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Dear Reader,

Our lives are determined by numerous calendars. The most common – the Gregorian calendar – in addition to the moon calendar, farmer’s calendar and not to be missed – the show calendar. The show calendars, especially during the spring and fall, exert their effects on the plastics industry. Therefore, it should not surprise anyone that a lot of regional shows are scheduled to take place. The most important fall show for central Europe is Fakuma, scheduled from October 14th to 18th in Friedrichshafen, Germany. Fakuma has changed constantly to a platform for the launch of new products. Therefore, we are not short on new product introductions.

One of the Fakuma highlights is the introduction of complete IML (In-Mold Labeling) systems – developed, manufactured and integrated for the first time entirely in-house. This presents a world innovation and guarantees the best matching of all components. These IML systems for high performance applications consist of the new TM Xpress fast running toggle machine in combination with our proven W727 IML automation systems and the respective molds from within the WITTMANN Group. Two of these systems can be seen operating in Hall A1, Booth 1417 at a separate booth.

Another world innovation has been achieved in the field of temperature control. The magic word to describe it is “DUO cooling”, where the cooling advantage exists in the ability of a single temperature controller to automatically switch between indirect and direct cooling, depending on the process temperature. This enables the processor to cover the complete temperature range (20°C to 160°C) with just one unit.

A further trend can be best described as “Automation Goes Mini”. Only a few years ago very rarely did applications show up which needed robots for handling of parts on molding machines with clamping forces of 800 kN and smaller. The direction to ever more sensitive and optically appealing small parts requires the increasingly use of automation even for these smaller machine sizes. For this reason, we have extended our family of robots downwards for the second time. At K 2004 we proudly presented our model W711 with a 5 kg of payload. This robot model is typically placed on machines of 1,000 kN and up. We went a step further and have once more decreased the dimensions. The result is our model W801 with a total weight of 120 kg and a payload of 3 kg, this robot is practical for use on the smallest molding machines.

Naturally, we have many more developments from our large product range which we would like to show you. I hope to welcome you to our stands at Fakuma.

Sincerely, Michael Wittmann
At this year’s Fakuma in Friedrichshafen, Germany, October 14th to 18th, WITTMANN BATTENFELD will present several innovations awaiting visitors under the slogan “One Stop Shopping for Injection Molding”. At a separate booth, the WITTMANN Group will present its new, powerful high speed TM Xpress series in combination with innovative IML applications. The new "Insider Solution", the concept of an integrated robot/conveyor inside the machine frame, will also be shown for the first time.

Susanne Binner
“Insider Solution” on this exhibit, a WITTMANN W823 robot will deposit the finished parts on a conveyor belt which is integrated in the machine frame.

This solution favors the production of injection molded parts with minimum space requirements and thus contributes to reducing the overall cost. This machine is also equipped with EcoPower, which achieves a substantial cost advantage by simultaneous reduction of reactive load and effective power. In this production cell, the integration of a WITTMANN W8 robot into the UNILOG B6 control system of the machine will also be demonstrated for the first time. With the “integration into the machine control system” option the robot can also be operated entirely via the UNILOG B6 visualization system, in addition to the robot’s own TeachBox control.

This solution includes not only the display of robot screen pages, but also complete integration of the robot into the alarm system, user administration, the data set management, language selection and the machine’s logbook. The WITTMANN BATTENFELD hydraulic machine series offer the ultimate in performance and compact design in its performance class.

All the above mentioned exhibits are equipped with the comfortable, high-performance UNILOG B6 machine control system. The PLUS 35/75, with a UNILOG B2 control system, is the “entry level” model of the hydraulic series (plug & play). It will demonstrate the production of a connector housing. A WITTMANN series W702 sprue picker will handle parts removal.

**TM Xpress – the new fast runner**

One of the highlights at this year’s Fakuma is the introduction of the new TM Xpress high speed toggle series combined with proven IML equipment from the WITTMANN Group. A separate booth will be dedicated to this first major joint project since the takeover of BATTENFELD earlier this year (Hall A1, Booth 1417).

The production of square cups with a 4.7 sec. cycle time from PP, measuring 125 x 125 mm (to hold 750 ml), will be shown on a TM Xpress 270/1350 with 270 t clamping force. A WITTMANN in-mold labeling (IML) system will handle the insertion of butterfly labels as well as removal and stacking of the cups.

