Cloud capability

"HydraulicoLink™ is a communication tool that works by scanning a QR sticker on a press with a smartphone. Any mobile device can gain access to all the information about the press (e.g. technical reports, diagrams, oil samples, drawings, spare parts etc.) so that customers have instant access to any data they need, along Industry 4.0 principles. The smartphone does not need a special app and the cloud can also be accessed from anywhere via web," explained Lars Bugge, Hydraulico’s CEO.

A flexible stance

“We are delighted with EuroBLECH this year – it has been very busy for us. We signed a big contract on the stand here for four presses (aluminium backwards extrusion and coining) with an Israeli customer,” commented Lars Bugge.

"2017 was a great year – we grew annual turnover by 40%, mainly due to the project work that we did. Project work takes from six-seven months to four years. On small presses (450-500 tons), our delivery times are five-seven months. We often integrate press technologies that are not ours in a press line. We assemble and test the presses, and work with other partners on the integration of peripheral equipment such as specific best-in-class automation, heating, lubricating or de-coiling, for example.”

Today, presses are often delivered as part of a full production system. Using the most recent developments within hydraulics, mechanics, and electronics, with strong partners as well as user-friendly software solutions and computer-based data collecting systems, Hydraulico designs and delivers custom-designed production lines.

It has streamlined its organisation over the last few years to enable it to operate more profitably, competitively and with fewer people. Fifteen years ago, it had the same turnover levels with 80 people. Today, it has 40 employees. It outsourced a lot of functions to key partners and focused on its core strength – engineering, process expertise and service, while investing much of its turnover into R&D.

The result of this has been innovative technology developments, such as its double-upsetting presses and side-strike hydraulic presses (with at least four axes). One serve double upsetting press delivers more output than three mechanical upsetters, it told ISMR. It has made eight of these presses and sold them to customers in Norway, Poland, Russia, Italy and Israel. More are in the pipeline and Hydraulico sees a lot of potential in this area (there is a lot of capacity out there). So, we complement that with highly reactive service and by upgrading/modernising hydraulic presses of any brand within the framework of an attractive warranty. So, service is a strong focus for us.”

Hydraulico’s press service includes press inspections and three maintenance contract levels (Safety, Preventive and Predictive), a digitalised service platform for instant remote service (HydraulicoLink) and rapid delivery of spare parts as well as quick cylinder repair.

Trends and directions

“We can see, in the deep draw market, that the market has now returned in the U.S. There is still a lot of oversupply in Europe. We now see new and interesting developments, investments and new lines in the U.S. – this will come later in Europe,” explained Carles Angla.

“We tend to target third tier suppliers onwards, because Tier 1 and Tier 2 suppliers usually prefer to diversify operations by employing mechanical presses to achieve a higher output. Nevertheless, France is picking up a bit for mid-to-high tonnage (200-500 ton press). Metal sheet and heat exchanger markets, there are some trends away from copper to other materials to avoid corrosion.”

He also highlighted the ongoing trend towards Industry 4.0 and production monitoring, citing increased interest in press modernisations in the sheet metal industry.

ISMR SAYS:

“The Danish press specialist showcased its HydraulicoLink™ for press monitoring at this year’s EuroBLECH exhibition in Hanover”

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He also highlighted the ongoing trend towards Industry 4.0 and production monitoring, citing increased interest in press modernisations in the sheet metal industry.
“If customers can save 30 or 50% of the cost of a new press by upgrading, then they will do that. If you have an old press, you can modernise and upgrade it and get another twenty years out of it. Around 15-20% of our business is in refurbishment. Service and upgrades are a key part of our turnover,” he told ISMR.

“Our expertise is in the double-upsetting of titanium and nickel alloys; isothermal forging of special titanium alloys; deep drawing of stainless steel and forward/backward extrusion of aluminium. We can undertake press modernisation at any level – with three weeks’ maximum downtime on-site.”

An eye on the future
Over the last few years, Hydraulico has decided to reinforce its jet engines target. It is developing new processes for the latest new materials to make jet engines 35% more efficient. These materials need to be formed in very high temperature ranges and under special, controlled conditions that need to be documented.

“We are also working in another market that is showing great growth – plate/heat exchangers. We are competing with companies that are ten times our size by using our flexibility and service as differentiators,” added Carles Angla.

The rail forging market (the production of rail switches for trains) is lucrative for Hydraulico but also an extremely small niche. It has sold its rail forging systems (with 5,000-ton press, sideways-moving tool and computer-controlled rail transfer system) to the UK, Russia, China and India and enjoys a strong market share. The system can manufacture eight rails per hour.

“There is still capacity in this market. These are huge presses with a lifetime of 50-70 years. We sell them to private or state-owned companies, generally. Our core business is the press but we can also offer value with a turnkey solution as we are familiar with the process. We minimise the machining of the profile which saves the customer a lot of money,” explained Lars Bugge.

Because Hydraulico target niches, it also offers electronic shimming technology to address rectangular or critically deep draws in metalforming (this avoids the need to lift the lower die and re-position the shims every five hours and can sometimes eliminate annealing costs or simply increase process consistency/stability). Its hydraulic programmable solution is designed to eliminate change-over time for the die, improve the quality, eliminate wrinkles or cracks and substantially reduce scrap levels. It can install this system on existing presses or on other brand presses.

With innovation at its core, the future looks bright for Hydraulico.

CONTACT
For further details, see www.hydraulico.com