

KELTEC: EXCELLENCE THROUGH GENERATIONS



**EUROTECH PARTNERS WITH FIREARMS INNOVATORS TO
INCREASE PRODUCTION BY OVER 300%!**

GEORGE KELLGREN KNEW WHAT HE WANTED.

He knew what he could do. However, the road ahead would require a shift in course he never anticipated.

In 1991, the Swedish-born designer and inventor established KelTec as a machine shop to support his firearms company, Grendel. George's goal was to manufacture firearms of the highest quality, catering to a wide audience and at an affordable price. He knew he had what it took, and so did his family.

George's eldest son, Adrian Kellgren, paints a picture of a childhood surrounded by the art of creation. "He would have his draft board; he used to do just hand-drawn designs and schematics. It was very interesting to be around that," Adrian recalls.



A young George Kellgren tests an early prototype

What George didn't know was that the landscape of the firearms industry would be permanently altered just three years into his new venture. The U.S. Congress passed the Assault Weapons Ban, an unforeseen storm that threatened to derail everything he had built. George recalls that turbulent period: "That was the most damaging blow to our industry. It closed the whole operation overnight. All the products we were making were covered by the assault weapons bill, so they were all gone."

Nonetheless, George always had a game plan. "You have to be prepared to start with something new again," he stated plainly. In these words lies the essence of George Kellgren's spirit and the mission of KelTec – a company not just building firearms but sculpting a legacy of adaptability and excellence.

“He said, all right. Shut the doors on Grendel. We’ll make KelTec the new firearms manufacturing company,” recalls Derek Kellgren, George’s second son and KelTec’s Director of Sales and Marketing.

That decision would turn out to be a pivotal moment for the Kellgren family and the beginning of KelTec's growth over the next 30 years.

Fast forward to the present day, and KelTec has established itself as one of the top manufacturers in the industry, led by the spirit of excellence and flexibility on which it was founded. Adrian now holds a significant role in shaping KelTec’s direction and development as Director of Industrial Production, working with the same eye for detail and innovation that his father used to ignite the spark of the company decades ago.



Adrian Kellgren, Director of Industrial Production, stands on the floor of KelTec's Coco Beach Florida factory



Like his father, a Navy veteran and family man, Adrian brings the discipline and drive he learned while enlisted, combined with the eye for design and adaptivity he gleaned from his father, to lead his team in KelTec’s pursuit of excellence.

When asked how his Navy experience influences his leadership at KelTec, Adrian speaks to the importance of empowering each employee: “The leadership in the Navy is designed to have those leaders drop dead at some point. If you have your commander in the field and he’s hit, you can’t have a whole unit fall apart, so we tend not to micromanage. We say, ‘Here’s the guidance, operate within it, and I’ll follow and see if it was effective.’ Then you empower those guys to make their decisions.” This balance of autonomy and trust has permeated KelTec and equipped the company with the agility to navigate consistent growth throughout the years.

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The diagram illustrates a process of automation and efficiency. At the top, two icons of machines are shown, each with a person icon next to it, representing two machines and six employees. A central gear icon is connected to both machines. Below the gear, a single machine icon is shown with a person icon next to it, representing one machine and one employee. This visualizes the transition from a labor-intensive process to a more automated one.

“We went from a footprint of two machines and six employees down to one machine and one employee. The efficiency went up dramatically.”

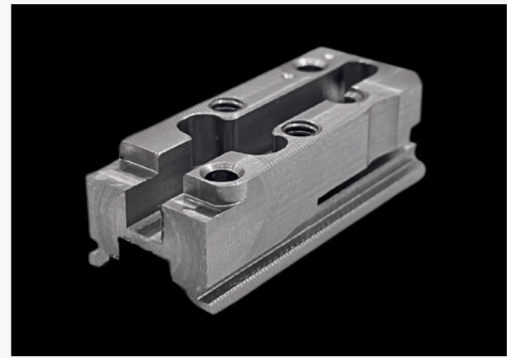
-Adrian Kellgren, Director of Industrial Production, KelTec

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Regarding the challenges of KelTec’s growth, Adrian says, “The biggest thing for KelTec is to design an affordable firearm for everybody. When we started to gain popularity in certain product lines, it became obvious that we needed to really ramp up production rates. We weren’t going to change the way we make the product. We definitely still wanted USA steel; we wanted USA componentry, so it was important for us to figure out a way to do high-volume manufacturing.”

