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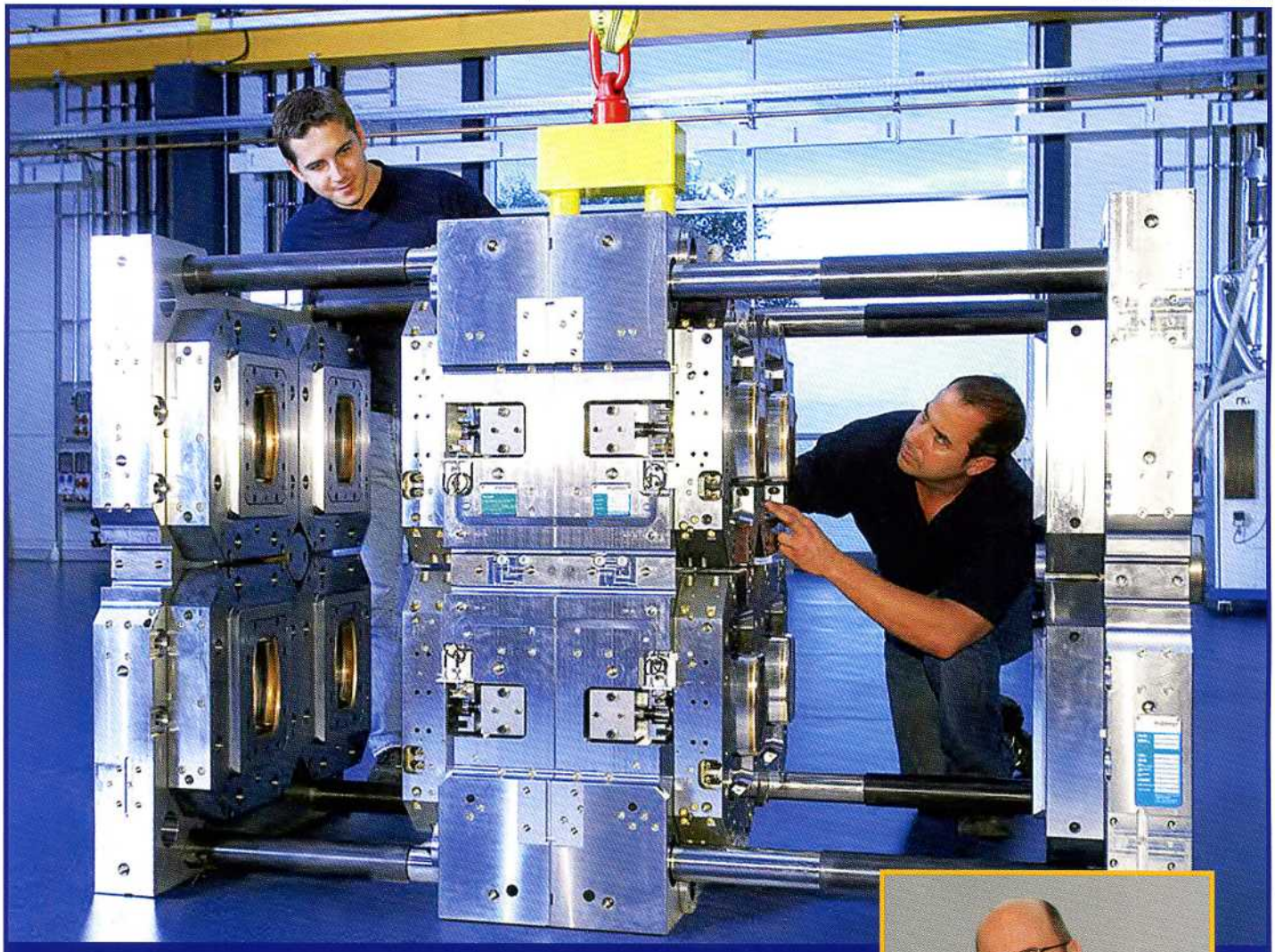

Quality Control and Measurement

Vogel Business Media

Slovenia's shops to celebrate return to pre-crisis levels with first-ever group stand at Euromold

With up to 3,000 workers employed in the die and mould industry and a population of only 2 million, Slovenia depends on the sector, so when it performs well, a lot of people feel it, relatively speaking.

Slovenian die and mould output last year rose to the pre-crisis level of €270 million, according to Ales Hancic, MD of Tecos Slovenian Tool and Die Development Centre in Celje.

In a presentation about Slovenia to international delegates at the Istma World Conference in Cape Town, South Africa, Hancic said toolmakers from the country will display as a group for the first time at Euromold, the world's largest die and mould show, to be held in Frankfurt, Germany, in late November 2014.

Source: Tecos

Support for the resurgent die and mould industry has come from the country's development centre for the industry, which turns 20 this year.

Not only will shops be joining forces on collective floor space, Tecos also has reason to celebrate, Hancic said: The technical centre is turning 20 this year. With turnover of €1.2 million, the centre employs 19 workers and focuses on the plastic and metal processing industry. It offers both products and services to the Slovenian and EU markets, Hancic said. The core competencies of the centre are said to lie in the fields of product design, structural analysis, toolmaking, optical metrology, reverse engineering, LCA and specialised training for specific polymer processing and toolmaking skills.

To date, Tecos has reportedly participated in more than 70 international and national research and development projects. The centre calls itself "an expert in simulation, both simulation of process as well as simulation of structural analysis". To this end, it makes extensive use of various FEM software.

» ***Tecos,***
Celje, Slovenia.
tecos.si

F1 team's shift to 5-axis processing leads to tidy order for machine tool builder

Formula One racing team Lotus has announced the purchase of six 5-axis milling centres with integrated automation from GF Machining Solutions.

The Mikron HPM 450U milling centres, which have been fitted at the Lotus F1 Team headquarters in Enstone, England, are part of a comprehensive modernisation of the production facilities belonging to the British Formula 1 team.

Thomas Mayer, the Lotus F1 Team Chief Operating Officer, said he is thoroughly satisfied. "We made the strategic decision to extend our milling capacities to five axis, and in this respect we chose a system that allows us to machine workpieces in a single set-up process. This decision has enabled us to increase productivity considerably, improve the utilisation of our machine tools, achieve a higher and more uniform parts precision and lower the unit costs."

Before investing in the machines, Lotus mainly relied on 3-axis milling to produce complex, high-precision parts. Although these delivered good results, the machines were said to lack the desired productivity. A key drawback was reportedly the considerable amount of time spent setting up the machinery. "We were not as efficient and effective as we wanted to be," Mayer noted. "With the old 3-axis machines, too much time was wasted on setting up the machinery and on the planning and design of individual add-on devices for milling. On top of that, the frequent interruptions in the production process not only had negative effects on productivity, but also, in view of the necessary manual handling of workpieces, on the precision of the parts."

Source: GF Machining Solutions

The racing team decided the time has come to make the step from 3- to 5-axis machining.

» ***GF Machining Solutions,***
Losone, Switzerland.
gfms.com