

INSIGHTS

EDITION **2** 2021

RS 1 ROBOT SYSTEM.

The product special.

USER-BASED.

Six industry sector reports.

FROM THE COMPANY.

Hermle Bike Marathon.





**Dear business partners,
Dear members of staff,**

from left to right Günther Beck, Benedikt Hermle and Franz-Xaver Bernhard,
Management Board of Maschinenfabrik Berthold Hermle AG

despite all the negative news headlines, we are currently still taking a positive view of the future. In amongst all of the challenges we have been successful in keeping our 1,300-strong workforce largely intact. We have also been able to increase the number of apprentices while at the same time recruiting all former ones permanently at the end of their apprenticeship. Short-time working ended back in August after more than a year and, thanks to our long-term human resources policy, we have been able to respond quickly and flexibly to the current upturn with a strong and complete workforce.

Our product drive in the area of automation solutions is also paying dividends. For example, in 2021 – in addition to standardised 3- and 5-axis machining centres – we delivered and installed numerous automation systems such as the HS flex / HS flex heavy handling systems and the RS 05-2 and RS 1 robot systems. Read more on this in the customer reports in this edition.

The Management Board of Hermle AG would like to take this opportunity to thank all of our customers who continued to place their trust in us during the crisis, thereby helping to secure a long-term and fair partnership. Equal thanks are due to the members of staff at all our locations, whose commitment, which cannot be taken for granted, made the current upturn possible in the first place.

Hermle AG has held its ground well in 2021 and expects to see sales up by 20 to 25 per cent over the year as a whole. Incoming orders rose by 75.1 per cent to €309.9 million during the first nine months of 2021.

The upward trend in orders continued in October, even if the spike in demand, which had been boosted in the third quarter by catch-up effects and larger individual projects, flattened out somewhat. We therefore expect capacity utilisation to remain very high throughout the final quarter. The only way to cope with this is by compensating for any shortfalls arising from increasing Covid-19 cases and considerable supply chain disruptions through various internal measures such as working overtime, re-designing processes and moving to alternative suppliers. Hermle's traditionally well-stocked stores, which help to efficiently address fluctuations in demand and supply, have gradually dwindled as a result of strong business in the third quarter. Right now, from the way things look, Hermle will again benefit from a solid order book in 2022.

Günther Beck, Member of the Board of Finances and Information Processing



Images of the new sheet metal production facility at the location in Zimmern o.R.

It is now almost two years since the groundbreaking ceremony for the expansion of our location in Zimmern o.R. Through the new, state-of-the-art sheet metal production facility, we have been able to add yet another large segment of Hermle manufacturing to this location, which was already home to the casting process of our mineral casting beds. More than 40 members of staff ensure the smooth manufacture of cabin parts, enclosures and numerous small sheet metal parts. In addition to intensive manual processes, e.g. for welding and edging, we also use state-of-the-art interlinked laser punching systems and a sheet metal storage system with well over 400 compartments.

The investment of over €15 million in sheet metal production is one of the largest single construction measures in the last ten years. We are currently expanding our machining production facility with a further horizontal machining centre and are also investing in quality assurance measures at our locations. You can get an overview of our manufacturing and production facilities at any time during a visit.

Benedikt Hermle, Member of the Board Materials Management, Production and Service

The Covid-19 pandemic has presented Hermle sales staff with numerous challenges: showcasing new products, organising company visits and meeting customers and interested parties on site. Online events such as Hermle Moves and various virtual workshops at least partially compensated for the lack of face-to-face communication. Fortunately, EMO and Fakuma enabled us to get a taste of trade fair life again – albeit in a somewhat muted form. We also held face-to-face workshops again. Talking about face-to-face meetings: We are already looking forward to the Hermle Open House from 26 to 29 April 2022, to which you are cordially invited. Against the backdrop of growing demand from Industry 4.0 customers, a key focus of our development work is on new automation and digitalisation modules for networked manufacturing systems. As a result, we presented the compact RS 1 robot system in 2021, which is suitable for automating six different Hermle machine models. External machines such as measuring and cleaning units or automated guided vehicle systems can thus also be integrated into a Hermle manufacturing system. This is where we come into our own, continuing to expand automation across plant floors.

Franz-Xaver Bernhard, Member of the Board of Research & Development and Sales

RS 1 PERMANENT PROCESS RELIABILITY.

The robot system for fully automatic pallet and workpiece handling.

The RS 1 is the complete combination cell for maximum flexibility and productivity. The rack storage concept ensures extensive autonomous runtime. Gripper and device changeover takes place automatically and the full-scale setup station enables pallets and workpiece carriers to be set up during the primary processing time.

This makes the robot system a highly suitable automation solution for many businesses.



