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CZECH REPUBLIK

Valk Welding, partner in robot welding for Agrostroj

Agrostroj Pelhřimov, Central Europe's biggest subcontractor with an annual turnover of approximately 185 million euros and almost 2000 employees, has begun investing in Valk Welding welding robot systems. The first of the twelve systems in total has now been delivered. With more than a hundred welding robot systems already in operation, Agrostroj Pelhřimov is taking the step towards higher productivity and flexibility, mainly because of the use of offline programming.

Agrostroj Pelhřimov

As well as supplying parts for manufacturers of lorries, building machinery and forklift trucks, Agrostroj Pelhřimov builds complete agricultural machines for leading farming machinery manufacturers (see www.agrostroj.cz). These include self-propelled harvesting machines, rotary mowers, soil processing machines (mulchers) and manure spreaders, which are produced from the beginning in components, then coated and assembled at the 175,000 m2 industrial complex. Then they are transported from there to the end-dealer or importer. For this purpose the company has its own transport division with 100 lorries, a number of which have advertising signs promoting the new partnership with Valk Welding.

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valk welding
The strong connection

CZECH
REPUBLIK

Investing in Valk Welding robots leads to higher productivity

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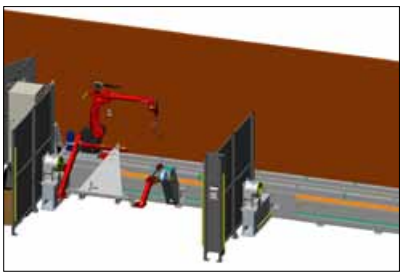
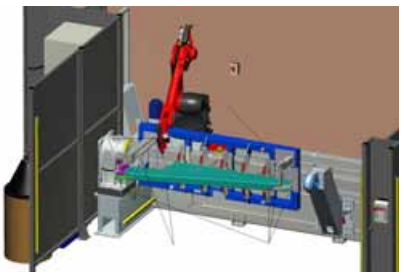
Strong growth in annual turnover

With turnover increasing from 14 million euros in 1997 to approx. 185 million last year, Agrostroj Pelhřimov is clearly expanding at a rapid pace. Despite this, the manpower level has risen during that period only from 1,200 to 1,965, which is less than would normally be expected given the growth in turnover. This is the result of the extensive automation introduced in the plate processing, coating and welding production operations. The company has 36 laser cutting machines, more than a hundred welding robots, large machining centres and an Eisenmann coating lane with a capacity of 6 x 2.5 m, equipped with the latest production technologies such as a KTL priming submersion pump system and powder coating.

Strong global position

According to owner and CEO Lubomir Stoklásek the company has gained a strong competitive position thanks to the high added value over the entire production chain, from engineering to the ultimate final assembly and direct delivery to the importer. The fact that all of the components are produced in-house enables Agrostroj Pelhřimov to achieve major logistical gains, a high level of flexibility and safety in production. The subcontractor has thus succeeded in building up a strong and long-lasting partnership with its OEMs, which has made it possible for Agrostroj to grow to be Europe's biggest subcontractor. “We have nothing to fear from the competition, even from China and Turkey”, says Stoklásek.Stoklasek toe.





Biggest employer in the region

For each OEM customer there is a project team led by a senior engineer who is responsible for engineering, tooling and production. The entire order administration system for the OEM partners is completely integrated in the ERP system of Agrostroj Pelhřimov. Commercial director Jaroslav Haban: "This full service leaves our OEM partners free to concentrate on their core activities, such as design, marketing and sales."

The company is also the region's biggest employer, and 42% of its employees have received intermediate or higher technical education and the average age is 36. "This is the result of our staffing policy, which is aimed at active partnership with schools for professional education.

Sheetmetal production as core business

Agrostroj has a large number of machines for cutting (36 laser cutting machines), bending and welding and processes over 50,000 tons of steel a year. The sheetmetal production is the most important link in the production chain. In the most recently added production hall of 30,000 m^2 is the production has been developed into a line production system based on the 'Lean' principles. This more advanced production automation gives Agrostroj the benefits of a large system supplier, which makes it possible for it to produce faster, more flexibly and more efficiently than its competitors.