The second exhibit will show the new TM Xpress 210/1350 machine molding 300 ml cups manufactured from PP in a 4-cavity mold with a cycle time of 3.9 sec. The wraparound labels will also be inserted by a WITTMANN supplied IML system.

The production cell on display represents a complete turnkey IML solution from WITTMANN BATTENFELD: the mold in the automation system comes from WITTMANN’s French subsidiary which specializes in this type of process; the auxiliary equipment is supplied by WITTMANN Kunststoffgeräte GmbH; the injection molding machine comes from WITTMANN BATTENFELD. The new TM Xpress series is now available with clamping forces ranging from 160 to 450 t.

**TM – the optimized toggle design**

PP felt tip pen inserts with a part weight of 0.5 g will be manufactured in a 64-cavity mold on a TM 110/350. The machine on display in this exhibit features the new, optimized toggle design. Lubrication is reduced to a minimum by the clearance of the tie bars and, as a result, they are free from lubricant residues. High precision linear guides provide guidance for the moving platen and eliminate adjustments for heavy molds.

**EM – the all electric series**

A dishwasher valve with a 23 sec. cycle time made of liquid silicone (LSR) in a 16-cavity mold supplied by Elmet will be produced on an EM 110/300 from the WITTMANN BATTENFELD all electric series.

**Vertical R – flexible and modular**

Thanks to the modular concept of the machine as well as its auxiliary equipment, the Vertical R rotary table machine offers many options/ combinations and can be supplied as a fully automatic manufacturing cell. WITTMANN BATTENFELD will demonstrate its system technological expertise manufacturing a PA filter housing with a part weight of only 0.675 g and a cycle time of 6.2 sec. on a VMR 60/65 electric machine featuring a rotary table and injection unit with servo electric drive.

The 4-cavity mold will be supplied by Weppler Filter. A WITTMANN W8X5 robot will handle the finished parts within this production cell.

**WITTMANN BATTENFELD service corner**

Another main theme of this year’s Fakuma is IT-assisted service. With a comprehensive program consisting of Web Service, Web Training and Remote Maintenance, WITTMANN BATTENFELD promotes worldwide communication – anytime and anywhere – allowing customers to save time and money.

Visitors will have a first-hand opportunity to experience and test these services directly at the service corner in the WITTMANN BATTENFELD booth.

WITTMANN innovations – 4/2008
Indo-US MIM Relies On WITTMANN BATTENFELD for Metal Injection Molding

Powder injection molding is a proven process to produce injection molded parts from metallic or ceramic compounds. WITTMANN BATTENFELD GmbH, Kottingbrunn, Austria, has been one of the pioneers in developing this technology from the beginning. WITTMANN BATTENFELD can look back on many years of cooperation with the market leader, Indo-US MIM Tec Pvt. Ltd., based in Bangalore, India.

Christian Kniezanrek

Following its founding in 2001, this processor soon developed into one of the most renowned metal injection molders worldwide. On its production floor, Indo-US MIM relies on machinery and equipment from WITTMANN BATTENFELD.

The PIM process (powder injection molding) is used to produce complex geometries with high dimensional accuracy in large quantities and at low cost. With its special advantages of high precision and repeatability, this process is optimally suited for cost-efficient mass production.

Description of the process

Metal injection molding (MIM) is one of two powder injection molding (PIM) applications. The other is ceramic injection molding (CIM).

With the benefits of injection molding, a process proven in plastics processing for many decades, the advantage of powder injection molding over mechanical forming processes lies in the fact that additional complexity of the manufactured parts does not add any additional cost.

It allows the implementation of an efficient manufacturing process with excellent tolerances for large quantities and/or technically advanced complex parts (including micro parts). Although the shrinkage in powder injection molding is about 15–20% (depending on the binder content and the grit size distribution of the powder), it is still possible to produce high-precision delicate parts thanks to the high repeatability of this process.

Molds for the production of PIM parts must be manufactured according to special design guidelines and from wear resistant tool steel. This allows the production of highly integrated molded components, which in turn contributes to minimizing the overall costs. This process even has an edge over precision casting in meeting the rising demand for complexity, large quantities and high quality standards, together with falling prices.