FREELY CONFIGURABLE

You can use the RS 1 with one machine or link two machines for maximum output – also at a later date. Various extensions such as a third rack module, a washing unit, a measuring machine or an automated guided vehicle system (AGV) are also possible.

COMPACT AUTOMATION

With an installation area of just 12 m², the RS 1 robot system always offers free access to the working area of machines, regardless of whether one or two machining centres are connected to the robot system.

VARIABLE MACHINE SELECTION

The overarching RS 1 concept is compatible with a range of Hermle machining centres: C 12, C 22, C 250, C 32, C 400 or C 42. It makes no difference whether two identical machines or two different ones are linked to each other.

AUTOMATICALLY PRODUCE MORE

The NC-controlled long-stroke clamping devices and grippers allow fully automatic workpiece changeover. The innovative RS 1 robot system thus automatically increases productivity through its interplay with the individual parts provisioning system via steplessly adjustable universal dies.

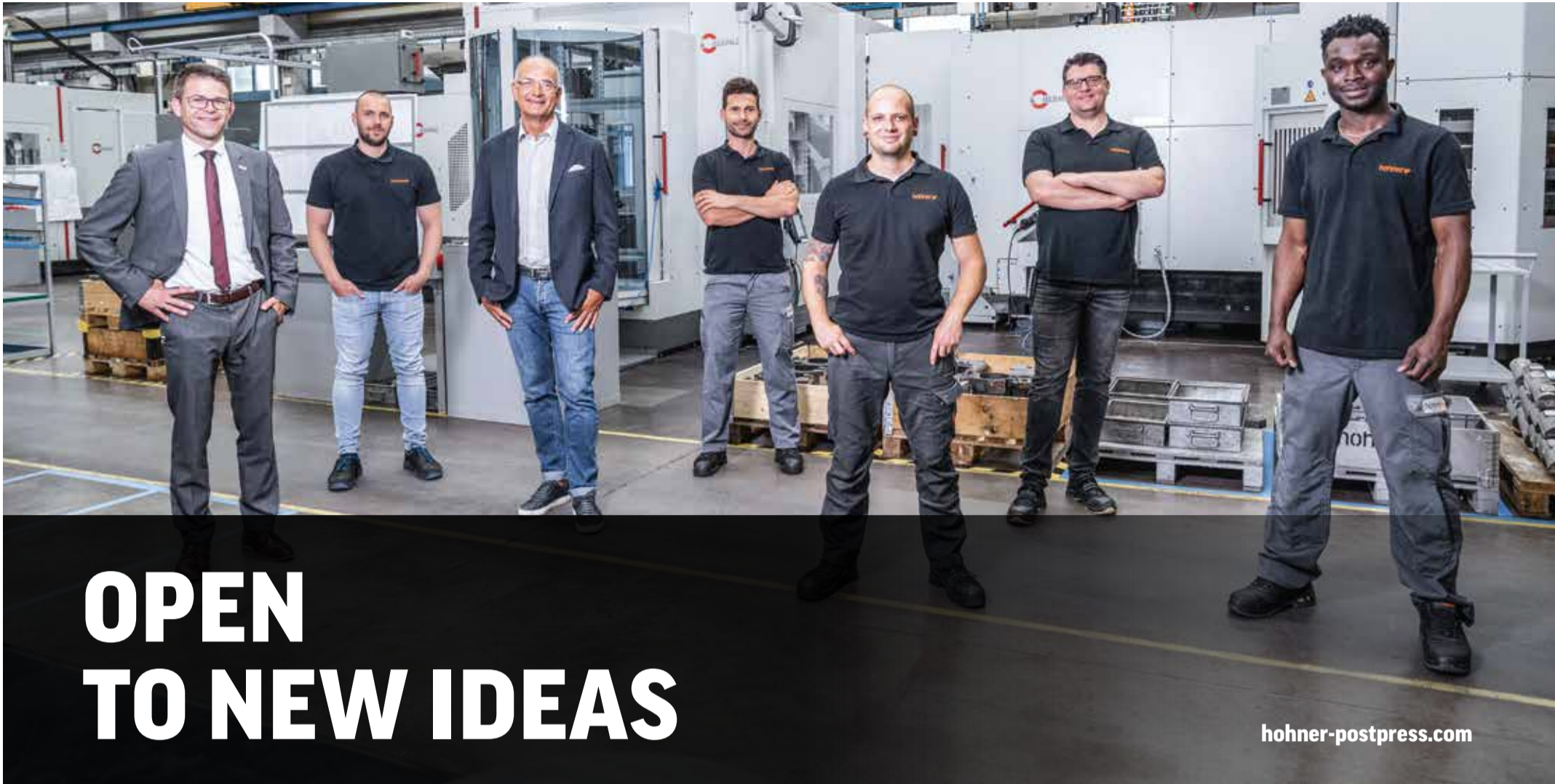
EASY HANDLING

The RS 1 is fully integrated into the Hermle software environment and correspondingly easy to operate via the touch screen – in fact, like an individual machine. There is hardly any need for manual intervention.

