

*Heading into the future with AP&T – one step at a time*

## **Graepel chooses ODEN presses**

Subcontractor Graepel, nestled in the German town of Lönigen, is outfitting itself for the future with an expanded production facility and two new ODEN presses from AP&T. Extensive production for customers that demand great flexibility and short lead times is only possible with equipment that offers high quality and availability. Previous positive experiences with its products gave the company confidence in AP&T and left it wanting to head into the future with AP&T one step at a time.

Graepel specializes in areas such as compression molding of perforated sheet metal products, agricultural equipment, heavy vehicles, construction machinery and other products for the construction industry. The company also manufactures other parts for these types of customers, including over 80 frame components for agricultural equipment manufacturer John Deere. At Graepel, customers are not only given access to production resources, they are also informed of how the parts should be produced.

### **More efficient flow**

In order to offer greater manufacturing capacity in the future, Graepel is now investing in new hydraulic presses and new facilities that will harmonize into more efficient production flow.

“Because our customers expect us to be flexible and deliver quickly, we must constantly create the best conditions to ensure we can meet these demands,” says



Sights on the future. Graepel Assistant Production Manager Udo Reinert (left) and Electrical Department Manager Klaus Steingreifer (right) inspect one of the ODEN presses together with AP&T Sales Manager Martin Schmid (center).

Udo Reinert, Assistant Production Manager at Graepel.

### **Positive experiences**

Graepel already has a 900 US ton hydraulic press and various automation equipment from AP&T as well as press equipment from other suppliers. The company's positive experiences with AP&T renewed its confidence in the company and its products.

“We're impressed with the reliability of the machines and the service AP&T provides when we need help. They've always been there when we needed them,” says Udo Reinert.

### **One thing at a time**

“Our most compelling reason for choosing AP&T was its balance between price and performance,” says Graepel Materials Manager Karl-Heinz Sliwka. The company opted for two ODEN Flexible universal presses with 560 US tons of press force each – the optimal force for pressing the perforated sheet metal products that Graepel plans to produce in the new presses. To start with, the presses will be operated manually. The company may later decide to automate them and build a press line – something that is excellently suited to

ODEN Flexible. The press frame has open sides and is designed for both manual and automated operation. Gradual development is planned in order to maintain high quality and availability in production.

"The quality requirements we face are getting increasingly tougher, which is forcing us to set tough demand on equipment. The combination of press and tools is extremely important. That's why we're working in stages," says Udo Reinert.

### **Flexible with expanded concept**

Graepel is one of the customers benefiting from AP&T's expanded offering. In addition to the two ODEN presses, the company has also invested in a complete mechanical press line with a conveyor system from AP&T. Everything falls under the One Responsible Partner® concept, which guarantees complete installation and integration of all hardware in AP&T's control system. Integration not only simplifies the service obligation for

Graepel, but also allows machine operators to work with a familiar interface. "The interface in AP&T control systems is extremely user friendly. Since our operators play an important role, it is a good idea to give them optimal conditions so they can do a good job," explains Udo Reinert.

The two ODEN presses were installed and commissioned in the spring of 2009.

"Right from delivery and installation of the first machine, we were struck by the professionalism that permeated the entire assignment. Subsequent business dealings also offered pleasant confirmation that we are working with the right partner," says Karl-Heinz Sliwka. In conjunction with the assignment, Graepel is analyzing its automation needs based on parameters such as production volumes and product types. It is then up to AP&T to satisfy these needs. One thing is clear - the future is being approached one step at a time.



Meets tough demands. ODEN presses are already in place in Graepel's newly constructed production hall - ready for the tough demands that the company's customers place on manufacturing.