

Quantum leap in accuracy

Röhm GmbH looks back on a history of more than 100 years as a manufacturer of tool and workpiece clamping systems. During these years the company has grown steadily and today serves international markets with three production facilities in Germany and 1,300 employees worldwide. At the main German plant in Sontheim/Brenz, 750 employees primarily manufacture technology-oriented system solutions for sectors such as the automotive industry, mechanical engineering, aerospace and many others on 41,000 square meters. The parts in question are finished on Kellenberger Premium grinding machines.

Of all things, it was an internal crisis which brought a decline in sales, taking Röhm to the abyss for the first time in the company's long history. After several difficult years, the acquisition of the company by Austrian investor Helmut Rothenberger Group in September 2017 brought the return to calmer waters. Member of the group Gerhard Glanz took over both as CEO and co-partner at Röhm. In his view, the company's portfolio fitted perfectly with the existing business areas of the Rothenberger Holding, which generates a sales volume of 1.3 billion Euros with over 100 operating companies, many of them in the machine tools sector.

Applying an extensive restructuring project, Gerhard Glanz achieved the "turnaround" within a few months. He restored confidence both among employees and customers and brought Röhm back into the profit zone. In order to make the company fit for the future, an investment sum of several million euros was made available, which flowed in new machinery and systems. The aim for the future was to produce Röhm's high-tech products in even better quality and at the same time more cost-effectively.

For division manager Alexander Scheitenberger and his 35 staff members, the investment came exactly at the right time. Scheitenberger's department manufactures



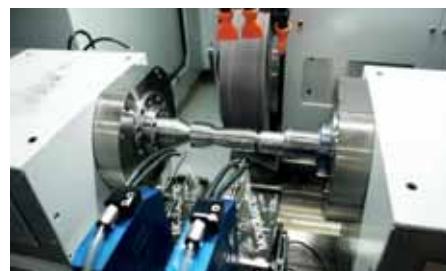
Division manager Alexander Scheitenberger (to the right) and Erhard Bader, head of production, are very satisfied with the decision for the K100.

tool clamping systems, 40 percent of which are customised special designs. A trained industrial mechanic, Scheitenberger has been with Röhm since 1990 and is very familiar with all machining processes and the Röhm portfolio.

The parts were being machined on a KEL-VARIA universal grinding machine with centre width 1,000 mm, which had been in use for 18 years. Now spare parts for key components were no longer available, making a replacement investment unavoidable. Scheitenberger and head of production Erhard Bader agreed, that the new machine should again be a Kellenberger: "We have had very good experience with the KEL-VARIA. The reliability, accuracy, and process safety of the machine over the runtime were outstanding. In addition, the cooperation with Kellenberger has always been characterised by a high level of professionalism. Erich Ziegler, the Kellenberger area manager who is responsible for us gave us excellent advice on the new procurement." Since 2018, the Kellenberger product portfolio has offered two machine designs, which can meet the machining tasks at Röhm. The new KELLENBERGER 100 platform concept proved to be the best solution, especially since Swiss manufacturer Wenger had specially adapted an automation to the machine.

Versatile platform solution

The task assigned to the engineers in St. Gallen, Switzerland, in regard to the KELLENBERGER 100 was to develop a platform on which different machine concepts could be realised with a strong customer orientation. The segment of high-performance, low-cost grinding machines within the group was integrated into the concept. The modular solution on a common platform and a new assembly concept to reduce throughput time enables cost-efficient production of the machine and thus a very



Machining with RÖHM high-precision centres on the Kellenberger 100.



Interior of the WeFlex loader with line gantry and pallet changer.

good price/performance ratio. The machine concept was optimised in close cooperation with the service department. This resulted in speeding up maintenance and service processes and better accessibility to maintenance-intensive components.

The Kellenberger 100 offers the widest range of standard configurations for a great variety of grinding operations. The machine is available in centre widths of 1,000/600 mm with centre height 200 mm and is designed for part weights of up to 150 kg. A higher drive power for the grinding wheel, 11,5 kW, ensures increased productivity, while the newly-designed guide in the Z-axis brings greater profile accuracy. For higher accuracy in non-circular grinding, the C-axis is equipped with a direct drive. Röhm opted for a machine with a centre width of 1,000 mm.

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