Recently, the increasing popularity of KelTec's P17 pistol has created the perfect opportunity to streamline KelTec's production process with the help of the Eurotech Rapido.

Adrian continues and reveals, "One of the most complex CNC parts of the P17 is the bolt, and we needed the volume to increase dramatically. We were producing these on two horizontal machines across three shifts with six employees. Then, one of our programmers looked at the part and determined that the actual sizing of this would lend itself to a Eurotech Rapido. We went from 45 parts per shift for a single horizontal machine up to 185 parts, and the 185 parts were from a single Eurotech run by a single operator who could attend other Swiss lathes. Once we got this thing manufactured and repeatable, it opened Pandora's box. We went from a footprint of two machines and six employees down to one employee and one machine. The efficiency went up dramatically."



Bolt for the P17 pistol, which Keltec was able to produce over 200% faster (and with 1/6th the labor) once machining was switched to the Eurotech Rapido.

KelTec was now in a position where the same part was being made with 1/6th of the labor on 1/6th of the floor space. This realization led the KelTec team to rethink how their manufacturing overall was handled. "It's allowed us to expand the envelope of potential parts we can make," Adrian added. "Those horizontal machines are back in the mix, but those six employees that were making one part are now making other parts, and it was almost a factory-wide expansion without actually having to expand physically, but just invest in a single Eurotech Rapido."



Fun Fact!

The KelTec KSG shotgun is featured prominently in the John Wick movie series (pictured above).

Always forward-thinking, KelTec didn't look at this newfound efficiency purely as a cost-saving measure but as an opportunity to push the company further. To this point, Adrian summarizes, "When efficiency is maximized, we can then make more parts and expand the business without increasing the footprint, and that's a huge benefit of the Eurotech machines. We always look at the kinematics of the mechanical systems of our guns to see how we can make them lighter and faster, and that's why we love using the Eurotech Rapido. It can do complex parts in a single operation almost entirely unattended, allowing us to explore interesting new design concepts."



Bolt for KelTec's Sub-2000, originally machined on a Mazak Integrex with a cycle time of 7 minutes, is now machined on the Eurotech Rapido with a cycle time of 2 minutes, 45 seconds. About three times faster!

The concept of new, unique, and exciting firearms designs is at the heart of KelTec. However, they realized long ago that a breathtaking design is only half of the equation when you're in the business of shipping hundreds of thousands of units a year while also keeping the cost affordable for the consumer. "It's one thing to design a gun. But being able to produce it in volume, that's the most important," says Adrian.

"You have to stress over the cycle times. One second translates to thousands of dollars. If you look at it over a one-year volume at 10,000 parts, or in some cases, we're doing a million parts, what's a million seconds when you add it up? The one-second matters; that's why we invest in the Eurotech Rapido," Adrian concluded.

The seconds are crucial for Adrian, George, and the hundreds of Americans, including many U.S. veterans, who work for KelTec today. The path from George Kellgren's machine shop to the company's current far-reaching achievements was not straightforward. However, with its strong legacy of family values, unwavering dedication to service, and relentless pursuit of excellence, KelTec is ready for many more decades of success and family-driven innovation. At Eurotech, we take pride in being a critical part of their journey and are grateful to stand by their side.



Derek Kellgren, Director of Sales (left), George Kellgren, Founder (center), and Adrian Kellgren, Director of Industrial Production (right)



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about KelTec or
Eurotech, please
contact us today!**

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