INTUITIVE OPERATION WITH HACS

When using the HACS, the operator has a clear view of all relevant data, including a system overview, work plans, sequence plans and tool overview. You can influence the processing priority at any time – via drag & drop along with optimal visualisation. Two machines are controlled by SOFLEX.

More information and animation can be found at www.hermle.de/RS1_en or in our virtual showroom www.hermle.de/showroom_en



OPEN TO NEW IDEAS

hohner-postpress.com

from left to right Helmut Müller, HPV Hermle Vertriebs GmbH, with the team of Hohner Maschinenbau GmbH: Group Manager CAD CAM Stefan Heitzmann, CEO Hans-Peter Schöllhorn, Team Leader CNC Production Burhan Pitzner, CAD CAM Programmer Tobias Habel, Production Manager Andreas Hennemann, Operator Samuel Emeka right Supporting role: 160 parts subsequently move in the housing of the narrow stitching head at 18,000 cycles per hour. If a surface is not manufactured to an accuracy of one hundredth of a millimetre, it will not run smoothly.

Hohner Maschinenbau feels at home in the world of complexity and precision. So why not expand this know-how and erect another business pillar as a subcontractor? Thanks to two robot-automated 5-axis machining centres from Hermle, the German machine manufacturer is optimistic about taking this decisive step forward.



Even before the Coronavirus crisis, the graphics industry had been under a lot of pressure: The Internet has grown into a strong communication platform with a myriad of distribution channels. Individual user targeting makes the online world highly attractive for marketing strategists. But with the arrival of digitalisation, the classic printed product is picking up on the trend towards individualisation – print is becoming more personal. Hohner Maschinenbau GmbH, which develops machines for the graphics industry, has therefore long been working on solutions for digital processing in parallel with its classic saddle stitchers and recently merged both worlds into a modular system. “A core can be expanded with up to five feeding variants. From saddle stitchers to a crossfolding, tower, fold stitcher or digital module. The machine grows with the needs of the print shop,” explains Hans-Peter Schöllhorn, CEO of Hohner Maschinenbau GmbH.

Schöllhorn also had to change production routines to be able to adapt each system individually: He reorganised the machinery and looked for a solution to increase productivity despite smaller quantities. His plan was to reduce the vertical range of manufacture and to only machine the high-value drawing parts with special quality requirements in-house – ideally 24/7. This is where Maschinenfabrik Berthold Hermle AG came into play.



top Operator Samuel Emeka checks a die with finished components for Hohner's narrow stitching heads. right The new Hermle system replaces six individual machines and is significantly more productive thanks to robot automation. bottom In addition to cast iron, plastic, aluminium and steels, Hohner Maschinenbau also machines brass on the C 400 U and C 650 U.

24/7 PRECISION

The requirements for handling and machining a range of parts in various dimensions, including various devices, were met by a combination of C 650 U and C 400 U. A powerful RS 3 robot is positioned between the two 5-axis machines and loads them fully automatically. Together, they replace six existing systems at Hohner, which shows that Schöllhorn was not necessarily concerned with expanding capacity but with increasing productivity. And it worked: “The machines run perfectly and productivity has increased from 30 to 80 per cent.”

In addition, the machine manufacturer is exploring new manufacturing dimensions, as the CEO notes: “Now we can offer the preci-

sion that was difficult to achieve before.” And Hohner knows what precision means: In a stitching head, 160 parts complete 18,000 cycles an hour. If a surface is not manufactured to an accuracy of one hundredth of a millimetre, it will not run smoothly. “We take complexity and difficulty in our stride. That’s why we want to offer this know-how to other companies,” this is how Schöllhorn explains entry into the world of subcontracting and adds: “I don’t see the point in filling a highly qualified system with parts that I can procure more cost effectively somewhere else. We’d rather manufacture complex and

highly demanding parts on the Hermle machines for internal and external use.”

“THE MACHINES RUN PERFECTLY AND PRODUCTIVITY HAS INCREASED FROM 30 TO 80 PER CENT.” Hans-Peter Schöllhorn

apprentices and skilled workers. It shows that we are a crisis-proof and future-oriented company.”

For him, the investment has had another advantage – it sends an important signal: “A company that is geared towards cutting-edge technology also has more chance of attracting future



AUTOMATION GUARANTEES BREATHING SPACE

hamiltoncompany.com

Headquarters of the Hamilton Group in Bonaduz, Switzerland.

Two C 12 U machining centres with robot automation have been in operation at Hamilton since June 2021. Team Leader Luca Morell is delighted – with the high level of integration of the Hermle solution and with a partner who understands the technical challenges and keeps its promises.

