VALK MAILING

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SWEDEN

Swedish market is getting ready for Valk Welding's robot technology

Since this spring Valk Welding has become active to introduce its welding robot systems on the Swedish market. Valk Welding's presentation at the Swedish trade exhibition Elmia Automation Fair was how it all started. For sales and support Valk Welding has created a close partnership with Prorob Teknik, a Swedish robot integrator specialising in welding and handling robot automation. Prorob will be maintaining close contact with the Swedish customers and will in due course also be arranging user training courses for them. With its robot technology Valk Welding is planning to target existing robot users wishing to raise their welding automation to a higher level or performance.

Close partnership with Prorob Teknik

Prorob Teknik is a well-known player on the Swedish market and knows like no other what this targeted group wants. Welding engineer Yngve Saarela, from Prorob in Sweden, has more than thirty years' experience of robot automation and expects a large market for Valk Welding's systems. "With this technology we anticipate building up a market share of 10 to 20% in the years to come." Following the successful launch at the Swedish trade exhibition and the first orders for the supply of welding robots, Prorob Teknik is now looking to expand its workforce.

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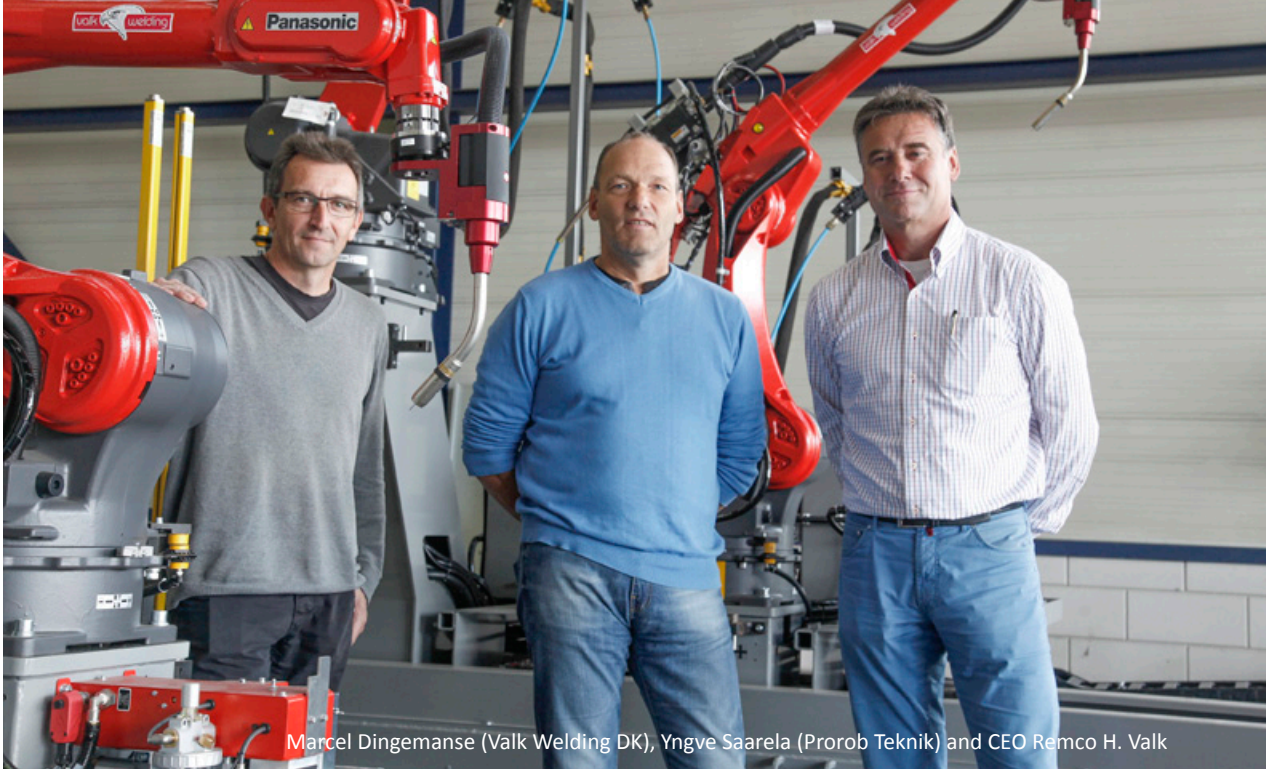
valk welding

The strong connection

SWEDEN



Marcel Dingemanse (Valk Welding DK), Yngve Saarela (Prorob Teknik) and CEO Remco H. Valk

PROROB TEKNIK AB

www.prorob.se

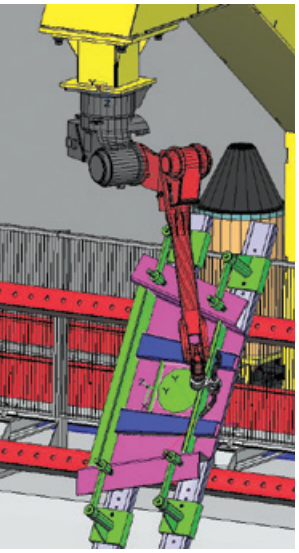
Yngve Saarela of Prorob Teknik AB:

"With the Valk Welding welding robottechnology we can bring welding automation in Sweden to a higher level."

continued from frontpage

Asking how Prorob sees the distinctiveness of Valk Welding robot technology, Yngve Saarela answers very clearly: "There are only a small number of manufacturers and robot integrators operating in Sweden. And they are all offering virtually the same thing. The level of Valk Welding is a good deal higher in the areas of offline programming, seam tracking and touch sensing. All of the components come from one source and are fully geared to each other. Also, Valk Welding works in close partnership with Panasonic, which is the only party that has developed its robots exclusively for the arc welding process by using an integrated welding power source. This reflects in the integration of the power source and multiple applications for specific welding processes that are made possible by this unique integration. The complete robot system is calibrated by Valk Welding, which means that the robot and periferials are extremely accurate and therefore welding programs can be used on the robot virtually without any corrections. Valk Welding's welding robot systems are unique in this respect."

