of its machines in circulation. The trajectory reflects a combination of trademark acquisition, product redesign, and continued reliance on DC motor technology developed during the 1990s. Today, Cuttermasters and the CUTTERMASTER Professional name remain connected through that sequence of engineering decisions, corporate restructuring, and gradual expansion into North American and international markets.