Robotisation of welding production

Welding robot systems dominate most of the production lines, which means that the welding production at Agrostroj is at a high level. The company had already spent some time looking for another welding robot supplier with knowledge and experience of offline programming and which could meet Agrostroj's requirements. It emerged from talks with Valk Welding that Valk Welding's systems could yield many benefits in terms of the concept, the programming method, lead times, weld seam monitoring and so on. Valk Welding CZ delivered its first welding robot cell in the production line in 2013. The first products were programmed offline by personnel of Valk Welding CZ so that the cell could be used for production straight away. The results met the quality and productivity requirements and were the decisive factor for the orders for more Valk Welding welding robot systems, 13 systems are now installed.

Agrostroj Pelhřimov

www.agrostroj.cz

CEO Stoklásek: "We also see Valk Welding robot-systems among our customers"

Service and support

While the systems were being built in the Netherlands, Valk Welding provided direct support from its location in Mosnov (Ostrava region). Jakub Vavrečka, responsible for the activities of Valk Welding CZ: "We provide full support for the people who work with our welding robot systems in the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Poland. That way we can be sure that the welding robot systems are used optimally. The intensive partnership has made it possible to quickly resolve any problems that have arisen up to now."

Towards a doubling in turnover

Agrostroj's owner Stoklásek: "We are currently processing 50,000 tons of steel a year. Based on our aim of doubling our turnover by 2020, consumption will increase by 20,000 tons a year. We are now working together with a number of customers on making preparations for new products. The complexity aspect means that it can take 2 to 3 years before we are able to make a start with serial production. We will also need modern production technologies, including welding robots, for all those new products.

The benefits of the welding robot systems of Valk Welding and their support made it possible to start production very quickly. The special advanced offline programming system, the 'Quick Touch' wire monitoring system and many other special functions made a strong contribution to this. Combined with the reliability of the welding robot systems that we are increasingly seeing among our customers, we believe that the partnership between Agrostroj and Valk Welding will be mutually beneficial."

EUROPE

New generation of **Panasonic** welding robots once again faster

When Panasonic Welding Systems introduced the TAWERS welding robot in 2005, Panasonic unleashed a true revolution in robot welding by integrating the welding current source and the robot controls. With the fast computing rate that this yielded, Panasonic laid the foundation for the development of new software functionalities. During the most recent EuroBlech, Panasonic introduced the TM and TL series as the successors to this successful series.

Like the TAWERS (TA series), the new TM series was specifically developed for the arc welding process and is still the only welding robot with a welding power source and robot controls integration in one single CPU. Also the speed, acceleration and declaration have been increased even further in the new TM and TL series, which has improved performance by another step. The rate of movement of the three main axis of the robot is another 22% higher than the TA series.

New: hybrid

A new development is the hybrid version, in which cable assembly, containing the welding current cable are fed through the robot's hollow shaft, while the wire cable is guided around it in order to prevent the wire from twisting or flipping. Other than that the TM series is functionally the same as the GE, WG3 and WGH3 series. The TM series is otherwise functionally the same as the G3 (for welding with an external power source), WG3 (integrated 350 Amp current source) and WGH3 series (integrated 450 Amp current source).

The welding robots in the TM series are available with an operating range of 1400 mm (TM-1400) and 1800 mm (TM-1800). This is **Panasonic**'s response to the stricter demands of the market for higher productivity, lower production costs and better weld quality.

As well as the TM series, **Panasonic** has also produced the TL series with a longer arm specifically for applications requiring a larger operating range. The TL series is available with an operating range of 1800 and 2000 mm, with the wire feed exclusively going around the outside.

New assembly hall fully up and running

Valk Welding took its third assembly hall into use in Alblasserdam during the last quarter of 2014. This hall, with a surface area of 1700m^2 makes it possible for Valk Welding to continue to meet the growing demand for welding robot systems both at home and abroad. Currently the larger welding robot systems are being built in the new assembly hall. The lay-out and concept of this hall makes it possible to set up the various systems over a large floorspace. This reduces the time spent on the internal transport of systems by 40%.