Prorob Teknik AB and Valk Welding have already created a sales and service centre in Sweden which will be located in Väckelsång (30 km south of Växjö)"



Offline programs 1-to-1 on the robot

Prorob Teknik anticipates that it is mainly existing robot users that will recognise the distinctive properties: "After all, they are aware of their own systems' limitations. The market remains convinced that there is no way of working 100% off line. They accept the fact that an offline program on the robot still has to be corrected on many points, in contrary however, the offline programs made in DTPS - the result of the partnership between Valk Welding and Panasonic - can be used on 1-to-1 on the robot. Even interim size changes in the product are automatically adjusted in DTPS in the robot's welding program. Our customers are not put off by the fact that Valk Welding is not yet a familiar face on the Swedish market. The fact that Prorob Teknik offers a more efficient solution is the decisive factor for the customer."

Seam tracking yields high welding quality

Making an effective welding program is one thing, but ensuring that the robot also precisely tracks the welding seam is quite another. Dimensional deviations caused by imprecise positioning or deformation during the welding process will also have to be checked first. With the touch sensing method 'Quick Touch' and its own Arc-Eye laser sensor tracking system Valk Welding offers a technology with which the robot precisely tracks the welding seam, which ultimately yields the highest possible weld quality. The technology provided by Valk Welding is superior on that point, too", stresses Yngve Saarela.

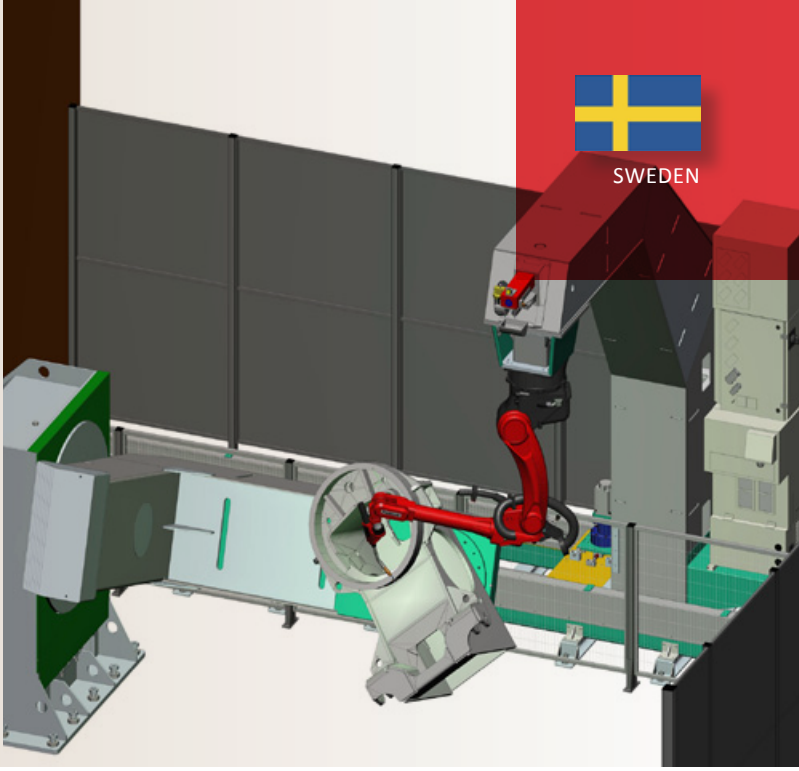
Direct support

For first-line service and sales support Prorob Teknik will be assisted by Valk Welding's Danish location. Marcel Dingemanse, Branch manager in Denmark and responsible for the Scandinavian market: "Our role is to share our experiences with Prorob Teknik. Just as we did, they will have to take the technology on board step by step until they can operate virtually entirely independently. That's a question of learning and growing together."

First orders in Sweden for Valk Welding

Robert Nylander, Manager at Bollnäs Verkstad Production AB and Yngve Saarela, Prorob Teknik

BOLLNÄS VERKSTAD PRODUCTION AB



Sweden's Bollnäs Verkstad will program offline from now on

The first Valk Welding welding robot cell in Sweden has been ordered by Bollnäs Verkstad Production AB, a supplier from Alfta, specialising in the engineering and manufacture of parts and frames for forestry machinery. The company already had ABB robot systems, in which a number of products were programmed as soon as they were delivered by Prorob Teknik. New products were subsequently programmed directly on the robot by the operators at Bollnäs Verkstad Production themselves. Director-owner Robert Nylander: "That took over 14 hours each for some products. During that time the robot welding production was stopped. We were looking for a more efficient solution to this. Prorob Teknik introduced us to Valk Welding at the Elmia trade exhibition and showed us what could be done by the DTPS offline programming system." That has led to an order for a new welding robot system consisting of a Panasonic TA 1800 welding robot mounted on a gantry construction and a clamping system on an L-shaped manipulator that is able to manipulate work pieces up to 1.5 tons. "That makes it possible to weld even the biggest product on the robot. The machine frame that we previously welded by hand in 24 hours is now welded on the Valk Welding welding robot in 6.5 hours."