The entire process consists of four steps

STEP 1: Powder is blended with a binder to obtain the “feedstock”. The powder content is normally the maximum possible or, close to the maximum, i.e. about 60% of the total
Injection Molding

Indo-US MIM, the market leader in PIM

Indo-US MIM is one of the leading manufacturers of metal injection molding applications, specializing in the production of highly complex precision parts. Its main customer base is in the automotive, aviation, telecommunication and medical technology industries.

With sales and service subsidiaries in Europe, America and Asia, Indo-US MIM offers worldwide customer support from product design and construction to comprehensive after sales service. With a production floor of more than 25,000 m², Indo-US MIM has the largest and most modern metal injection molding facility in the world. Its R&D department develops about 200 injection molded parts every year. A vital success factor for Indo-US MIM is its modern equipment, consisting of more than forty WITTMANN BATTENFELD hydraulic HM series injection molding machines. Indo-US MIM operates machinery with clamping forces ranging from 80 to 100 tons. Due to the company’s rapid growth, about 10 new machines are added each year.

STEP 2: Molded parts are made on an injection molding machine using a process similar to injection molding of thermoplastic materials. The resulting parts are so-called “green parts”.

STEP 3: The binder is removed normally by a thermal or chemo catalytic process to obtain the so-called “brown parts”.

STEP 4: The “brown parts” are then sintered to produce the finished components.

Equipment package for PIM machines

WITTMANN BATTENFELD supplies customized plasticizing systems and screws for powder injection molding and other special applications. Due to the special attributes of the feedstock used, the machines are fitted with the following special equipment:

- Barrels and screws are made of wear-resistant materials. The material specification depends on the type of powder to be processed. A set consisting of a barrel and screw made of hard metal is absolutely necessary for processing metal powders.
- Optimized screw geometry for processing metallic and ceramic compounds.
- High injection speed for extra dimensional accuracy in forming the part geometry.
- Temperature controlled feed zone.
- Special hopper.
- Special ejector function with open safety gate.
- SPC quality monitoring.
- Customized automation as required.

Depending on the application, there are other options available in addition to the basic PIM equipment package, to allow the selection of the most appropriate machine specifications for any conceivable application.

WITTMANN BATTENFELD – the pioneer

The most outstanding features of the WITTMANN BATTENFELD hydraulic machine series are their modular diversity, ultimate precision and extensive range of options. Thanks to their compact design, the HM series machines are extremely short and offer a reduced overall footprint. WITTMANN BATTENFELD offers its customers extensive knowledge and experience for PIM technology. Through cooperation with expert partners, WITTMANN BATTENFELD is well positioned to support its customers with basic advice to pilot run production.

Christian Kniezanrek is Sales Manager Asia at WITTMANN BATTENFELD in Kottingbrunn (Lower Austria).
WITTMANN UK Works With Carclo Technical Plastics

Leading plastics manufacturing equipment supplier WITTMANN UK is helping Carclo Technical Plastics (CTP) located in Mitcham (Surrey, England), to increase its volume and its market share of precision engineered products for the European, US and Japanese healthcare and laboratory markets.

Barry Hill

Over the past twelve months WITTMANN UK has supplied a total of four full servo 3-axis WITTMANN W721 robots into CTP’s Mitcham based molding shop, thereby helping to increase the overall production volume at the factory while also decreasing reject rates and machine stoppages.

Medical products

CTP’s diagnostic cell of nine machines is currently molding a range of disposables for the medical market. These are then exported to the tune of some 20 million units per week. And, thanks to the increased robotics and automation performance at the company, Carclo Technical Plastics is steadily increasing its output.

CTP’s Molding Shop Manager Andy Fay explains that greater stability was needed for the automatic removal of pipette tip moldings from the injection cells, “The Y axis of the WITTMANN W721 linear robot was much steadier and robust than the previous model of robot. We were therefore able to rely on a much shorter dwell time in the mold and thereby increase output. The new WITTMANN robots have also given us peace of mind and removed any possibility of tool damage due to inaccurate robot positioning.”

