

Paul J. Croft

SYSTEMS PROJECT MANAGER — CAPITAL EQUIPMENT & AUTOMATION

Chicago, IL | 773.289.2518 | pjcroft@zohomail.com | [linkedin.com/in/paul-croft-a9325a6a](https://www.linkedin.com/in/paul-croft-a9325a6a)

PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Systems Project Manager and capital equipment leader with 29 years in robotics and automation (since 1997). Manages \$50+ million in projects annually at Prima Power North America — about 10 concurrent projects, including \$10M+ automated sheet metal systems — leading cross-functional installation and applications teams from post-sale through sign-off and payment. Previously North America's subject-matter expert for panel bending and press brakes, and designer and builder of about 25 custom press brake robot cells.

CORE SKILLS

Equipment / Automation: Panel benders, press brakes, laser cutting, turret punch, automated storage & sorting, press brake robot cells, full FMS automation, Motoman / Yaskawa, Fanuc, Kuka, PLC programming, robotic welding / laser / plasma

Project / Product: Capital project management, resource & risk planning, feasibility / part analysis, cell design & pricing, factory liaison, runoff & acceptance, customer training

Software: AutoPOL, Prima Power machine & software systems, Microsoft Project, Salesforce, Jira, CAD-CAM, Microsoft Office, Linux

EXPERIENCE

Systems Project Manager

Sept 2023 – Present

Prima Power North America

- Manage \$50+ million in capital equipment projects annually; about 10 concurrent projects (range 8–14), including multiple \$10M+ systems and several projects approaching \$30M — 3–4 systems over \$10M this year.
- Responsible for Prima Power's largest North American customers from post-sale through delivery, installation, sign-off, and payment; develop project plans covering resource allocation, risk, and contingency.
- Lead cross-functional teams of 10–12+ per project — 6–8 installation technicians, 2–4 applications engineers, plus factory and service representatives.
- Currently managing two large-scale automated systems integrating multiple styles of automated bending equipment, laser cutting, automated sorting, and complete automated storage systems.
- Created internal project-tracking dashboards for the North American project management team and installation coordinator, providing live, fine-grained tracking of installation hours and actual costs versus quoted PMC budgets — from automated imports of technician workbooks and sales quotes — plus open issues and hours lost tracked via Jira.

EXPERIENCE (CONTINUED)

Bending Product Manager / Senior Applications Engineer

Sept 2014 – Sept 2023

Prima Power North America

- Served as North American subject-matter expert for panel bending and press brakes (US, Canada, Mexico) — higher-level technical authority supporting sales on complex customer applications and questions.
- Analyzed customer parts and recommended machine and software solutions; acted as factory liaison for escalations, product feedback, and new models and features.
- Led showroom demonstrations and customer presentations, in person and virtual.
- Built the virtual demonstration capability during COVID — designed and commissioned the showroom multi-camera setup that allowed live machine and software demos to continue remotely for customers at home and in their factories.
- Designed and programmed demo parts for panel benders and press brakes; created, shot, and edited demo and instructional videos for customers and the Prima Power NA YouTube channel — featured presenter in “Prima Power eP-Series Overview with Paul Croft” (<https://youtu.be/M1dYc3rDAtc>), a press brake overview video salespeople still send to customers today.

Applications Engineer

Sept 2003 – 2014

Prima Power North America — Toronto (Finn-Power) / Arlington Heights, IL

- Started in Toronto at Finn-Power and relocated to North American headquarters in Arlington Heights, IL, as automation demand grew.
- As one half of a self-contained two-person unit, delivered about 25 custom press brake robot cells end-to-end for North American customers — feasibility and throughput analysis, cell and equipment design, pricing, build, runoff and customer acceptance, installation, programming, and training — across Motoman, Fanuc, and Kuka robots. No two cells were the same.
- Provided machine and software training on press brakes, panel benders, laser, and turret punch equipment.

Manufacturing Engineer / CNC & Robotic Programmer

2000 – 2003

Ledalite Architectural Products — Vancouver, BC

- Designed, specified, and implemented the Steelform line in-house — press brakes with PLC load/unload and custom tooling feeding a dual-robot welding system and automated powder-coat line; responsible for PLC and robot programming.
- Programmed 4 Amada turret punch presses (Merry Mech); contributed to design-for-manufacture sessions for new products.

Robotic Programmer / Manufacturing Liaison

1997 – 2000

Northside Industries — Kelowna, BC

- Robotic Programmer (1997–1999): programmed Motoman 6-axis robots for fibre-optic laser and plasma cutting applications.
- Manufacturing Liaison (1999–2000): liaison to Western Star Trucks for 100+ JIT / Kanban products shipped twice daily, covering quality and fitment.

EDUCATION

British Columbia Institute of Technology — 2001–2003

Mechatronics and Robotics; Computer-Aided Design & Engineering; Manufacturing Engineering