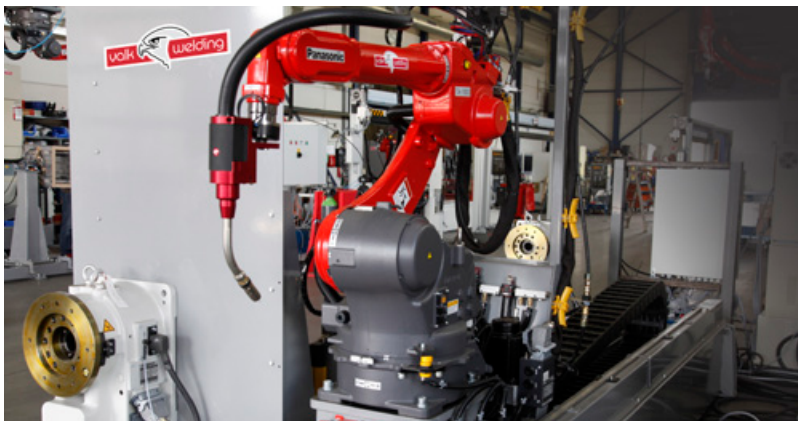
More than half of the 25 employees from Bollnäs Verkstad carry out welding work. Robert Nylander: "That makes welding the most important production item. Welding robot automation enables us to save a substantial amount of time. The lead time for the frames is reduced and the labour costs per product fall sharply. Being able to save a lot of hours on the programming gives us even greater gains."
The new welding robot system was installed in week 46. In September the 2 operators Patrik Woxberg and Magnus Engström took an offline programming course at Valk Welding headoffice in Alblasserdam (the Netherlands). In the mean time the operators programmed the first products in DTPS with the support of Prorob Teknik and specialists of Valk Welding Denmark. The plan is to first gain experience with the programming and the welding robot system and then to gradually increase the number of products being welded on the welding robot.
www.bollnasverkstad.se

Two welding robot systems for Henjo Plåtteknik

Henjo

Together with Prorob Teknik a next order for two welding robot systems is delivered to Henjo Plåtteknik AB, a supplier of advanced plating structures. With 100 employees and a turnover of 130 million Swedish krona Henjo Plåtteknik serves major customers including ABB, Atlas Copco, Electrolux, Cargotec and Komatsu. At its production location in Ljungby Henjo has the most advanced production facilities in the area of plate processing and finishing, including a number of welding robots van Yaskawa, Migatronic and ABB in the past.

Anders Larsson, CEO of Henjo Plåtteknik AB: “The investment for both robots is to rationalize existing manually welding. The reason we opted for the Valk Welding system is that, bacuase of it’s small footprint, it fits perfect in the hall that we use today - space is a major concern. Offline programming is another big advantage when it comes to the utilization of the equipment and flexibility.



We are looking forward to continuing the work to rationalize our production with the Valk Welding robot systems and we hope that this will be the start of a long-term relationship between our companies. That is why we ordered the second robotsystem to be supplied and of November in our facility based on the experiences we gathered with the first system supplied by Valk Welding.” www.henjo.se

POLAND

Valk Welding wants to expands further in Poland

Remco H. Valk, CEO Valk Welding and Tomasz Pyka

Tomasz Pyka, first Polish employee

On 1 May 2014 Valk Welding took on Tomasz Pyka as its first Polish employee. Tomasz Pyka is well known in the Polish welding industry: he has more than 12 years' experience with welding and cutting processes and robotics. As a European Welding Engineer (EWE) he has worked for organisations including Böhler Thyssen and Fazos. Tomasz will be supporting the Valk Welding group in Poland with all of its commercial and technical activities there. www.valkwelding.pl
www.robotizace.cz

With the official opening of Valk Welding PL Sp. z.o.o. and the arrival of Tomasz Pyka as the first Polish employee in May of this year, Valk Welding has taken the next step in raising its profile as an important player in welding robotisation in the region.
"We focus in Poland on the mid and high end welding robot solutions, but not so much on automotive applications. "Our specialization in the mid and high-end systems, we can play a complementary role alongside the local robot distributors & integrators, says CEO Remco H. Valk."

Valk Welding 'moved' with a number of European multinationals to Poland when it set up its own location there. 'Reha-Pola, a division of the Belgian Vermeiren group, was the first customer we delivered a welding robot to, back in 1989. Since than we delivered the 14 welding robots. Setting up Valk Welding CZ in Ostrava placed us close to the southern Polish metal industry. That resulted in an order for a large welding robot system for Wielton. Having delivered the 17th welding robot to them, we are their main supplier for robot systems. Valk Welding has now already installed and is servicing a total of more than one hundred welding robots in Poland.

The company focuses with its turnkey welding robot systems mainly on companies that process relatively small series. "It's more or less our role to solve the customer's problems, to join him in finding the best solution. We base this on more than 850 manyears of robot experience within our company and serve the local companies from our own national locations in their own language and culture. That makes us fast and flexible - and that is something very important among small and medium-sized companies", as how Remco H. Valk of Valk Welding explains it.

It is a fact that this places Valk Welding in the operating area of local Panasonic dealers. Remco Valk: " We no longer believe in that national segmentation: dividing up sales areas based on countries is a thing of the past. It's much better to concentrate on the competencies that are required. Panasonic's Polish office recently asked us to take over a project in Gdansk that was far too big for them. Panasonic even has its own subsidary in Germany, but that doesn't mean that we have to stay away from that market. They concentrate more on the automotive industry. We on the other hand are interested mainly in the small and medium-sized private companies that are present in large numbers in most European countries and, with their specific requirements, are a good fit for how we are used to operate.'

This year Valk Welding PL presented itself for the second time at the international welding exhibition Expo WELDING, which was held from 14 – 16 October in Silesia, Poland.

Wielton and Valk Welding start technical

The business community in Eastern Europe is also experiencing problems with the shortage of young technical professionals. This is being caused in part by the fact that the Polish governement is placing specific training tasks with the business community. The Polish trailer builder Wielton SA has responded to this by giving a boost to technical education in the form of a separate technical class for the study programme for CNC-lathe operator and robot operators. Valk Welding provided a reconditioned welding robot installation and educational programming software for this purpose.

10th anniversary celebration Valk Welding CZ

Valk Welding CZ is 10 years old 2004-2014

CZECH REPUBLIK

With 10 employees and its own sales, training and service support facilities, Valk Welding CZ completely independently serves the East European region with welding robot systems and consumables. Last summer the Czech subsidiary celebrated its 10th anniversary in the presence of its first customers from the Czech Republic, PWS (Panasonic Welding Systems), some suppliers and a number of Dutch colleagues. During the past 10 years the team has installed over 300 robot systems at Czech, Polish and Slovakian companies, including well-known companies such as Wielton, Huisman, VOP, CIEB, Prosvar, Agrostroj, Bosal and many more. According to branch manager Jakub Vavrecka the company's success is based not only to the high performance of the systems, but especially to the outstanding partnership with its customers, suppliers and the people at all Valk Welding locations. "This partnership is unique and we are pleased to communicate this in our pay-off: the strong connection."