Hamilton develops and manufactures innovative ventilators, liquid handling robots and other automation solutions at its main facilities in Bonaduz and Domat/Ems, Switzerland. The family-run company relies on a high degree of vertical integration to enable it to be autonomous and meet the stringent quality demands placed on medical instruments. “When our orders went through the roof about 18 months ago, it became clear that we’d be unable to handle this high volume of orders with the machinery we had at the time. And we knew: The time had come to start investing,” explains Luca Morell, Team Leader Production Milling Vertical at Hamilton. The plan was to replace three stand-alone machines with highly efficient, automated machining centres. The demands placed on automation were just as high as on the actual milling process: Hamilton expects the highest possible form and position tolerances despite the thin-walled and fragile component geometries.

The Gosheim-based machine manufacturer proved around two years ago that Hermle always achieves the required performance and precision: At that time, Hamilton invested in a C 42 U and a

C 32 U, both equipped with an HS flex system. The 5-axis technology significantly increased the scale and complexity of components that could be produced by the life science equipment manufacturer. “However, the driving factor for our renewed investment in Hermle was the fully integrated nature of the automation solution and the quality of the cooperation,” Morell explains.

AUTOMATIC GRIPPER CHANGE

The two new C 12 U machining centres with the RS 05-2 robot system have been in operation since June 2021. The centres and robot are operated via the Hermle Automation Control System (HACS). “It takes operators by the hand, so to speak, and guides them through the necessary programming steps,” Morell told us when praising the HACS. The 20 to 150 mm long blanks are stocked and supplied via a drawer storage system. “Besides prototypes, we’ve also set up standard parts, of which we have to machine about 4,000 a year. They’re located ready for use in one of the five drawers in case the low-volume production or prototype load is not too high.

“THE TECHNOLOGY IS FASCINATING.”

Fadri Pitsch

As soon as there’s a bit of breathing space, the system automatically schedules them into the manufacturing process,” Morell explains. To ensure that this also occurs reliably even during unmanned shifts despite varying dimensions, Hermle integrated a special feature into the robot cell: A gripper station offers space for eight pairs of grippers which the robot changes automatically, if necessary.

A total of two CNC programmers and four operators currently work at the new machining centres: “We consciously increased manpower to ensure we can reprogram the parts machined on the three previous machines as quickly as possible and set them up at



the new machining centres,” Morell says. “Then we’ll only need two man-hours to guarantee 24-hour continuous operation and can exploit the full potential of the automated centres.” He can only estimate how high this will be, citing a productivity increase of 25 to 30 per cent compared to the three previous machines.



top Fadri Pitsch loads the dies with blanks, thereby providing the C 12 U with enough work for the next unmanned shift.



bottom Hamilton replaced three stand-alone machines with two highly efficient Hermle machining centres with automation. And an automated vice was a must.



from left to right Flavio Bass, Project Leader Production Mechanics at Hamilton, Christian Simon, Hermle Regional Sales Manager (Switzerland) AG, Luca Morell, Team Leader Production Milling Vertical at Hamilton.

RS 05-2

THE ROBOT SYSTEM WITH AUTOMATIC FINGER CHANGE.

GRIPPING. CLAMPING. STORING. MACHINING. 24/7.

Companies that produce lots of workpieces weighing up to 5 kg can reach the next level with the RS 05-2. Namely, the full automation level. The robot system demonstrates all its advantages, especially in the field of precision engineering and medical technology: Compactness, storage variability and flexibility in the use of clamping devices and grippers. Now for the first time ever, the newly developed finger change on the gripper allows truly flexible production in small robotics – also as a double gripper for even faster, fully automatic workpiece changeover. The RS 05-2 robot system can be adapted to various Hermle machining centres: C 12, C 22, C 32, C 250 or C 400.



INNER DRAWER STORAGE

Five-fold drawer storage with universal dies for individual and large-scale workpiece storage.