For many industrial users the rack and pinion design for the “wrist” mechanism of the WITTMANN W721 robot gives it a competitive advantage. That, together with a 10 kg (22 lbs.) payload over the 6 kg (13.2 lbs.) figure normally quoted for the competitor robots means that the non-pneumatic mechanical design is winning hearts and minds of WITTMANN UK customers.
Absolute quality and performance

Says Andy Fay, “Robot quality was probably the foremost factor when beginning to source with WITTMANN UK. Our high cavity tooling needs fast, efficient and fault-free production on a 24/7 basis – all under clean conditions.”

Convincing service

Andy Fay’s reasons for working with WITTMANN UK include “Speed of order quotation. We particularly appreciate the quick responses always given by the company and the short delivery lead times and excellence in service, installation and back-up.

Particularly when integrating the robotics into CTP’s automation further down the line.”

Carclo Technical Plastics and WITTMANN

Carclo Technical Plastics manufactures a range of customized products at its Mitcham, Surrey base. These are for the medical and healthcare markets and cover conventional injection molding, insert molding, two shot molding and assembly techniques.

Carclo Technical Plastics is ISO 13485 approved to the highest standards of medical manufacture and is part of the global Carclo Technical Plastics organization with facilities across the United Kingdom, United States, Czech Republic and China (see www.carclo-plc.com).

Temperature controllers

Carclo Technical Plastics also uses WITTMANN’s very popular TEMPRO primus C 9 kW water heaters.

Andy Fay comments that “The competitive price of these temperature controllers means that it is much more cost effective to buy in bulk and simply replace them rather than repair them as needed.”

WITTMANN’s successful W721 robots

WITTMANN’s W721 robots received another extensive showing at the K 2007 plastics exhibition. The robots are directly aimed at the majority of companies involved in injection molding. Comparatively short production lead times ensure lower cost and a steady market supply of the W721 robots. •

Adds Fay, “WITTMANN UK were so confident of the robot’s performance that they supplied the first one to us for trial painted in our factory white colors.

Output was then in fact improved to the tune of around 10% over the previous robots.” The four WITTMANN robots are now playing a central role in the manufacture of this product line.

Barry Hill is Director of WITTMANN UK in Northants.
WITTMANN Temperature Controllers With DUO Cooling: New – And Simply “Cool”

Until recently, plastic processors had to purchase various heating and cooling units which were designed for the respective temperature range for applications with low or high tool temperatures. Every user knows about the serious disadvantages of this approach: higher investment costs due to multiple units, increased maintenance costs, higher space and training requirements.

Gerald Schodl

WITTMANN has introduced a new product to the global market to eliminate this problem once and for all. The new duo cooling system is used for the first time with the WITTMANN TEMPRO plus C series.

This system makes it possible to cover the entire operating temperature range from 20°C to 160°C with only one heating and cooling unit!

This year at Fakuma 2008, the WITTMANN Group will present a new temperature control system which can be operated with both indirect and direct cooling. The advantage of the new DUO cooling is the automatic switching between indirect (set volume) and direct (maximum) cooling from a single unit depending on the default switching temperature.

Indirect cooling

Indirect cooling is used optimally in the upper temperature range in which little energy needs to be eliminated and ensures a high regulation accuracy of +/-0.1°C. If the default temperature set point of 90°C is exceeded, the cooling valve is activated by the software thereby allowing cold water to flow into the cooling coil to cool the water circulation medium in the heat exchanger down to the default temperature set point value.

Indirect cooling prevents temperature swings, thus ensuring optimal temperature conduction in the range of 90°C to 160°C with a regulation accuracy of +/-0.1 °C.

Direct cooling

Direct cooling can supply up to 100% more cooling performance as compared to indirect cooling and is active in a selectable lower temperature range between 20°C and 90°C. This way it is possible to regulate applications with a temperature difference of 5°C between the part and cooling water supply to an exact temperature of +/- 0.5 °C.

When the required cooling temperature is below 90°C the unit switches to direct cooling automatically after reaching the default switching temperature value. If the default set temperature is exceeded, two valves are activated simultaneously. Warm water is transported from the mold cooling circuit to the cooling water drain via the outlet valve; cooling water flows directly into the heat exchanger via the cooling valve. This makes it possible to achieve extremely efficient cooling specifically in the lower temperature range between 20°C and 90°C.

Another advantage for the user is rapid cooling (crash cooling) to a preset safe temperature for the purpose of fast, time-saving tool changes.