Valk Welding CZ example to other national subsidaries

In August 2004 Richard Mares, Jakub Vavrecka and Remco Valk decided to become the first robot integrator to open their own subsidary in the Czech Republic. The initial aim was to locally support the Dutch and Belgian companies that were moving their production to that region. But also to sell their systems to local companies. Branch manager Jakub Vavrecka: "Customers realised straight away that Valk Welding was way ahead in the area of welding robotisation compared to the local robot suppliers. That resulted in several orders being placed by suppliers and manufacturers even from the automotive industry (passenger cars, lorries and coach building)."

From its business premises next to Ostrava Airport Valk Welding is now providing the sales, service and training for the East European market. Only the engineering and assembly of the robot systems still take place at Valk Welding in Alblasserdam (NL). Jakub Vavrecka: “That does not mean that we don't have any welding robots in stock here. We do have several training and service robots, spare parts and a large stock of welding wire. We now have a permanent stock of around hundred tons, which means that we are able to deliver most types of solid welding wire within one or two days."

CEO Remco H. Valk: “With our Czech location we are able to serve the manufacturing industry in Eastern Europe in their own language and culture. With that aim in mind our Czech employees have in recent years accumulated a great deal of know-how in the areas of robotics, programming and welding. From Alblasserdam (the Netherlands) we provide direct support, if neccesairy, and make sure that all employees are kept up-to-date with the latest developments. That makes it possible for the Czech team to operate entirely independently, which makes it a good example for the other national subsidaries that we have in Denmark in France, and will also be setting up in Poland, Germany and Sweden in the future."

www.valkwelding.com - www.robotizace.cz

class in Poland

WIELTON

valk welding

The new engineering class was officially opened on 1 September at the Technical College in Wieluń in the presence of the Minister of Education from Poland, local councillors and other invitees. Wielton SA is among Poland's biggest trailer builders and the biggest employer in the city of Wieluń. With this initiative Wielton is seeking to maintain manpower and know-how on a longer term.

The long-term partnership (since 2005) with the Czech branche of Valk Welding made it possible to equip the class with a Valk Welding welding robot system. Wielton itself invested EUR 60,000 and Valk Welding in a reconditioned weldingrobot installation in the technical class that offers places for 24 students aged from fourteen to sixteen. A section of a Wielton trailer has also been placed in the teaching area as part of the educational programme. The 24 students are being trained at this modern company with the prospect of the best possible career paths and practical training programmes at companies that Wielton works with, and the opportunity of taking part in foreign trade exhibitions.

www.wielton.com

CZECH REPUBLIK

Fourth welding robot for Czech manufacturer CIEB

CIEB, the Czech manufacturer of truck seats, this year received the Čekia stability award. This prestigious award, presented to stable and reliable suppliers, is reserved to just a small number of entrepreneurs in the Czech Republic. According to George Mikala, CEO of CIEB, the consistent welding quality of the frames made a substantial contribution to this. The company put its first Valk Welding welding robot system into use in 2006. CIEB now has four. As well as consistent welding quality, the automated welding process has enabled the company to sharply step up its productivity. The factory in the Czech Republic's Brandys produces 120,000 to 140,000 frames a year. As well as passenger and driving seats CIEB manufactures various parts for seats and other components for the automotive industry.

The fourth welding robot, which Valk Welding delivered this year, is of the same type as the one supplied in 2012. Both are equipped with a **Panasonic** TA800WG3 welding robot. "These welding robot systems are set up to weld back frames for passenger seats. The fourth work station had to be installed to meet the growing production volume", says CIEB's CEO George Mikala.

Tried and tested partnership with Valk Welding

As is the case with many other customers, investing in a welding robot system is often the first step in a long-term partnership. This holds true for the partnership with CIEB, which took its first steps towards welding robotisation in 2006. The first 2 welding robot cells on an H frame construction and **Panasonic** VR006 L welding robots not only improve the weld quality but also sharply increase efficiency. Robot welds also eliminate the chance of human error.

George Mikala, CEO from CIEB

300 percent faster

CEO George Mikala: "More than half of all welding production is now carried out with welding robots. The welding robots are about 300 percent faster than manual welding. A welding robot in a three-shift system has the same productivity level as nine qualified welders. The company is currently producing 8 to 15 sets of seat frames a day for 2-3000 buses a year, representing 120,000 to 140,000 frames a year. CIEB supplies them to major manufacturers such as IVECO, SOR, TATRA, LIAZ, AUTOSAN, SKODA, SAAB, OPEL, and many more.

Seats for the Olympic Games and the Dakar Rally

The high quality level made it possible for CIEB also to provide the seats for the Czech team in the Paris-Dakar Rally. The athletes who took part in the Winter Olympics in Sochi and the Paralympic Games were also transported using buses equipped with seats from

VAN HOOL

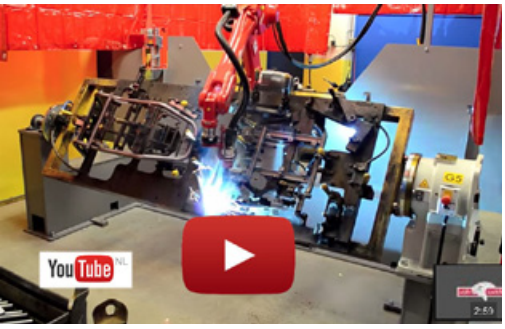
Jos Hendrickx (l), Tank building and engineering Department Coordinator Daniel Kemp, Manufacturing Manager Commercial Vehicles

BELGIUM

Van Hool and Valk Welding have grown up together

Partnership leads to technical competitiveness

In 1997 the board of the Belgian Van Hool NV, which manufactures buses and industrial vehicles, expressed its intention to continue to invest in the production processes and the development of new technologies as well as product ranges in order to support its international expansion. One of these investments was the first Valk Welding welding robot. The two parties then laid the basis for a long-term partnership in the area of welding robotisation. "We keep each other sharp by raising the bar together", is how Daniël Kemp, Manufacturing Manager Commercial Vehicles, explains the partnership.