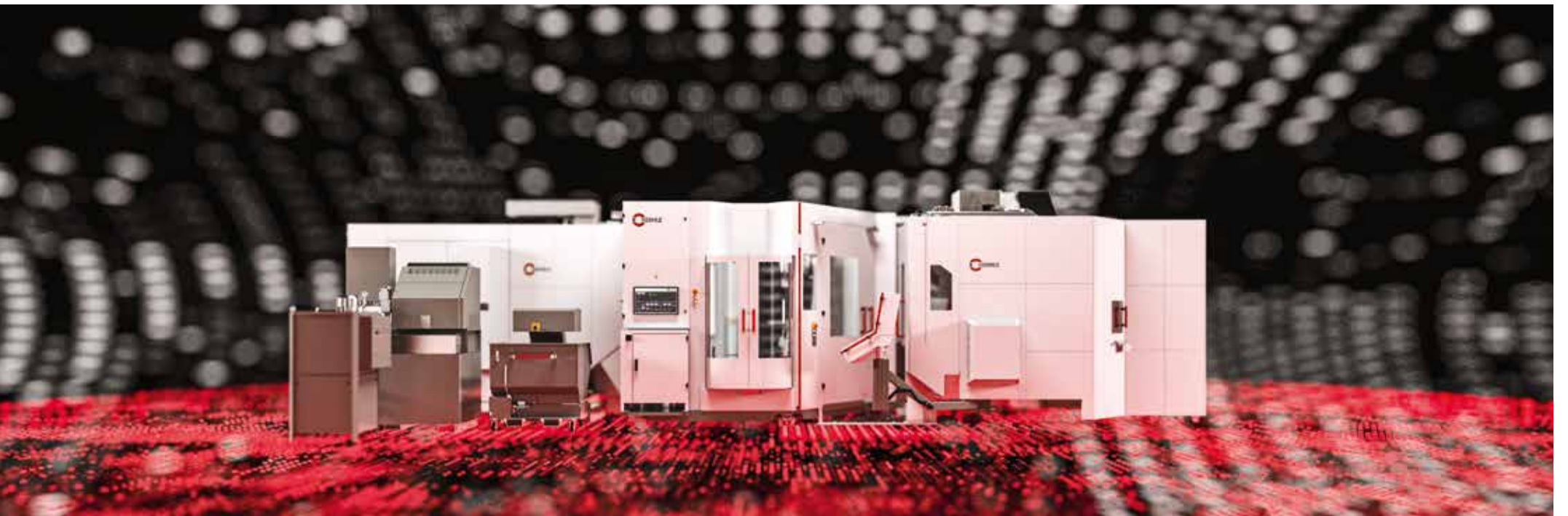
OUTER DRAWER STORAGE



DOUBLE GRIPPER

Double gripper with a wide variety of finger grippers for increased productivity.

You can find even more information and an informative animation in our product special at www.hermle.de/rs05-2_en or visit our refurbished virtual showroom at www.hermle.de/showroom_en. You can find a video of the system also with the finger change on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/HermleAG.



FLEXIBLE AND UNMANNED PRODUCTION

lugauer-gmbh.com

The NC-controlled long-stroke clamping devices and grippers allow fully automatic and flexible workpiece changeover.

Lugauer GmbH from Jenbach, Austria, specialises in the precise production of mostly complex workpieces that require drilling, milling and turning operations in addition to fixture and tool construction. To ensure the highest level of precision, process reliability and even greater flexibility, the high-tech company has invested in the latest RS 1 automation solution from Hermle.

Lugauer GmbH was founded in 1994 by Hartwig Lugauer and taken over in 1998 by his son, Gernot Lugauer, who is currently the company's Principal Shareholder and Managing Director. Through permanent investment in machinery and continuous further development, the family business has developed into a reliable partner in the machining industry. The majority of customers are at home in mechanical engineering, automotive, semiconductor and abrasive materials industries.

AUTOMATION AS A STRATEGY FOR THE FUTURE

The Austrian company invested in a C 42 5-axis machining centre including a HS flex handling system from Hermle at the end of 2017. Lugauer had already gained good experience with a Hermle automation solution through the use of the HS flex handling system. "Due to the actual variety of parts, the desire to operate unmanned shifts over the weekend and the required combination of pallet and parts handling, only automation equipped with a robot came into the equation at Lugauer," says Gregor Rofner, sales engineer at Hermle, and adds: "During the course of the project, we

both came to the conclusion that the best way to achieve the desired high level of flexibility and cost effectiveness was with a 2-machine solution."

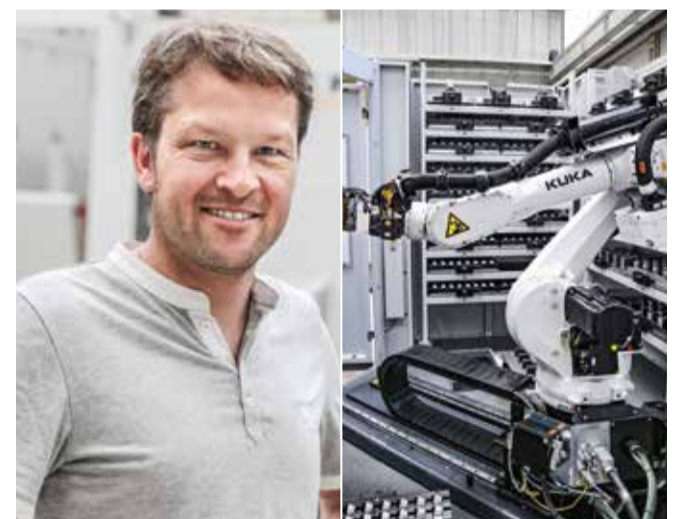
ONE ROBOT OPERATES TWO C 22 U MACHINING CENTRES

The new system at Lugauer consists of two Hermle C 22 U 5-axis machining centres and the RS 1 robot system, which operates both machines 24/7. Three rack storage modules with 26 die pockets, 16 pallet pockets as well as four special clamping devices and four gripper pockets ensure the optimum provision of parts.

