

# Perfection in grinding technology

## Grinding & Surface Finishing visits Hardinge Kellenberger's impressive new facility in Goldach, Switzerland



**Kellenberger AG was founded in 1917 by Leonhard Kellenberger. Its earliest success resulted from its universal grinding machine and the company participated in its first machine exhibition in Basle, Switzerland in 1919.**

In 1956, Edgar Kellenberger assumed responsibility for the company. Under his leadership, the company was successful by regularly updating its universal cylindrical and cutter grinding machines and by expanding the export of its products. By the late 1970s, Kellenberger had worked with the Swiss electronics manufacturer Grossenbacher to develop a numerically controlled system for its machines. In 1989, the third generation of the Kellenberger family assumed responsibility for the company when Jürg Kellenberger was appointed managing director. The company continued to grow and was acquired by Hardinge Inc. in 1995. Five years later,

Hardinge added to its grinding portfolio by purchasing Jones & Shipman, Hauser, Tripet, Voumard and Tshudin.

### New facility

In a groundbreaking move that cements its position as a leader in precision engineering and manufacturing of grinding, Hardinge Kellenberger has unveiled its state-of-the-art facility in Goldach, Switzerland. This new establishment marks a significant milestone in the company's journey, showcasing its commitment to innovation, sustainability and excellence. Covering an expansive area and equipped with cutting-edge technology, the company's facility is set to greatly advance the industry and elevate Switzerland's reputation as a hub of precision grinding. With its advanced technology, state-of-the-art research & development centre and focus on nurturing talent, Hardinge Kellenberger is set to greatly advance the precision engineering and manufacturing landscape of grinding on a global scale. As Hardinge Kellenberger continues its legacy of excellence, the world can anticipate groundbreaking solutions and products that epitomise precision and craftsmanship.

Viktor Gaspar was appointed CEO of Hardinge Europe and Kellenberger AG in March 2020. In this exclusive interview with Grinding & Surface Finishing, he explains



*Viktor Gaspar CEO of Hardinge Europe and Kellenberger AG.*

how exponential growth resulted in the move to a new facility and the company's plans for the future.

"We moved to our new facility in July this year. Our previous facility was in the middle of St Gallen, where the company was located for 103 years. The space became too small for us and we simply could not grow there anymore.

"The decision was made to move to new premises around four years ago when I started here. We were looking at ways we could grow the company and I realised there was a capacity issue as we were building 165 machines in the current facility. The owners wanted to grow further and so we made the decision to build a brand-new facility. The official opening was on the 9th of September.

"At our new facility, we have capacity for up to 350 machines per year. 81 percent of our business goes into Hardinge Kellenberger machines, 10 percent into Hauser machines, 7 percent into the Voumard brand and 2 percent into the Tschudin range."

All grinding machine brands belonging to Hardinge, like Kellenberger, Voumard, Hauser and Tschudin, have been brought together in one place with sales, research





and development, production, assembly, warehouse and administration.

For the new plant in Goldach, the future production concept is based on the complete detachment from rigidly predefined areas as they are in use in a flow production. Instead, an innovative laser concept will line out exactly the production structure that is needed at the moment.

Streamlined production processes and an optimised assembly process bring about high improvements in capacity and efficiency. Vibration-insulated foundations will significantly reduce noise pollution for employees.

The new production facility has been developed with sustainability in mind. A central cooling and compressed air system incorporating groundwater as well as Lake Constance water in accordance with the latest environmental aspects will help to reduce operating costs. Bringing the brands together in one place eliminates time-consuming and costly commuting between the sites.



Time-consuming and cost-intensive commuting between the St. Gallen, Wittenbach and Romanshorn sites will also be eliminated by merging the brands at the Goldach location.

The 4.45-acre production hall will serve

as the new location's centerpiece housing the following areas: Spindle construction; Grinding shop and measuring area; Showroom and Training workshop.

#### The vision

Viktor Gaspar continues: "We have a nice slogan which is called: 'Perfection in grinding technology.' We exist because of our past. Where do we want to go? We want to be a global leader. We are already a global leader on the technology side, but not from the market side. We want to develop new machines and our strategy is to develop components and then components will help to produce new machines. If you research the total market of grinding machines, it is worth around 2.1 billion, USD, globally every year. The market that we are operating in, however, is worth around 700 million. The overall market consists of service grinding, cylindrical grinding, centreless grinding, smaller machines and jig grinding. We are operating in the cylindrical grinding and jig grinding markets right now."

Providing added value for its customers continues to be the focus of Hardinge Kellenberger. Viktor Gaspar concludes: "Today's customers don't buy machines, they buy solutions, and we want to further meet this demand with the best machine configurations in the grinding sector."

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