See also the film clip on our Youtube channel, www.youtube.com/user/valkwelding "production of frames of seats for busses"

Brandys. The buses now form part of the city transport system in Moscow and St. Petersburg. 'All of Moscow's underground trains have a driver's seat from our factory, and that's something we're proud of," says George Mikala.

Success in the markets and a rising production volume call for the further development of the company and its production systems. CIEB will certainly be continuing its use of welding robots in the near future and beyond.
www.cieb.cz

Investing in the first welding robot placed Van Hool among the early adopters in the area of offline programming. Daniël Kemp: "That made it possible for us to efficiently weld small series on the robot. At first the operator had to spend more time on programming than on welding. But the evolution of the offline programming system DTPS has now turned that around. Offline programming has turned out to be one of the most important items in the automation process. The company employs one person full time (and 2 to absorb the peaks) for programming in order to keep the 12 robots running flexibly in full production. But we are now working on automating the programming itself. We will be one of the first in the world to start working with APG (Automatic Path Generator) ourselves, which will take us another step towards further reducing the programming time." APG is a toolkit developed by Valk Welding with open source software that customers can use to create their own specific robot software. APG automatically generates complete programs for the welding robot based on data from CAD and Excel.

Manual welders alongside welding robots

The industrial vehicles department is now using 12 welding robots, the largest three of which are used for chassis building. Despite the move towards automation the company is still employing 300 manual welders. Jos Hendrickx, tank building coordinator: "It is especially difficult to automatically weld stainless steel tanks owing to the strict requirements set for leakage prevention." The first systems dating back to 1998 are still being used and we continuously face new automation challenges."

Production in Western Europe

A lot of the work in the market has moved to low wage countries. Daniël Kemp: "It is only possible to produce competitively in Western Europe by automating. A distinguishing feature is that we are able to make top quality products according to customer specification and in many variants by investing heavily in automation technology. All of our trailers and tankers are therefore custom built, while others make mainly standard products. We will therefore have to continue to invest in production technology, new products and new markets, just as we set out to do in 1998. In that respect I see many similarities with Valk Welding. We entered new markets at the same time, both companies have gone through a strong technological evolution and the organisations have grown sharply as well. That's how we continue to build our futures, both together and individually."
www.vanhool.be

NETHERLANDS

Profielnorm automates welding production

Mass production of small series

If you as company want to supply a top quality product and give the customer value for money, the production and organisation have to be perfectly matching to each other. Profielnorm in Zeeland's Tholen succeeds in this by continuously investing, which makes it possible for them to stand out in the world of mezzanines. The company has recently invested substantially in automation and the certification of its welding production. The company is now able to weld small series with a minimum retooling time using the automatic software developed by Valk Welding for the welding robot. Profielnorm is now able to automatically weld a large volume of varied products. A successful project, made possible by Valk Welding's hardware and software solution and the joint development of the welding jig.

With its mezzanines Profielnorm offers smart and affordable solutions for space problems in the building sector and industry. With its modular system of cold-shaped girders and trusses and welded columns the company is able to supply a tailor-made structure for any project. The columns have to be given head and foot plates, and have different connections and measurements. In each project this means that a large number of variants of a similar product have to be programmed and clamped. Until recently Profielnorm was using an OTC welding robot, which had to be programmed separately for each column. Engineer Peter Flikweert: ”Despite the advantage of copy and paste for separate software blocks, the programming took up a lot of time. Also, the robot did not have a weld seam tracking system and the accuracy declined with time, which made it necessary to reprogram. The robot was simply due for replacement."

