

CASE STUDY

PRODUCT - FLEX-HONE® TOOL

APPLICATION - MUSICAL INSTRUMENT CLEANING

The Flex-Hone® tool is used in the repair, maintenance and manufacturing of woodwind and brass musical instruments. Common instruments include trombones, trumpets, flutes, tubas and French horns, though its benefits are of use in any brass instrument that has valves or slides. Oberloh Woodwind and Brass Works, located in Seattle Washington, is known nationally for their repair and rebuild of brass and woodwind instruments. A typical repair job often starts with the cleaning and refinishing of the instrument. To do this, technicians often use the Flex-Hone® tool.

On a typical repair job, after the instrument is dismantled and before any dent work is done, the parts must be cleaned. The Flex-Hone process makes sure that any roughness from materials such as lime, scale or general corrosion is removed. This also allows the technicians at Oberloh Woodwind and Brass Works to avoid embedding any internal tube debris into the soft brass during the dent removal process. This debris can cause obvious problems with the slide action. Not a good thing...



An upclose view of the Flex-Hone®. The Flex-Hone cleans and polishes the inside of the tube.

Oberloh Woodwinds believes in the process so much that they have a specially designed honing fluid machine that floods the tube with a special oil formulated for the honing procedure. This machine filters the oil and recirculates it back to the work being processed. While it is not necessary to go to these lengths to use the Flex-Hone tool, it is simply another example of how successful it has been in their shop. Oberloh has found that using the Flex-Hone makes the work done more efficiently with regards to time, cost, and performance. In other words, the owner of Oberloh Woodwinds, Daniel Oberloh, gets better pay for straight forward, trouble free work and offers his customers a higher quality finished product that is done at a faster and more reasonable cost.

