



OPEN HOUSE IN PLÜDERHAUSEN

IN LATE FEBRUARY, BAHMÜLLER GMBH OPENED ITS DOORS TO CUSTOMERS OVER THREE DAYS, TO SHOWCASE ITS LATEST GENERATION SPECIALITY GLUER, THE TURBOX BTX2300.

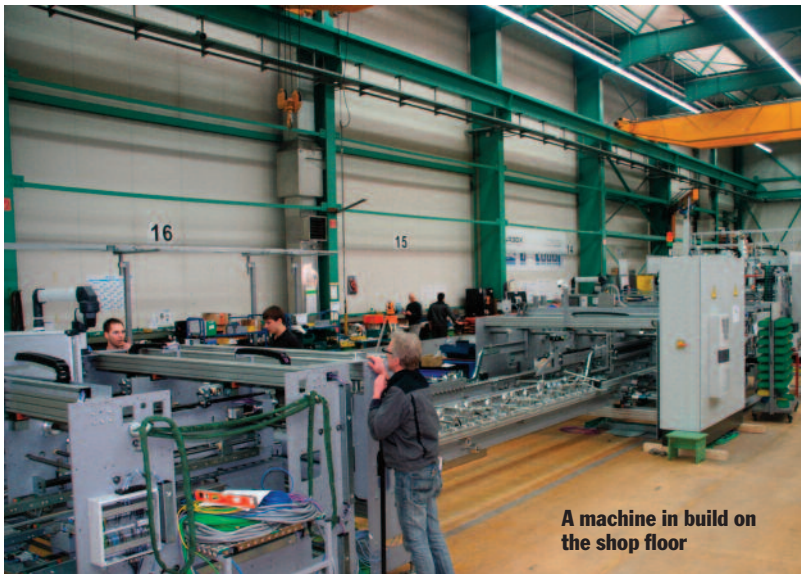
A REPORT BY DANIEL BRUNTON

Right: Ulrich Wolz, Managing Director of Bahmüller (left) talks with Sieghard Schoneberg of Fa. Wellcarton

With snow still very much evident in the region, the lure of the new generation Turbox BTX2300 speciality gluer enticed over 150 customers to visit the three-day Open House event in Plüderhausen, Germany. Customers from multi national integrators as well as leading independent companies all converged on the company's rapidly expanding facility to see first hand the latest in innovations from this leading German manufacturer.

Launched in 2006 following a design collaboration with gluing specialists JD Engineers, the BTX2300 is the latest generation of speciality gluer — but this time, designed 100 per cent in house at Bahmüller. “We have a great deal to thank JD Engineers for,” states Ulrich Wolz, Managing Director. “When we started working in the Turbox in 2005, we were limited in our technical experience and knowledge – but we have matured over the last seven years or so, and the results speak for themselves. The BTX2300 is one of the most sophisticated and high productivity gluers available on the market, something we are proud of. The





A machine in build on the shop floor

number of visitors we have welcomed over the course of the event is testament to the market's acceptance of our high-end machine and associated ancillaries."

Since its launch, over 40 machines have been sold and installed around the world; there are numerous examples of companies that operate two or three machines within their group — the company confirmed there is one customer that runs four machines! At the time of the event, there were no fewer than four machines in build, one of which is destined for a leading integrated company in the UK. "We have never marketed this machine as a 'mass production' model," states Mr Wolz. "I think we could comfortably say that each and every machine we have made is slightly different — we pride ourselves on the fact that

we can individually tailor each machine to the customer's requirements, giving the Turbox a special place in the market. The machine has certainly evolved over its life-time — this is the third generation — and it is in part due to the close working relationships that we have with each of our customers that has resulted in these evolutionary developments."

Knowledge transfer

As Mr Wolz explained, the Turbox has evolved in part thanks to input and interaction with customers. The company hosts a dedicated Turbox Workshop annually. At these events, users and Bahmüller engineers interact openly, discussing ways in which the machine can be further enhanced.

But it is not just the transfer of knowledge between customers and the manufacturer that is important — it is the embedding of knowledge within the company itself that is important too.

The company is one of the larger employers in the region and has always prided itself on the quality of its engineers. This can be directly attributed to its commitment to the training of apprentices; the company is keen to take on your people straight from college, train them in engineering and then employ them within the company after the completion of the lengthy programme. Many of the young men and women who graduate from the apprenticeship stay with the company, some going on to work for the company for life. There is no better example than Mr Wolz, who progressed through the apprentice ranks of Bahmüller to become the Corrugated Division's Managing Director.

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Box samples on show



John McKenzie of Göpfert UK talks to a visitor from the UK

All in-house

In today's market, driven by outsourcing, it is quite refreshing to see that Bahmüller has the opportunity to manufacture everything in-house. Parts are machined under their own roof and scores of engineers are on hand for assembly. Spraying, assembly, training — it all takes place in Plüderhausen. "We are continuing our growth," states Mr Wolz. "In March, we began to build a new 'logistics' building to handle parts and assembly for the Turbox as well as the folding sections for flexo folder gluers. The need for this additional working space is directly as a result of the success of the Turbox in the market."

It is also the close relationship with another family owned business that has secured Bahmüller's place in the market — and that is the relationship with Göpfert. Cooperating under the banner of BGM Maschinen GmbH, the two independent businesses have forged a close unity over the last thirty years, supplying flexo folder gluer solutions for high graphics in up to six colours and predominantly in the jumbo range. "There is no doubt we have gained a great deal

of synergies with our partners Göpfert, especially the implementation of servo drive technology," explains Mr Wolz. "We have used servo drives extensively in our new generation of machines, as well as utilising jointly-developed software. It is a perfect example of two family businesses exchanging technical know-how."

TODAY, WE ARE ABLE TO OFFER SOPHISTICATED SOLUTIONS FOR CUSTOMERS AROUND THE WORLD, BOTH BIG AND SMALL."

Visitors review the sealing tape applicator from Enpro GmbH



On show

New safety features; new process controls; new press conveyor; new alignment system; 'Unique Eject'; Power Packer and Topmatcher — these were the primary developments being presented to customers. Also on show was a special turning device where Bahmüller integrated a sealing strip and tear strip applicator; this system, developed by Enpro GmbH allows an over-sized blank to be rotated 90 degrees, after application of the sealing and tear strip, specifically targeted at boxmakers who make courier boxes for Amazon and the like. Other partner sub-suppliers on hand included Baumer HHS, who had their glue application and inspections systems running on the gluer being showcased.

"We have been delighted with the event," concludes Mr Wolz. "The evolution of the Turbox and downstream systems such as the Power Packer has allowed us to significantly expand our product offering to the corrugated industry. No longer are we considered the suppliers of basic, stand alone sealing systems — today, we are able to offer sophisticated solutions for customers around the world, both big and small."

Some background

Headquartered not far from Stuttgart, this privately owned, second generation family run business employs over 320 people and generates over €75 million in sales. The company, which runs two different divisions, is well known in the global corrugated industry as a supplier of sealing parts for flexo folder gluers, stitchers, tapers and gluers and more recently, as the manufacturer of the Turbox, Topmatcher and Powerpacker lines. The corrugated division, headed up by Ulrich Wolz, accounts for €25 million of the group turnover and employs 100 people. The other division of the business designs and manufactures precision grinding and tooling machinery, and is regarded as the market leader globally. ■



Tobias Kusterer of Bahmüller (right), talks with an integrated customer from France