DUO cooling

The WITTMANN TEMPRO plus C heating and cooling unit offers optimal ease of use. Various process data like actual/set temperature, water supply, system and pump pressure, flow and other features are called up and displayed on the colored TFT-LCD display.

The direct cooling function is activated via a separate menu for each circuit. In the case of the indirect unit of the TEMPRO plus C series it is possible to operate one circuit with duo cooling and the second circuit with standard indirect cooling.

In a circuit with preset DUO cooling the unit switches automatically from indirect to direct cooling if the temperature is below 90°C.
Case study: molding 
TRODAT’S PRINTY

TRODAT is a leading manufacturer of innovative marking devices based in Wels, Austria.

The Wels site has 500 employees and produces approximately 100,000 stamps per day. Among other things, TRODAT is the inventor of the popular stamp PRINTY. All components for the PRINTY stamp – like case and covers – are produced at this location.

The required tool temperatures lie within a range of 30°C to 95°C across the entire production.

The long-term business relationship between WITTMANN and TRODAT and their mutual ambition to implement innovation and process optimisation while maintaining low costs at the same time prompted TRODAT to successfully introduce the DUO cooling system in their company with outstanding results.

Use of DUO cooling for the PRINTY series

The PRINTY 4912 series text stamps covers are produced on an ENGEL ES 650/200 W injection molding machine.

The product consists of 2 components molded in a multiple-cavity tool. Based on the sprue weight, shot weight and throughput information, the cycle time can be optimally reduced.

The cooling time represented 50% of the cycle time and was the main focus for further process improvement and increased efficiency. Until now, TRODAT used six individual direct units for this application.

Based on an optimised part design, two WITTMANN DUO cooling series TEMPRO plus C indirect units were used. The advantage of being able to cover the entire tool temperature application range using a single device for direct/indirect cooling resulted in an immediate increase in production efficiency.

TEMPRO plus C series features like maintenance free ultrasound flow measurement, sensor controlled pressure monitoring, unlimited empty suction volume, pressure monitoring, serial interfaces and user-friendly color TFT-LCD display, complete the function of heating and cooling units!

TRODAT’s summary on DUO cooling

“Thanks to the increased use of direct cooling in the lower temperature range, we have achieved a cycle time reduction of 18%” – recalls Mr. Dobritzhofer who is responsible for thermoplastic processing and maintenance at the Wels TRODAT plant.

“Besides a very strong increase in efficiency, we have also achieved standardization of the heating and cooling units in the company through the use of DUO cooling.

This development makes employee training, spare parts purchasing and warehousing much easier and results in the saving potential we were hoping and striving for, especially as far as unit acquisition costs are concerned! In the past, we operated six units and now only require two as the WITTMANN indirect units with duo cooling are suitable for use with every tool and operate at temperatures up to 95°C”, comments Mr. Dobritzhofer convincingly.

Gerald Schodl is Sales Manager of the Temperature Controllers Department at WITTMANN Kunststoffgeräte GmbH in Vienna.
Focus On Productivity: Metchem Central Material Handling System

For Metchem Spolak z.o.o. based in Wadowice, Poland, WITTMAN installed a central drying and conveying system in 2007. Metchem has been a successful supplier of parts to the automotive industry for 24 years. Among their regular customers are Fiat, Volvo, VW, BMW, and Toyota. WITTMANN and Metchem are already looking back on a long-ranging and entirely successful collaboration.

Philipp Kaiser

To improve productivity and simultaneously reduce cost – not to mention the many other advantages – Metchem decided to install a central drying and conveying system.

Besides the energy saving (about 20%) and the material savings (about 2%) the system significantly reduced their labor requirements because of the reduction in maintenance and centralization of the raw materials.

An efficient and smooth operating material supply is indispensable for every plastics processor and the drying system, in some ways, is the heart of every plastics production line.

Before material is processed by the injection molding machine the resin has to be optimally dried. This eliminates moisture, avoiding the formation of bubbles and flow marks.

Special features of the drying system

Metchem is using a central drying system to dry the different resins like: PA6.6, GF30, POM, ABS, and PE. The system consists of two WITTMANN DRYMAX 900 twin bed desiccant dryers supplying each of the 13 drying hoppers (having a total capacity of 3,500 l) with 900 m³ of dry air per hour.