Efficient and sustainable approach

Various sustainable systems have been used in the new hall. The hall is equipped with low-energy LED lighting and rainwater is caught in 'grey water tanks' so that it can be used to flush the toilets. Also, a highly effective system has been used to circulate the heat using less energy in the winter.

Full capacity

The explosive growth in the number of orders and the continuing trend in 2015 resulted in the hall immediately reaching full capacity with the assembly of welding robot systems. The next item on the agenda is therefore to rebuild the first halls complex.

www.youtube.com/valkwelding:
"Valk Welding buildings 2015"

Growing order portfolio leads to the establishment of Valk Welding Deutschland GmbH

As Valk Welding has been active in the German market since 2012, there has been a respectable growth in the sales of welding robot systems to German customers. The efforts of Jörn Lota and Remco H. Valk during the past 3 years have led to an installed base of more than 60 welding robot systems.

In the first quarter of 2015 alone 4 welding robot systems were delivered to German and the order portfolio for this market is growing. Valk Welding established Valk Welding Deutschland GmbH to provide optimum support for this fast-growing market and to follow up all of the activities on the German market quick and correctly. That opened the door to strengthening the sales and technical team with local German personnel and to setting up a national establishment. The first German service technician started work in May.

Keeping in pace with the developments of Valk Welding throughout Europe, it is being investigated where the German location will be situated. The current plan is to locate it in the Hannover region in order to quickly and efficiently serve the German market in central and northern Germany.

The introduction and delivery of several welding robot systems on the German market using the DTPS offline programming system developed by Valk Welding and **Panasonic** has resulted in many companies in Germany that were already using welding robots to change to the Valk Welding solutions. Improving the efficiency of offline programming and the high quality support was an important buying reason for many of these companies. Manufacturers and suppliers for truck and trailers, as well as manufacturers in the agricultural machinery is a rapidly growing customer basis.

www.youtube.com/valkwelding:
"DTPS introduction Movie 2015"

Sharp rise in sales of high nickel alloy welding wire

As Europe's largest independent supplier of solid welding wire, Valk Welding is one of the few companies that supplies from stock high nickel alloy welding wire next to the steel, aluminium and stainless steel wire which is supplied from their warehouses Europewide. These special welding wires are mainly used for welding of steel components in order to make them resistant to heat and chemicals.

During the first quarter of 2015 Valk Welding saw a sharp rise in the demand for high nickel alloy welding wire, with the order intake for this welding wire exceeding the quantity of the whole previous year. According to Henk Visser, Valk Welding's manager welding consumables, this sudden increase is a result of the postponed maintenance on waste incineration (waste-to-energy) plants, in which this welding wire is used to weld pipes that are then assembled into complete cooling water panels at the plants. Also, many energy companies are switching to more environmentally-friendly waste incineration plants. "Quality, price and delivery time always play an important role here. Valk Welding orders a large volume from one of the best producers every year and is therefore able to negotiate the best conditions. Every year we deliver large quantities of NiCrMo-3 (Inconel-625) to many customers in Northwest Europe for the construction of new waste incineration plants. In this process we always seek a logistically flexible solution in close cooperation with the producer, which creates a close connection with our customers. That once again underlines our 'slogan' of “the strong connection” from start to finish!
www.valkwelding.com/en/welding-accessoiries/welding-wire

NETHERLANDS

Special ADK machine cuts, positions and fastens pipe sections for heat exchangers

ADK Techniek develops customer-specific systems for the automation of welding and cutting applications, such as welding columns, longitudinal welders, rotary welding positioners and combinations of them. The system that ADK Techniek has built this year for GEA Bloksma B.V. in Almere is a good example of this. For this manufacturer of industrial heat exchangers ADK Techniek built a system for cutting holes and positioning flanges on thick-walled pipe sections. Using the latest Kjellberg HiFocus 161i neo plasma cutting system the company is now achieving a higher level of precision and cutting speed without any significant rework before welding.