SPINDLE RUNTIMES OPTIMISED: 24/7

According to Christian Aigner, authorised signatory and technical manager at Lugauer, the extensive flexibility of the overall system is just amazing: "In the first shift, we produce individual parts on the first machine followed by unmanned pallet or handling parts. A component for the automotive industry is currently manufactured 24/7 on the second machine. On this machine, we now produce the same number of parts in one week with two people as we did before with two machines and four people. It's beyond our wildest hopes," Aigner says proudly.

Generally speaking, the rack storage concept ensures an exceptionally high autonomous runtime, as the gripper and device changeover takes place automatically. The full-scale setup station also enables pallets and workpiece carri-



ers to be set up during the primary processing time. "At first, it was an enormous change for our staff. The software, working with the robot and the process of handling blanks were all new, and they had to learn to think ahead. Both machining centres operate unmanned at night or over the weekend, meaning a certain amount of setup preparation is necessary," the technical manager says when pointing out possible teething problems. The training provided by Hermle to the Lugauer team during the initial training period and subsequent work processes focused on these and other soft skills. "In the meantime, everything works just fine," Aigner says.

"DESPITE HIGH INVESTMENT COSTS DURING A PERIOD OF UNCERTAINTY, IT WAS THE RIGHT DECISION TO REMAIN MARKETABLE IN THE FUTURE."

Gernot Lugauer



left A special die system, which is based on a standard die system and offers space for 48 parts, is used. top right Eng. Gernot Lugauer, Principal Shareholder and Managing Director of Lugauer GmbH far right Three individually selectable rack storage modules ensure an optimum supply of parts.



IT'S MECHANICAL SPORT

blomix.com

from left to right Geert Cox, Managing Director Hermle Nederland B.V., Luuk Beenders, Managing Director BLOMIX B.V., and Marco van den Heuvel, Operations Manager at BLOMIX B.V.

BLOMIX blow moulds are used worldwide. The Dutch company meets the challenge of delivering the highest quality while remaining flexible and economical with the help of automated 5-axis machining centres from Hermle.

Luuk Beenders, Managing Director of BLOMIX B.V., believes plastics suffer from an unjustifiably poor image: "The material can be processed fully and is recyclable." BLOMIX designs, engineers, manufactures and maintains moulds for extrusion blow moulding in the southern Dutch town of Brunssum. They are used to create products with volumes ranging from 20 millilitres to 500 litres – although precision, not size, is the real challenge here. Since a blow mould consists of several parts. If they are not machined precisely, unwanted seams or burrs are visible on the finished blow moulded products. "For the perfect 3D contour, we manufacture with tolerances in the range of a few microns," Beenders explains.

Although this might sound very simple, it is technically very difficult to achieve: The moulds spend up to 15 hours on the machine in just one setup. To prevent thermal conductivity causing any negative impacts during the long milling periods, a nine-metre-high ceiling and adiabatic cooling help to keep temperature fluctuations to a minimum down on the BLOMIX shop floor. Additional peace of mind is provided by the Dutch company's machinery: Three automated 5-axis machining centres from Hermle AG. The youngest member of the team is a C 650 U with HS flex heavy automation. Thanks to their rigid design and integrated electrical heat compensation, the milling centres from Gosheim are precise and offer long-term precision. An investment that pays for itself: "The outstanding precision of the Hermle milling centres helps to cut installation time. The individual components fit together much better, thus reducing the time spent reworking," Beenders claims.



top The nine-metre-high ceilings of the workshop almost make the C 650 U with HS flex heavy automation look small; the robot-automated C 30 U is visible in the background.



left Due to the precise machining of the fits, BLOMIX saves time during subsequent installation. right BLOMIX moulds are used wherever thermoplastic products are manufactured for food, household and industrial applications.

IMPRESSIVE CONCEPT

Yet another reason for choosing Hermle was the reliable automation solution. "This is the only way we can remain competitive," the Managing Director explains. That the machine and the automation come from the same source increases ease of use and technical availability. "If problems arise, it's clear who's responsible. In addition, the team at Hermle responds very quickly when we need its help." Introduction of the HS flex heavy system in March 2020 therefore came at just the right time for BLOMIX. "We're one of the first companies in Europe to use the system and it's going very well," Beenders adds.

All Hermle machining centres, including the automation, are controlled and managed by the Hermle Automation Control System (HACS). Beenders is delighted with the integrated operating concept: "In our case, flexibility doesn't just mean we can easily swap parts between the three Hermle

machines, it also means operators are proficient on each machine." They can thus optimise machine utilisation, thereby ensuring greater capacity.