Special attention was given to the energy saving systems and safety functions that had to be integrated. Among the essential functions of the installation was the dew point controlled regeneration of the desiccant beds.

Based on actual measurement of the dew point, activation of the respective desiccant bed is delayed, resulting in shorter regeneration cycles and hence, energy savings. “SmartFlow” is WITTMANN’s intelligent method...
of airflow control resulting in energy savings of up to 30%. Actually, it is a fully automatic method of regulating the air control flaps, making the necessary adjustment for airflow to meet the specific requirements of different materials and fluctuating material quantities.

Another feature, the material protection function, monitors the material throughput at every drying hopper. In a case where the throughput is decreasing significantly under the preset value, the drying temperature is lowered automatically, thus preventing overdrying of the resin and thermal degradation.

To minimize space requirements, the entire drying system has been installed on a platform. A further enhancement to the user-friendliness has been made by linking the drying system to the control of the conveying system. This offers the convenience of a single control for the entire facility.

**Three vacuum lines**

The conveying system was split into three independent vacuum lines. The first line feeds the drying hoppers and the second – with a maximum conveying distance of 75 m – loads the four injection molding machines.

Both these lines are equipped with a single stage side channel blower which offers multiple advantages. It offers low investment and ensures a contact free process of compaction.

Thus, the conveying air is free of oil and dust particles that could cause contamination of the resin. At longer distances however, a side channel blower is reaching the limits of its capabilities. For the overlapping range of performance WITTMANN reverted to a claw vacuum pump. This is also a dry operating device and was used for the third vacuum line with conveying distances of over 80 m.

The loading of the drying hoppers is performed with A200 and A300 series material feeders, which can be adapted to the different hopper capacities with their modular construction. As an option, the feeders are equipped with a capacitive level sensor that again, has special advantages. On one hand, the material flow stops automatically when the fill level is reached. This avoids overfilling and minimizes the run time of the pump.

Another advantage is provided by the patented WITTMANN “residual material time visualization system” that records the drying time of the material in the drying hopper. This data can be recalled via the high resolution VGA touch screen of the system control as a table or as a graphic presentation. In addition, the operator has the choice whether or not to stop the feeding of the injection molding machines in the event the preset throughput is overstepped.

**Production safety through system reliability**

The RFID-coded (Radio Frequency Identification) coupling station CODEMAX contributes to the production safety. Simply, via remote control, a specific stored material can be assigned to any injection molding machine. The control identifies the manifold coupling to which the respective tube must be connected to and checks the connection. If the connection has been correctly made, conveying of the material can be started. In the event of a wrong connection, conveying is automatically suppressed and the control screen shows an error message and the troubleshooting instruction. With the user-friendly M7.2 control the operator can conveniently access a multitude of settings and controls.

By means of different menu views, control procedures in all areas of the drying and conveying system can be optimally managed. The material flow view provided via the control screen is of particular importance. There the fully documented material flow is visualized in all of its states and phases, from the starting point to the final destination at the injection molding machine. As typical for every molded part, different preparation steps are needed – e.g. drying, coloring or adding of regrind – all steps of the material flow are graphically displayed (as it is possible to embed everything into the freely configurable control).

This total monitoring of every aspect of the complete system allows immediate intervention and guarantees proper problem analysis using accurately recorded material data.

The system can be linked to the existing computer network via a conventional personal computer, therefore providing the operator with additional flexibility. This integration enables the manufacturing department to monitor the whole production process from the office and to adjust the process if necessary. Using the intranet/Internet it is possible to mirror the M7.2 control screen on any personal computer.

Metchem is using the standard OPC protocol to select and save all relevant process data, having installed the OPC server software on one of their computers. Also, the freedom of choice is given as to which data should be selected and processed locally. Everything is possible, from the simple collection of the dew point values to displaying the errors of all the peripheral equipment. Thus, Metchem is capable of presenting a transparent production report for customer audits showing the process parameters that have been used.

The close interaction of all hardware and software components provides maximum flexibility and process safety, independent of production requirements.

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**Examples from the M7.2 system control screen: residence time of material in drying hopper (above), and an overview of the coupling station.**

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Philipp Kaiser
is Regional Sales Manager at WITTMANN Kunststoffgeräte GmbH in Vienna.
Italy: Sverital S.p.A.