Gains achieved with precise cut-out

The industrial heat exchangers of GEA Bloksma B.V. are used (among other things) for heating and cooling marine engines. Strict requirements are set for the sealing of such systems, and the quality of the welding seam is a critical aspect of the production process. After 22 years the cutting/fastening system that ADK Techniek had previously supplied for cutting recesses in hull sections was finally due for replacement. Rob Groot: "We tightened up our requirements for the precision, programming and handling of the new machine. The key point is that the quality of the weldpreparation for the recesses has to be good at all times. The better the right-angled recesses fit in the hull, the better the quality of the weld becomes, you need less welding additives and post-processing is virtually eliminated. The gain is therefore found with a precise cut-out."

Improved welding preparation with latest plasma cutting technology

To improve that precision, in the new system the recesses are cut out of the hull with a plasma cutting system (this was previously done with an autogenic system). Henry van Schenkhof of ADK Techniek: “Since the system has to last a long time we have used a Kjellberg HiFocus 161i neo plasma cutting system, the ‘Rolls Royce’ of plasma cutting systems.

Simple programming

One of the requirements set for the new system was a user-friendly and simple programming method. In view of the small series and, in some cases, single items that have to be cut, the system has to be quick and easy. The software that ADK Techniek has developed for this purpose means that the operator only has to enter the specific measurements, such as the length and diameter of the tube and the diameter and position of the recesses. The program then uses this data to generate the cutting program and adds the parameters such as the radius and the angle of the cutting torch, the diameter of the main pipe, the diameters of the holes to be cut, the saddle shape to be cut on the pipe flange connections, the distance between the cutting torch and the work piece, the rotation movements, the linear position of the holes, and so on.

www.gea-heatexchangers.com

www.youtube.com/valkwelding:
"Cutting, positioning and tack welding machine ADK Techniek“

ADK Techniek
laspositionering robotica speciaalmachines besturingstechniek

Custom Build solutions for the automation of welding and cutting applications

Since becoming part of the Valk Welding group in 2012, ADK Techniek has received several orders for large systems. Examples include a complete production line for Hazeleger Metaalbewerking for the mechanised welding of stainless steel liquid tanks and 6 large welding column systems for Huisman. The integration of the company in the Valk Welding organisation has lived up to its promise. Sales responsible Henry van Schenkhof and production manager Arie Stam: "The integration of ADK Techniek in the Valk Welding group has made the company an even more attractive partner for larger companies, and the international Valk Welding companies enable us to reach an even bigger target group. With the construction of customer-specific systems and software for such applications ADK Techniek occupies a unique position and provides an addition to the automated welding solutions of parent company Valk Welding

Custom build

Most of the machines are built according to customer specification. Arie Stam: "We concentrate on automated solutions for specific product categories in which a lot of positioning and welding take place. Where customers are unable to produce with standard machinery we develop a custom solution specifically geared to the customer's production situation and requirements. That is the strength of ADK Techniek. We have always had a good reputation for high quality, which increases the life cycle of the machinery. That is a principle that drives us in our design. We make no concessions to quality, despite the temptation to use less expensive components."
www.adktechniek.nl

Plant manager Arie Stam and technical consultant Henry van Schenkhof

Six large welding column and boom systems for Huisman

ADK received an order from Huisman for the construction of six large welding column and boom systems. The worldwide operating company Huisman designing and constructing onshore and offshore equipment, wanted identical systems for the submerged arc welding (SAW) of components for large structures for several of it's facilities..

The welding systems are semi-automatic and are electrically driven over 3 axis. Five of the six column and boom systems have an effective stroke of 5 x 5 m and one of even 10 x 10 m. That makes it possible for Huisman to weld large components for heavy structures and building machinery.

Huisman

Arc-Eye lasersensor

3 Welding systems were delivered with Valk Welding's new Arc-Eye laser sensor. This is the first time that both companies have used the Arc-Eye on SAW-systems in order to improve quality.