Room for improvement is important at the company, which works in a project-based manner. "We don't utilise the machines to maximum effect as this allows us to respond more spontaneously to requests from customers. Nevertheless, there has to be a pay-back," the Managing Director explains. During the day, workers complete the complex tasks, perform tests and prepare the unmanned shifts. At night and on weekends, the 5-axis machining centres ideally run autonomously. "It's virtually a mechanical sport."

"WE'RE ONE OF THE FIRST COMPANIES IN EUROPE TO USE THE SYSTEM AND IT'S GOING VERY WELL."

Luuk Beenders



EXPANDING CAPACITY BEFORE REACHING CAPACITY

ks-fertigungstechnik.de

from left to right The two Managing Directors of Kretzschmar & Silber Fertigungstechnik GmbH Ulrich Silber and Thimo Kretzschmar together with their full-time employee Andreas Wegner and Andreas Glumpler from HPV Hermle Vertriebs GmbH.

Kretzschmar & Silber Fertigungstechnik GmbH invested in a Hermle C 32 U in the middle of the lockdown. It provides the subcontractor with greater flexibility – for its new customer base – and increases capacity should its dormant automotive suppliers become active again.

“It’s interesting what can actually develop from an idea sketched on the back of a beer mat,” Thimo Kretzschmar says during a cigarette break. Silber’s former work colleague is referring to how Kretzschmar & Silber Fertigungstechnik GmbH came into existence. Back then, both founders were employed by toolmakers and were unable to find a satisfactory solution for the secure and precise clamping of components measuring over 400 millimetres. “Together we developed a clamping device and patented it,” Ulrich Silber explains in response to his business partner’s comment. At the same time, they rented space in a workshop in Knittlingen and commenced operations with a C 250 U from Maschinenfabrik Berthold Hermle AG. Today, roughly four years after establishing the company, the workshop belongs to them fully.

COURAGE TO TAKE THE FIRST STEP

Since 2017, Thimo Kretzschmar and Ulrich Silber have been milling prototypes, individual parts and small volume orders for automotive suppliers, machine manufacturers and tool makers on five machining centres. The two developers sold their clamping device



top When it comes to small volume production, employee Andreas Wegner appreciates the excellent accessibility offered by the 5-axis machining centre from Hermle.



top Kretzschmar & Silber Fertigungstechnik GmbH ordered the C 32 U with the ergonomically adjustable comfort control panel and the Heidenhain TNC 640 control.

idea last year but retained their traditional subcontracting practices. “We know how our customers’ parts actually work. In addition, we’re fast and flexible. We’ve helped a few companies out of a tricky spot by producing high-quality parts for them at very short notice. This is only possible because we don’t fully plan our capacity,” Ulrich Silber explains. This approach is also a reason for the company’s latest investment – a 5-axis machining centre of the High-Performance-Line from Hermle. As the Covid-19 crisis fundamentally changed Kretzschmar & Silber’s customer base. A lot less was heard from automotive suppliers. Instead, companies from the fields of medical technology and general mechanical engineering came to the fore. The new C 32 U is the answer to the question of how they plan to manage once their existing customers start

“WE BOUGHT THE MACHINE TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE, SO TO SPEAK, TO ENSURE WE CAN MEET FUTURE CAPACITY DEMANDS.” Ulrich Silber

ordering again regularly. “We bought the machine to be on the safe side, so to speak, to ensure we can meet future capacity demands,” Silber says.

RELIABLE AND FLEXIBLE

Kretzschmar & Silber Fertigungstechnik GmbH uses the C 32 U to process a wide variety of orders effectively and efficiently. What the two machinists additionally appreciate is the reliability provided by the machine, as they are supplied with 80 per cent of the material required. “That means we don’t usually have any replacement parts should something go wrong,” Silber claims. Yet another reason is the flexibility provided by the 5-axis milling machine. The materials being machined are just as diverse as the customers: From plastic and aluminium to various steels and carbides, everything can be found in the subcontractor’s order books. “The daily challenge is to have the right clamping devices and tools available and to machine the materials effectively,” Silber emphasises. “Therefore, the large tool magazine had a profound impact on our choice of machine.” He ordered the C 32 U with an additional magazine, thus reducing setup times by up to 50 per cent compared to the C 250 U.



top The C 32 U from Maschinenfabrik Berthold Hermle AG has been in use at Kretzschmar & Silber since mid-2020.



top EROFORM uses almost all the 5-axis machining centres for serial production.
right The clamping channel slide milled from hot work steel is a key component in the injection moulding tool.

Vendor CVT-Capellmann acquired the necessary expertise to manufacture its injection moulding tools in-house through the takeover of EROFORM. The quality and service provided by Hermle transform the existing 5-axis machining centres into a secure second pillar: Subcontracting.