Since the beginning of the eighties Sverital S.p.A. has been the exclusive distributor for WITTMANN in Italy. The company was founded in 1950 by Boerje Noren, the father of the current Managing Director, Bjoern Noren.

Sverital is located near Milan, the economic capital of Italy, in a building with approximately 2,000 square meters. The team consists of about 35 people located at this facility plus 20 salesmen and 6 technicians located externally.

The company has quite a good reputation in the Italian market thanks to the worldwide selection of good quality products, a problem solving approach and excellent service support.

The structure of Sverital

All the products represented by Sverital are associated with the business of molds and the molding of plastic materials. Sverital has five branches, one for each family of similar products. The five branches are:

- Auxiliary equipment for plastic processing.
- Tools and machines for mold finishing.
- Mold components.
- Hot runner systems.
- Components for end of arm tooling (EOAT).

For each one of these branches there is an experienced Product Manager with solid knowledge of the products represented by Sverital in order to offer technical support to the sales team and the end customer.

The support consists primarily of trying to find the right solution for the customer’s problems and to create a long-term relationship based on confidence and loyalty. In this way, the customer finds a partner and not just a supplier. Of the five branches the most important is auxiliary equipment and in particular, automation.

The Italian market

Italy is a country in a critical phase from the point of view of industrial production. Competition from countries where labor costs are low is taking away any large-scale production causing a deep crisis for local manufacturing companies and especially injection molding and mold making companies.

The only way to survive for most of these companies is to increase their use of automation in the production processes to be more competitive. For this reason, over the last few years, there have been a growing number of requests for completely integrated solutions from companies in the molding field. For this reason, Sverital has created a team for the design of automation systems and developed a network of sub-contractors for production. In the last couple of years Sverital has also invested a lot of time and resources into the area of safety and is now able to provide customers with both solutions and support for CE certification of the manufacturing work cell.

Mr. Sergio Scolari, Commercial Director, says, “For the WITTMANN brand to become known in Italy where there exists dozens of competitors in each of the fields (robots, material handling, granulators, etc.) it has not been an easy job and has required several years of patient work from all Sverital’s staff and strong support from WITTMANN. Today the WITTMANN brand is considered across the whole Italian territory as a market leader, and in particular, their robots.”

There is still a lot to do for material handling and the other auxiliaries due to the presence in this market of some of the biggest companies for these products, but it is just another challenge for the Sverital people.
Finland: WittFinn/SPM Service Oy Ab

Suomen BATTENFELD Oy started as a BATTENFELD affiliated company in 1986. In 1994, when the ownership changed, Suomen Plastmaschinen Oy Ab/SPM Service was created. In 2008 WITTMANN purchased BATTENFELD and WITTMANN BATTENFELD was established.

The company began its representation both in Finland and in the Baltic countries, and at the same time, Suomen Plastmaschinen Oy Ab changed its name to Oy WittFinn Ab.

Their personnel have remained almost the same since the establishment of the company, giving them over twenty years experience in sales, service and accessories in the plastics industries.

Machinery

At the moment the territory of Finland and the Baltic countries has 900 injection molding machines in which the service, maintenance, accessories and spare parts are in the hands of the WittFinn company. The biggest needs are for the medium size injection molding machines with 100–1,000 t clamping force.

Clinetele

• Electronics (Nokia)
• Medical
• Appliance
• Packaging

The WittFinn personnel also have long standing experience with the automation of robots, service, mixers, accessories, mills, mixers and their sales.

Prospects for the future

In the future, Oy WittFinn Ab will expand its activity into the Baltic area to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia.

They will require more personnel because the number of machines will increase and also, they will train more service personnel.

At present, Oy WittFinn Ab employs 6 people and in next two years it is estimated they will need another 3–4 more.

WITTMANN BATTENFELD’s representation has been very well accepted by existing customers and Oy WittFinn Ab continues to meet all their customers’ requirements in sales and service with the same competence and skill as before. The prospects for the future look good as their sales and the number of machines are expected to increase continuously.

The head office in Salo.

Presentation of BATTENFELD equipment at a show in Lahti.

The Oy WittFinn Ab Team with its director Horst Schallschmidt (in the middle).