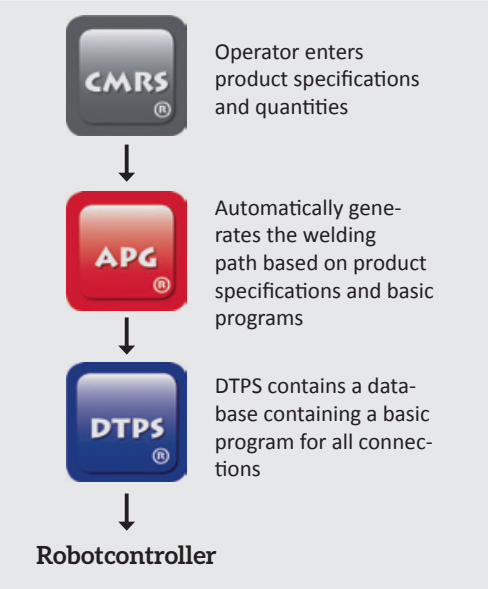
PROFIELNORM®
geeft uw bedrijf de ruimte

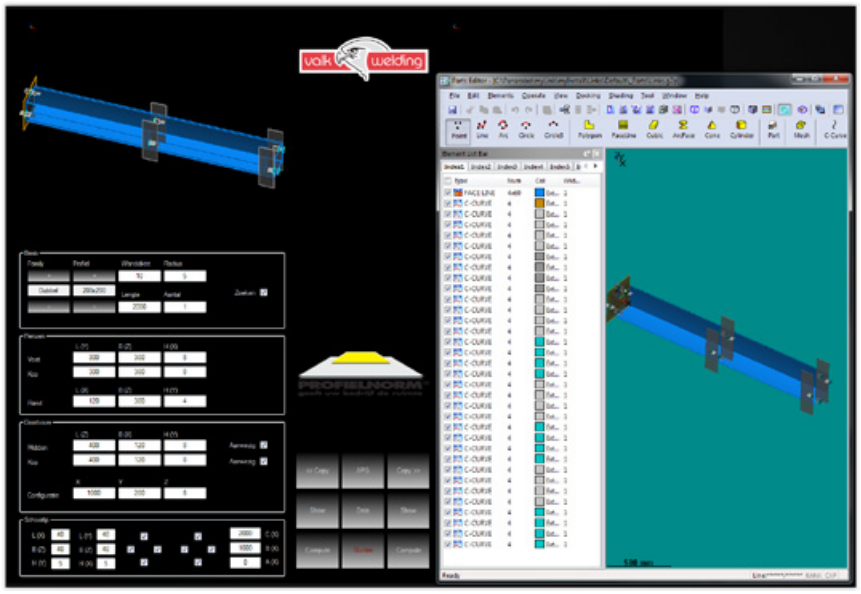
Need for easy programming

By purchasing a new welding robot system Profielnorm was looking to take automation a step further. Jos Schot, managing director of Profielnorm: “We wanted our operators to be able to quickly select a programme without first having to go through configuration and adjustment steps. It takes a robot integrator with in-depth knowledge of software to achieve that. In our search for a suitable supplier we found that Valk Welding is well ahead of the crowd. After seeing a few examples of completed projects we had every confidence in them. Based on their DTPS programming system Valk Welding has in recent years developed a number of software building blocks that can be used to automate the programming of similar products. A unique aspect is that we are able to devote our own specific welding know-how to this and then adapt the data to it ourselves afterwards.

Automatic Path Generator

APG (Automatic Path Generator) for DTPS is a toolkit developed by Valk Welding with open source software that customers can use to create their own specific robot software. APG automatically generates complete





programmes for the welding robot, which - in addition to the positioning of the welding torch - contain the right torch angle and the right welding parameters, such as amperage, voltage, weaving parameters, crater filling parameters, etc. APG works like CMRS (Custom Made Robot Software) as a DTPS plug-in.

Stratified software structure

Paul van den Bos, teamleader of Valk Welding's software department: "We have opted for a stratified software structure composed of the modules CMRS, APG, DTPS and the robot software. With that aim in mind we've laid down the welding programs for all connections in a DTPS database. On the input side we've created a simple CMRS input screen in which the operator enters the type of column, shoring, base and head plate, which column length is required and which quantities are to be welded. The selected column connection is also displayed in graph form so that the operator can check that it's the right model straight away.
Once the information has been entered APG retrieves the necessary base programs from the DTPS database and automatically generates the welding path for the welding robot."

Two stations

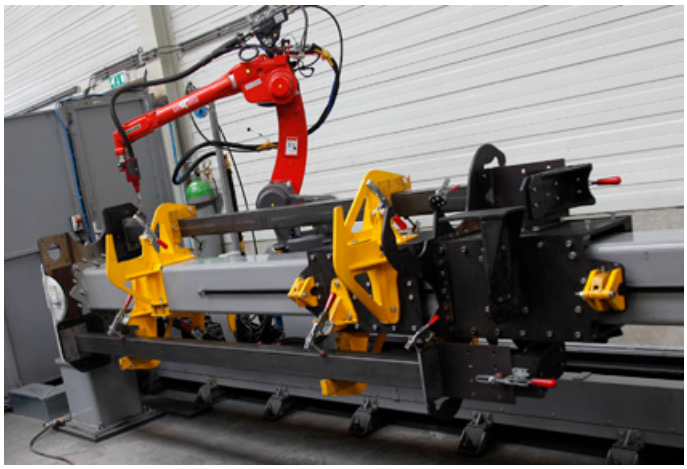
To ensure that the robot is able to continue welding while the columns are loaded or taken out, the system is equipped with two working stations of respectively 4.5 and 7.5 m which are served by a **Panasonic** TA 1900 welding robot on a 12-metre track. The welding robot is equipped with a Valk Welding robot torch with a pneumatic safety holder, which ensures that the robot immediate stops if there is a crash and that the welding torch is not deformed. A Wire Wizard wire guidance system has been installed between the welding wire drum and the robot to ensure that the wire is fed smoothly and without any friction.

Jointly developed welding jig

Profielnorm developed the jig in close consultation with Valk Welding and then built it itself. Engineer Peter Flikweert: ”We wanted to be able to clamp four columns next to each other and have them attached and welded by the robot. Valk Welding checked in DTPS whether the welding robot could get to all required positions. At first, that was not the case. After looking at various alternatives we eventually created at a carousel, which provides sufficient accessibility for 4 columns. The jig consists of top, end and support sections that we can adjust along the whole length. The jig was made for the maximum column measurement of 160 x 160 mm and we use filler blocks for smaller sizes. The advantage of four columns per station is that the welding time for each station is a bit longer so that the operator doesn't have to walk backwards and forwards between the stations as often."

NEN 1090 certified

Profielnorm is among the first group of companies certified for the new NEN 1090 and the accompanying ISO standard (NEN 1090-2 and ISO 3834), which has been required for construction parts since July 1st 2014. The specifications for this were written by an International Welding Technologist (IWT). Managing director Jos Schot: "In our mission we set out to stay close to our customers with our systems and to project an image of quality and reliability. This certification makes us well-fit and well-organized for the market. In that respect I see similarities with the organisation of Valk Welding.
“In the meantime the first 4.5 m station has been fully optimised and we are copying it entirely to the 7.5 m station. There is still enough space for a second, identical cell at a later stage. www.profielnorm.com