The CVT Group produces over 80 million geared parts for small and flat engines each year. However, CVT Managing Directors, Hans and Paul Capellmann, were still unhappy with the fact that the firm was giving away important know-how by having its injection moulding tools manufactured externally. The Covid-19 lockdown provided the solution: Instead of investing time in setting up their own tool shop, they took over EROFORM GmbH, based in the southern German town of Eschbronn-Locherhof, which was up for sale due to the lack of a successor. It was here that the medium-sized family business found the experience and machinery it needed: In addition to systems for eroding as well as surface and external cylindrical grinding, it also includes five machining centres from Maschinenfabrik Berthold Hermle AG: One C 600 U, two C 40 U and two C 22 U machining centres.



top from left to right Tobias Slezinski, Head of the Machining Department, and Roland Hermle, Managing Director of EROFORM GmbH.
bottom EROFORM uses the C 40 U to also produce individual parts for tool and mould making.

“NEW ORDERS ARE COMING IN, WE’RE EXPANDING OUR OWN DESIGN CAPACITY AND WE NOW BENEFIT FROM ADDED VALUE IN-HOUSE.”

Roland Hermle

Hans and Paul Capellmann completed the takeover of the tool maker and subcontractor on 1 July 2020 – and appointed Roland Hermle as its Commercial Managing Director. “The plan was that I would join the business for a short while. But then everything turned out differently,” Hermle explains. The machinery, which had not really seen any investment for years, was also to blame. “Despite obviously having been neglected for quite some time, Hermle technicians were still able to bring the existing machining centres back up to current standards,” he says, and adds with a smile: “As much as I appreciate the fast and efficient service, I’m quite happy when there’s no Hermle van standing in the yard in the mornings.”

MORE CAPACITY AND STABLE PROCESSES

The Hermle 5-axis machining centres are mainly used in the small volume and serial production of CNC components. “The only problem here was that we often had to interrupt serial production for individual pieces,” Hermle explains. This has been solved with a C 12 U, which CVT bought a few years ago to expand its own tool-making capabilities. It was moved to Eschbronn-Locherhof to exclusively machine individual parts, primarily for tool and mould making. This creates capacity for serial production. Two of the machining centres are even automated: At one of the two C 22 U machining centres, a handling system has been adapted accordingly,

while the other is fed by a robot. “Unfortunately, it’s third-party automation technology. And the error-prone interface has shown that in future we definitely need to rely on a single source complete solution,” Roland Hermle adds. “The Hermle machining centres are rock solid and can cope with high feed rates when roughing. The processes run stably and reliably for weeks.” Roland Hermle looks into the future with optimism: “New orders are coming in, we’re expanding our own design capacity and now benefit from added value in-house.” This is also noticeable in the utilisation of our overall capacity: The Managing Director monitors the target and actual figures daily and, thanks to a current 94 per cent degree of capacity utilisation, is almost ten percentage points above his planned target.



top The handling system at the C 22 U (at the front) offers storage space for up to 24 pallets.

COMPANY.



RAISING DONATIONS

HERMLE IS RUNNING AND CYCLING FOR A GOOD CAUSE.

Last year's Hermle Bike Marathon proved to be so popular that we decided to do it all again for the Hildegard and Katharina Hermle Foundation. The format is so simple and was also extremely well received this year: No crowds, no strict rules, just you and your bike - or your running shoes. This year, the name of the event was Hermle Bike & Run. Where they ran and cycled was up to the employees of Hermle AG and its subsidiaries to decide. The only requirements were a specified minimum distance and plausible proof of the respective kilometres covered. The result was more than impressive.

6,581 KM
€131,620

Over the Swabian Alb, through the Danube valley, in the Alps or around northern Germany - the Hermle runners and cyclists gave their best. In the end, they ran a whopping 563 kilometres, including two marathons and a mega-trail, and cycled an incredible 4,596 kilometres. Together with the 27 racers who clocked up another 1,422 kilometres during the Black Forest Bike Marathon, we achieved a grand total of 6,581 kilometres. This corresponds to an overall donation of €131,620, which this year will benefit two important institutions in the local region: One half will go to the Katharinenhöhe aftercare facility and the other half to Lebenshilfe Tuttlingen. We would like to take this opportunity to once again say a huge thank you to all the participants. It will be interesting to see which records we can set in 2022.



DATES

TECHNI SHOW, UTRECHT, NETHERLANDS

15.-18.03.2022

CCMT, SHANGHAI, CHINA

11.-15.04.2022

HERMLE OPEN HOUSE, GOSHEIM

26.-29.04.2022

GERMANY



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Hermle SEA Co., Ltd.
20150 Chonburi
www.hermle-sea.com

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Organizační složka.
Office Prague,
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