ARC|EYE

The equipment supplied by Huisman is often the most critical equipment on offshore installations, and the welding quality in particular has an important role. The highly reliable ADK systems convinced Huisman to place the order for the construction of the six welding column systems with ADK Techniek, since the responsible enginers at Huisman have extensive experience with ADK equipment for over 15 years.
www.huismanequipment.com

NETHERLANDS

Moving into in-house production profitable for Santbergen Rolcontainers

Rebecca, Edwin and Vincent Santbergen with the new welding robot

In 2008 Santbergen Rolcontainers decided to start producing its own roller containers as well as repairing them. That turned out to be a good move for the Breda-based family firm. With annual growth figures of 10 to 15%, thousands of roller containers and other logistics storage equipment are 'rolling' out of the production halls. To keep pace with all the welding this requires, a Valk Welding welding robot with two work stations was taken into use last year. In view of the favourable market developments the brothers Vincent and Edwin Santbergen expect that more will be needed in the years to come.

'Specialists in roller containers' is what Vincent, Edwin and Rebecca Santbergen intended to be when they took over the company from their father Hans. Up until that time Santbergen Rolcontainers had concentrated exclusively on repairing roller containers, both at their own workplace and at customer locations. Edwin Santbergen: "By carrying out repairs we found out which aspects of the roller container were open to improvement. Armed with that know-how we began designing our own roller containers, starting with demos and smaller series. That number soon went up. Since that time the volume has been growing by 15% a year. The company is also continuing to repair, modify and rent out roller containers.

"Making life easier for our customers"

"There are about four roller container manufacturers in the Netherlands, and we try to stand out as a total supplier. We do that not only by delivering top quality Dutch products, but through customisation, short delivery times and providing a highly rated repair service. Customers can also come to us for single roller containers or other logistical storage equipment and to rent various types of roller containers to cover peak periods, for example. By doing this we are penetrating more and more new markets that have never previously used roller containers. To continue to deliver that high level of quality we needed to continue to automate our production process in order to remain competitive on the price aspect as well," explains Vincent Santbergen.

First experience gained with old welding robot

The company took its first steps towards automating the welding production as far back as ten years ago. Edwin Santbergen: "The idea was to start by gaining some experience with this. But we soon found ourselves facing the old technology that was no longer in keeping with the digital methods of today. When we wanted to upgrade the robot we had to pump more and more money into the old system. That told us that the time had come to try something new. Alcomij, a partner of ours, advised us to take up with Valk Welding for their technical know-how, service, training and reliability.

Welding robot on H-frame

The Santbergen brothers first considered the concept of a welding robot with a turntable. Valk Welding came up

Santbergen rolcontainers
A family Company

with another proposal: a welding robot on an H-frame, which makes it possible to produce on two sides and keep more space for the loading and unloading of materials and finished product. Vincent Santbergen: "This is an important aspect, as production has more than doubled. The welding robot system was supplied and completely assembled on the frame, including the **Panasonic** TA1400 WG welding robot, control panel, drum of welding wire, light curtains and safety screens. Both sides are fitted with a work station with a manipulator so that the welding robot can optimally reach all positions. We made all of the jigs with a simple clamping system ourselves."

Training close to home

"Together with some manual welders we followed a programming and operating course with Valk Welding in Alblasserdam. We weren't all that keen at first: everything was new, including programming on a teach pendant. But the course was very informative and immediately created confidence. This made it possible for us to programme the frames of the roller containers that are now processed by the welding robot in large series. Now that we're getting the hang of it we're gradually extending the process to other parts in smaller series sizes."

Further automation

Edwin Santbergen: "We gradually noticed that we were unable to supply the welding robot with sufficient material quickly enough. The weak link was the existing band saw in which we had to manually place the tubes one by one. That problem has been solved with the new sawing machine with a cassette. The welding robot is now taking up the extra production in addition to what is done by the manual welders. But there's a big quality difference with the robot. That's why we want to have more frames processed by the welding robot. We expect to be able to do all of the welding with robots within 2 years."

www.santbergenrolcontainers.nl

EUROPE

300th H-frame

Twelve years after delivering the first welding robot on an H-frame, Valk Welding delivered its 300th welding robot system based on this successful concept. The development of a welding robot mounted on a torsion-free H-frame made Valk Welding the first robot integrator to introduce such a concept. It was later followed by the alternatives of an E-frame setup, which has since then been copied by several other robot integrators.