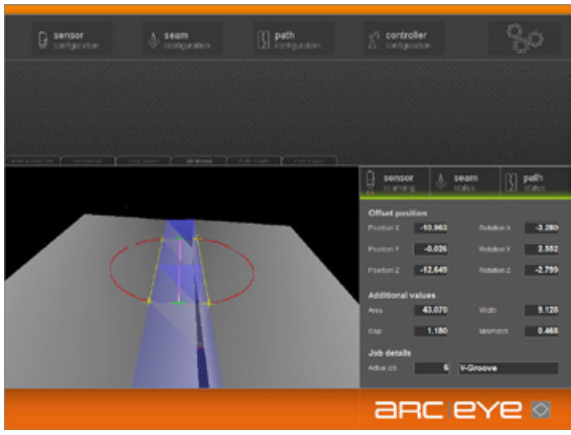
DENMARK

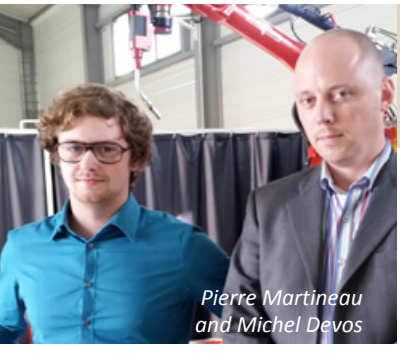
ACO Engineering uses Arc-Eye laser sensor to weld heat exchangers

Ulrik Nielsen, design engineer at ACO

Denmark's ACO Engineering is at the cutting edge in the design and construction of thermoplates, which the company uses in equipment such as heat exchangers for the process industry. 80 of the over 100 employees work continuously on welding the thin-plate stainless steel thermoplates. The company has been working on robotising the process for some time, but keeps coming up against problems concerning the welding robot's inability to track the welding seam. The use of the Arc-Eye laser sensor means that ACO Engineering is now able to weld the first thermoplates with a welding robot.

The thermoplates are made of thin- plate2 mm stainless steel plates that are welded on the top side. The plates are easily deformed during the welding process due to their thickness and the large amount of heat applied. This presents a huge obstacle to automating the process. The plate deformation cannot be reduced, which makes it impossible to correct the deviations in the welding program. Only a laser sensor on the robot is able to continue to follow the welding seam realtime. Valk Welding has developed its Arc-Eye system for that purpose to the extent that the laser sensor communicates directly with the robot control. The Arc-Eye laser sensor is mounted in front of the welding torch and carries out circular scans to make a complete 3D image of the welding seam without being affected by reflections from the stainless steel.
The Arc-Eye thus determines the track to be followed by the welding robot so that a exact and reliable welding seam is obtained.





Pierre Martineau and Michel Devos

Etienne Chombar and Peter Pittomvils

FRANKCE

Valk Welding France continues to expand

It is now a year since Valk Welding opened its own subsidary in France. From this location in Lacroix Saint Ouen (50 km. North of Paris), Valk Welding is now closer to its French and southern Belgian customers. Michel Devos, Branch Manager France: "We are now in a position to provide our French-speaking customers with training and demonstrations with the welding robots in our demo area locally. We also have a warehouse for the storage of welding wire so that we can guarantee fast delivery times. The welding robot systems will continue to be assembled in Alblasserdam (the Netherlands), where - now that we have a new industrial complex - we have a total workspace of 5,000m^2."

Growing demand for robot welding systems in the industrial market has already led directly to a sharp increase in activities and confidence. For this reason Valk Welding France recently took on two young engineers to add support to its commercial activities. Michel Devos: "Pierre Martineau and Etienne Chombar recently joined our French team. They each bear responsibility for contact with the market in the west and east of France respectively.
Peter Pittomvils, Branch manager in Belgium and responsible for a number of global accounts, states: "The new recruits represent Valk Welding's new generation: they project dynamism, persistence, endurance and professional know-how, which is precisely what we need to meet our objectives." Both new engineers are graduates of the prestigious study programme Lycee Professionnel Marie Curie in Nogent sur Oise. They studied Robotics and Vision there and have gained work experience as technicians at com-

Welding robot serves two 6.5 m clamping benches

The heat exchangers, which are used in the food, dairy and chemical industry as well as in the process industry, have to meet the strict requirement set in those sectors. The thermoplates are therefore TIG welded in order to eliminate leakage . For that purpose the Valk Welding welding robot system is equipped with a TIG robot torch and serves two 6.5 m working stations which are served in turn by the robot on a 14 m track. ACO Engineering is able to weld both the largest thermoplates of 6 x 2 m as well as the smaller versions on the robot.

Welding robot four times quicker

A heat exchanger is made of 50 up to 200 plates. A manual welder easily spends 20 hours on welding a large thermoplate all around. The welding robot does that in a quarter of the time with a higher degree of accuracy and above all, a constant quality. ACO Engineering therefore does not only achieves cost savings but also greatly improves its quality. By using the welding robot system the company is now able to increase its productivity and use a number of manual welders for less monotonous work.
www.aco-engineering.dk

panies including Peugeot. With these young talents Valk Welding is looking to further intensify its activities in France. Remco H. Valk, CEO of the Valk Welding group said last year at the opening: 'Our aim in France is to achieve a market share of over 25% in three years, and we'll need to use all of the tools at our disposal to achieve that. At this stage we have already achieved 25% growth in turnover compared to 2013. We are considering the possibility of taking on more new people for the future for service, logistics and all other disciplines needed.

www.valkwelding.fr

Automotive sector saves costs with Wire Guide Modules

EUROPE

A number of companies in the automotive industry have achieved a substantial cost saving by using Wire Guide Modules. Wire Guide Modules are 45º wire guiding elements with roller bearings which make it possible to guide welding wire through short bends without friction being generated. The Wire Guide Modules form part of the Wire Wizard programme of wire transport systems.

