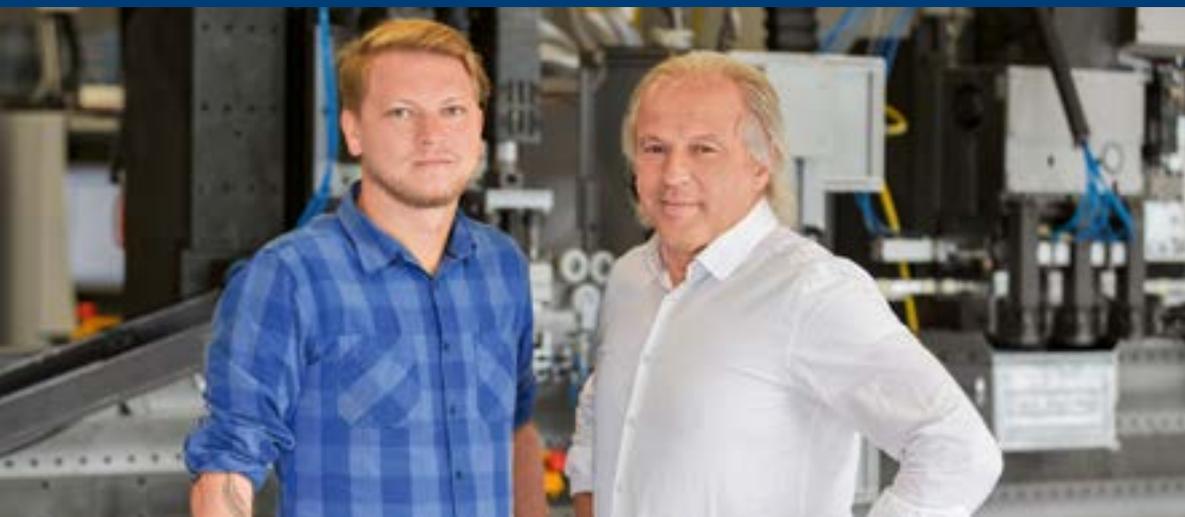


STEINTEX WALTER VOM STEIN OHG, WERMELSKIRCHEN

EFFICIENCY FROM A SINGLE SUPPLIER



Walter G. vom Stein (right) and his son Leonhard now manage the family-owned company which was founded in 1892 and manufactures accessories for textile machines.

New fiber yarns such as carbon and aramid demand that the looms used to process them are equipped with particularly high-quality materials. That is why Steintex Walter vom Stein OHG, which is headquartered in Wermelskirchen, relies on its BIMERIC BM 4500 for its heald production operations. The machine enables it to perform all the necessary steps at a single system, to manufacture faster and at a higher quality than before, and to integrate innovative new material features.

Since it was founded in 1892, Steintex Walter vom Stein OHG, which is headquartered in the German town of Wermelskirchen, has operated as a successful manufacturer of accessories for textile machines. Its product portfolio includes injection-molded items as well as healds, heddle rod holders, reeds, balloon springs and other formed wire parts for the textiles industry. This is a dynamic, innovative sector that has been revolutionized in recent years through the introduction of new fiber yarns such as carbon and aramid. These are used in the manufacturing of products for special applications such as brake parachutes, geotextiles, tire baskets

and other highly wear-resistant parts, for example for the automotive industry. "We have always stood out for our exceptional dynamism and that is why we are able to take advantage of these new developments," explains Walter G. vom Stein, who represents the fourth generation of the family to manage the business.

Minimum time loss

One impressive example of this dynamism is the new Bihler BIMERIC BM 4500, a new, multifunctional machining center that was acquired to complement the existing machine pool in late 2014. "With our

new BIMERIC, we are now able to produce complex stamped parts involving different operations in a single end-to-end manufacturing process," explains Walter G. vom Stein. "In particular, the RZV radial gripper feed is ideal for our thin material."

What is more, the new system has made the laser marking of the materials possible for the first time and everything can be done much more efficiently than before: "We can now reduce our manufacturing times by between 25 and 30 percent," says Leonhard vom Stein who is responsible for Marketing and Controlling. "And retooling times have also been cut from six to eight hours in the past to an average of two hours now."

Custom process design

At present, the BIMERIC is being used to manufacture the healds that are used to guide the new high-performance yarns. The metal strip,



With the new BIMERIC BM 4500, it is now possible to manufacture complex stamped parts in a single, end-to-end production process. The system also features a packaging and magazinging unit.

which is usually some five millimeters wide and 0.2 millimeters thick, is fed to the RZV via an alignment mechanism. This is followed by the application of the laser marking and the punching out of the central recess. It is through this hole, the so-called "thread eyelet" in the center of the heald, that the threads will subsequently pass on their way to the loom. A laser is also used to round off the edges of the thread eyelet in order to prevent carbon fiber yarns, for example, which consist of up to 40,000 individual filaments from breaking or fraying. It is then rotated slightly to open it out so that the thread can subsequently be inserted more easily. Once the healds, which vary between 15 and 100 centimeters in

length, have been separated, they are subjected to a downstream visual inspection to ensure their quality. "The fact that practically any number of individually configured processes and machining stations can be integrated in the system as a function of requirements is another of the BIMERIC's great advantages," confirms Walter G. vom Stein. To assist in the manufacture of healds, the company also plans to commission a packaging and magazinging unit with an integrated quality assurance process.

Further machine already planned

After approximately two years of operation, the new BIMERIC BM 4500 has already more than proved its

worth, thanks in particular to its stability and trouble-free performance. At the same time, it provides the perfect basis for all the company's current and future requirements. "These include the new yarns for technical applications, which represent another area of new business opportunities for us. In addition, the system opens up new possibilities for manufacturing hybrid plastic parts." This is why the company has already taken the decision to acquire a further BIMERIC BM 4500 next year. ■

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