A welding robot on a fixed frame setup has the advantage that the welding robot, the controller , the jigsupports, the positioners and the anti arc-flash screen are mounted as a complete configuration and installed at end-user's premises. This not only reduces the time spent installing the system at the client's premises, it also makes it possible to move the cell at a later date and put it directly back into use without any reprogramming work. This saves a lot of time and money if the system has to be relocated internally.

The setup of an H-frame with two opposite jigsupports makes it possible to load a work piece on or remove it from a single station while the other robot welds on the other station. Also, the separate components and welded work pieces can be fed in and discharged on both sides of the welding robot system, which provides more freedom in logistics around the cell.

The Valk Welding H-frames are available as standard with work lengths of 2,500 and 3,000 mm. Versions with up to 6 metres' linear movement can also be supplied (total clamping length of the product to be welded 8,000 mm).

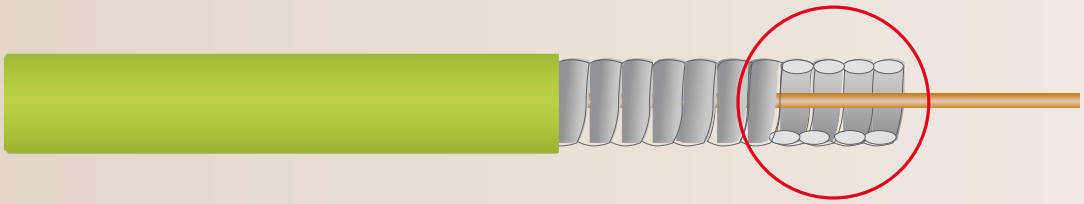
www.youtube.com/valkwelding
'Production of frames of seats for buses'

Valk Welding welding wire in a new packaging

A start was made last year with creating unity in all of the company's communications. Based on the new design of our website, documents and other publicity, we are now working on bringing the packagings for welding wire and consumables into line with the new look. From the end of February the packaging for welding wire in drums and on spools will therefore feature the new design. The quality of the welding wire, the measures and weights all remain unchanged, so the quality and specifications will be identical.

EUROPE

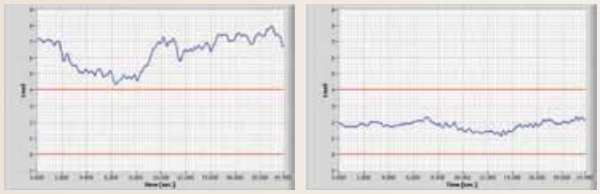
New Torch Liner for optimum wire feed between feeder and robot torch



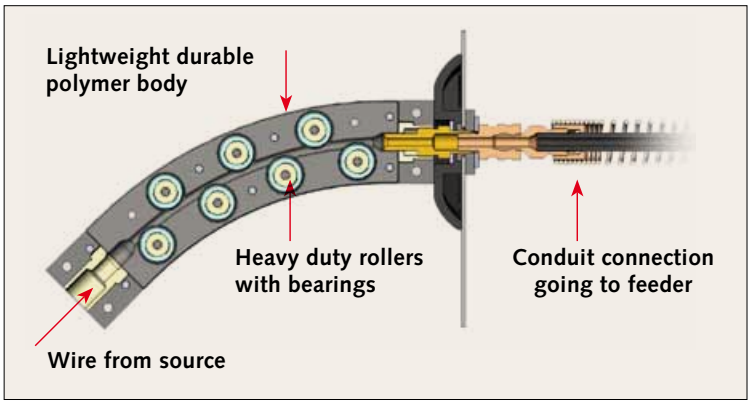
Wire Wizard has developed a wire feed cable specifically to improve the transportation of the wire between the wire feeder and the robot torch. The new E-Power Torch Liner is developed from the existing black wire cable and features a patented spiral-wound inner jacket with a smooth wire liner coating. This minimises friction. The welding wire is transported more easily through the liner and the force to be delivered by the wire feeder is reduced.