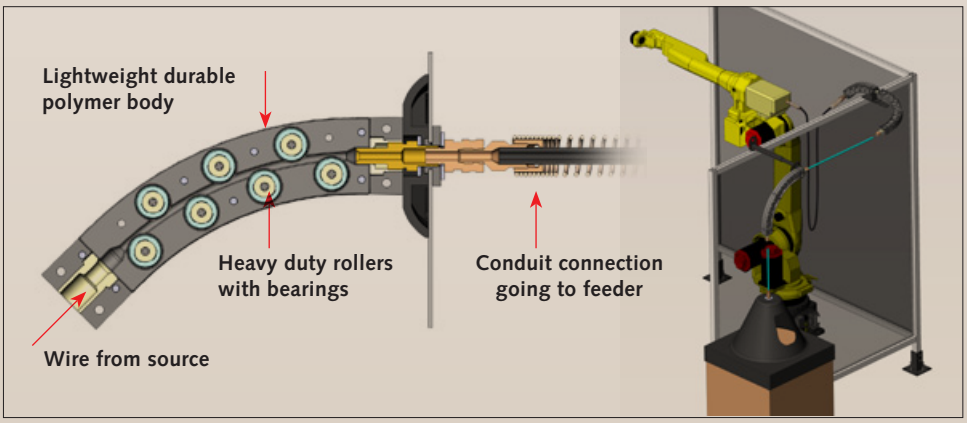
With the Wire Wizard wire feeding systems Valk Welding offers a solution for wire transport from drum to the welding robot with nearly no friction. To make this possible in a situation with tight corners or a larger distance, the engineers at Wire Wizard developed the Wire Guide Modules. Motivation for this development:
No friction = no wire-feed-errors and no maintenance = more production.
Wire Wizard product manager Peter Haspels: 'In practice the wire cables often have to run through bends at many angles. Those are precisely the places where friction is unavoidable and the wire cables are subject to wear. Wire Wizard has developed an innovative solution to this with the Wire Guide Modules. A number of companies in the automotive industry are now broadly using the Wire Guide Modules and have achieved substantial cost savings with them. Since the use of the Wire Guide Modules eliminates the friction in the bends and angles the cables have to be replaced less frequently and there are fewer wire feed problems. That saves both manpower and costs for cables and increases the switch time for the welding robots."

Tests and practical studies carried out by these companies with the Wire Guide Modules have rated the Wire Guide Modules as being sustainable and cost-saving.

The use of roller bearings in the Wire Guide Module makes it possible to transport the wire with the same force over greater lengths from the drum to the welding robot or other welding applications. It also makes it possible to place the welding wire drum in a place where it can easily be reached by a forklift truck.
The 45º modules can be connected to bends of 90°, 135° and 180°.

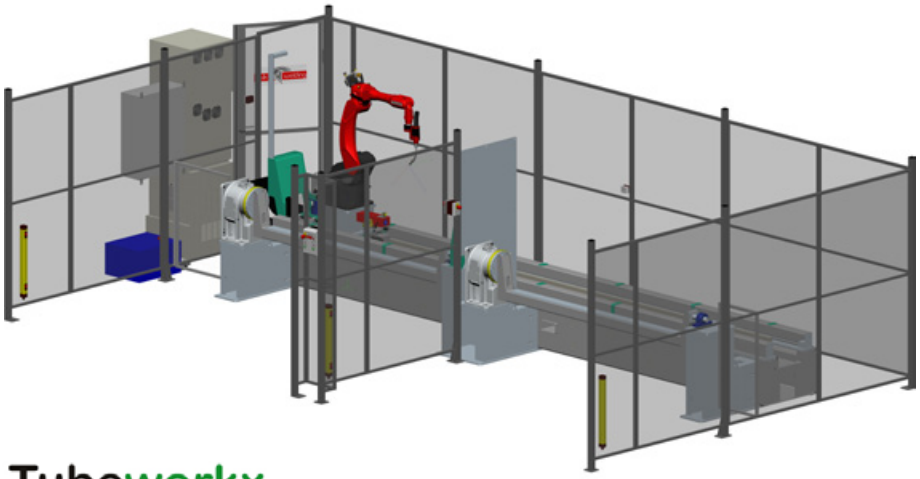
More application examples are given at:
www.wire-wizard.eu/gallery/wire-guide-modules-in-use

For info contact Peter Haspels per E-Mail
info@wire-wizard.eu



NETHERLANDS

Tubeworkx changes to Valk Welding



Tubeworkx
your tube our technology

Valk Welding invests in a strong connection with its customers, not only through the welding robots its delivers but especially with the service support it provides. Customers can therefore count on full support in the areas of welding, robotics and programming both in the start-up face and also thereafter. This makes it possible for most customers to get high returns on their investment. "That impression has not escaped our view", says Dieks Prenger, managing director of Tubeworkx. This Almelo-based parts supplier for the central heating industry and the automotive, truck & bus, medical and hydraulics sectors, which has already several Yaskawa Motoman cells in use, invested this year in a Valk Welding welding robot cell. This consists of a Panasonic TA 1800 welding robot on a track that serves 2 work stations with horizontal rotating positioners, on which parts with a maximum product length of 2,500 mm are welded.

Dieks Prenger, who took over the company with partner Marc ter Horst in 2004 and shifted the focus under the new name Tubeworkx to tubular products, plans to be at the cutting edge of production technology in this market. "We have built up a superb competitive position in relation to the low-wage countries through working 24/7, high reliability of supply, absolutely watertight products and just-in-time delivery", explains Dieks Prenger.

The company had doubts about staying with its current supplier to increase its capacity because of its experiences with mainly the service support it provided. Dieks Prenger: “The impression that Valk Walking is the market leader was immediately underlined by the first weld test . Communication was direct and quick, the welding quality of the test pieces was perfect and the demo in Alblasserdam made a very good impression to us. The new welding robot gives us the latest technology, which not only offers more functionality but also makes the system easier to operate then our present ones."

Tubeworkx is now using the new welding robot for 25 different products. "These are all regular orders that we have programmed online. The Valk Welding systems make it possible for us to re-use the existing programs without applying any corrections. We would like to automate the welding for even more products this way, but we haven't got the space. As soon as the new building is ready there will be nothing in the way of further expansion with Valk systems," predicts Dieks Prenger.
www.tubeworkx.com

Tradeshows

Sepem Industries
Douai, France
27-29 januari 2015

Ouest Industries
Rennes, France
2-4 june 2015

Vision & Robotics
Veldhoven, the Nederlands
3-4 june 2015

HI Industrie 2015
22-25 september 2015
Herning, Denmark

MSV Brno
Brno, Czech Republic
5-9 oktober 2015

Welding Week 2015
Antwerpen, Belgium
20-22 oktober 2015

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