The Power Torch Liner is protected with a thick outer coating. In a comparative test with a feed of ø 1.2 mm welding wire at a rate of 4.5 m/min, in which the torch liner was placed in a circle three times, the welding wire underwent 72% less friction with the Power Torch Liner than with a liner of a competing brand.

Get interested, ask for a free sample at Peter Haspels : info@wire-wizard.eu



Welding wire cuts corners to the welding robot



With the Wire Wizard wire transport systems, Valk Welding offers a solution for transporting welding wire from the drum or spool to the welding robot virtually without any friction. Wire Wizard has developed the Wire Guide Modules specifically for situations in which the welding wire has to pass short bends or curves on its way to the welding robot. This virtually eliminates the chance of friction occurring in the bends of the cable. No friction means no downtime thus more production!

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

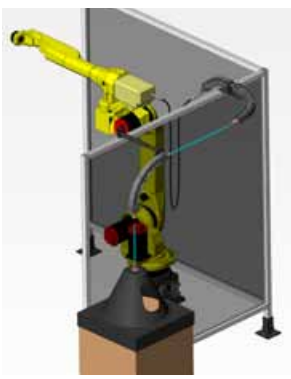
The roller bearing in the Wire Guide Modules ensure that the wire is guided through the short bend without any friction. That makes it possible to transport the wire with the same force over greater lengths from the drum to the welding robot or other welding applications. It also makes it possible to put the welding wire drum in a place where it can easily be reached by a forklift truck. The 45° modules can be connected to a combination of 90°, 135° and 180°.

Wire Wizard product manager Peter Haspels: 'In practice the wire cables often have to run through corners at many angles. Those are exactly 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 widely 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."
For info, email Peter Haspels:
info@wire-wizard.eu

See also:
www.wire-wizard.eu/gallery/wire-guide-modules-in-use

new Wire Wizard folder and PowerPoint presentation:
www.valkwelding.com/en/welding-accessoiries/wire-wizard

welding-accessoiries/wire-wizard

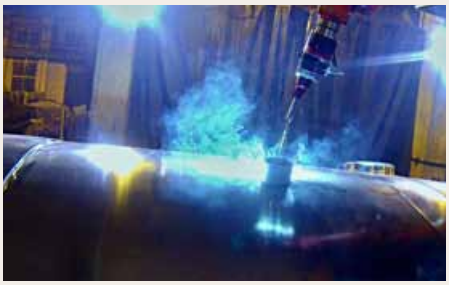


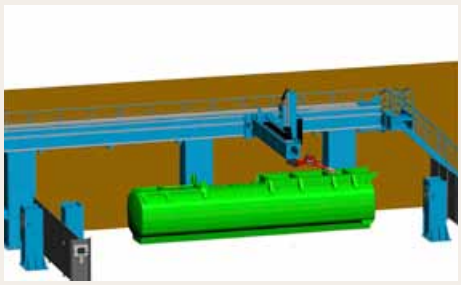
www.youtube.com/valkwelding:
" Welding of Alu tanks"

Stokota welds complete tankers by robot

Stokota, an international industrial vehicle manufacturer and logistics provider has taken a new Valk Welding robot system into use at its Polish location, which the company is now using to weld the complete superstructure of fuel tankers

The management of Stokota had been planning for some time to improve productivity by means of robot automation at its location in Elblag, Poland. CEO Ronald Lefebvre: "An intensive market study led us to Valk Welding, which was able not only to deliver a welding robot system but was also willing to start a project with us to deal with all of the production issues that arise when welding aluminium trailers.





Welding robot system with XYZ shifter

The trailers and superstructures made by Stokota according to customer specification vary strongly in size, design and material composition. Stokota wanted to weld the aluminium fuel tanks entirely with a robot. Following a comprehensive project analysis by the Czech/Polish division of Valk Welding, it quickly became clear that Stokota would only be able to carry out the processes it wanted with a welding robot on an XYZ portal structure. This is designed with two work stations and has a total length of 32m. The X, Y and Z movements of the portal structure make it possible to reach the fuel tankers on all sides. Valk Welding was able to fall back on its previous experience with similar large-volume products.

Arc-Eye laser monitoring system

It soon became clear that the welding seam shapes and the welding seam preparation for the Stokota products were such that a monitoring system was completely indispensable for the robot welding of the large-volume aluminium tankers. The robot system at Stokota was therefore equipped with the Arc-Eye laser monitoring system.

Aluminium welding technologies

The welding robot system is equipped with technologies for MIG aluminium welding, including 'Spiral Weave', which uses various wire speeds during the circular weaving movement of the welding robot. This makes it possible to burn the oxide skin of the aluminium at a higher voltage, whilst melting the filler material in a second cycle of the weaving movement. It is partly thanks to these advanced technologies for aluminium welding, which form part of the **Panasonic** welding robot system, that the implementation of this complex robot system for welding extremely complex products proved successful. The fact that the operators were given intensive training in their own language by the Valk Welding CZ and PL people made a strong contribution to this.

Stokota also builds tankers for refuelling civil and military aircraft. The robot system has also proved its worth in this fast-growing market share for Stokota. All 30 tanks for the Belgian Air Force were quickly and efficiently welded using this arc-welding robot system.
www.stokota.com

Valk Welding sponsors Team Sailing Rotterdam event

Valk Welding acted as the main sponsor for the Dutch Student Championship for Team Sailing that took place on 25 and 26 April at Kralingse Plas in Rotterdam. During this Team Sailing Rotterdam event student sailing association teams from throughout the Netherlands competed for the title Dutch Student Team Sailing Championship!

Team Sailing involves two teams, each with two boats, competing against each other in a short course in which the teams have to make it as difficult as possible for the other boat to cross the finishing line first. This format is also operated by the Dutch Student Championship for Team Sailing.

Valk Welding also sponsors the Valk Welding Match Race team that takes part in various (international) sailing events. Sailing has always traditionally been a characteristic of Valk Welding, not least among the Valk family itself. Neither is Valk Welding an unfamiliar name in the world of competitive sailing.
Remco H. Valk: "Competitive sailing, and especially team sailing, is all about working together in a team. The best result can only be achieved by close cooperation between the jib and mainsail trimmer and the helmsman. There is a strong link in this issue how we at Valk Welding always try to get the best possible result for our customers. We get the best result by making sure that our employees, suppliers and customers work close together. By engaging with our customers as a supplier, providing optimum support, intensively communicating and empathising with our customer's product we build up a strong bond with them. That has resulted in ongoing customer-supplier relationships. We aim to express this with our pay-off "The strong connection'."

Alpe d'HuZes': Cycling for a good cause

This year Valk Welding will for the first time be sponsoring a team of 36 cyclists and runners who will be taking up the challenge presented by the 14.4 km Alpe d'Huez course. The 'Alpe d'HuZes' is an event in which cyclists and runners climb this French mountain six times to raise funds for the KWF cancer fund. The Alpe d'Huez has a height difference of 1061 metres, 22 bends and an average gradient of 8%.

Six times up the Alpe d'Huez

Valk Welding will be sponsoring the team '36Knopen', a group of 36 cycling sailors. Because the group consists of sailors, they will be cycling from yacht club to yacht club for training purposes. From Loosdrecht to Sneek over 150 km and from Loosdrecht to Paterswolde (Groningen) over 200 km. Under the motto 'Giving up is not an option' the team is currently training hard to finish the course. Valk Welding warmly embraces this good cause.
www.opgevenisgeenoptie.nl

Tradeshows

Ouest Industries 2015
Rennes, France
2-4 June 2015

Vision & Robotics
Veldhoven, the Netherlands
3-4 June 2015

Technische Industriële Vakbeurs
Hardenberg, the Netherlands
1-3 September 2015

MSV Brno
Brno, Czech Republic
14-18 September 2015

HI Messe 2015
Herning, Denmark
22-25 September 2015

Welding Week 2015
Antwerp, Belgium
20-22 Oktober 2015

Metavak
Gorinchem, the Netherlands
27-29 Oktober 2015

Tolexpo 2015
Villepinte, France
17-20 November 2015

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