

Press release

High accolades for PWO tool construction

- **In the finals of the “Tool Engineering 2008” award**
- **Jury rates strategic focus on customer benefit as a particular strength**

Oberkirch, October 23, 2008 – Progress-Werk Oberkirch AG successfully reached the finals of the exclusive competition “Excellence in Production”, despite this being the first time it has taken part and the stiff competition from the field of 327 highly-respected participants. In the category “Internal Tool Engineering – more than 100 employees” the PWO location Oberkirch came in among the top three with a large German automotive manufacturer and an equally renowned tier 1 supplier. PWO AG was able to impressively demonstrate its capabilities to a broad specialist audience.

The reputed competition is conducted by the tool machine lab (WZL) of RWTH Aachen University. It puts challenging demands on the participating companies. Jurors assess technological capabilities throughout the entire process chain as well as a broad range of cost-relevant, organisational and strategic aspects of the respective companies.

This goes far beyond merely theoretical mind games: The organisers sent teams of experts to get a personal on-site impression of the participating companies. The jury was made up of high-ranking representatives of companies, associations and research facilities.

Experts identified that one of the particular strengths of PWO tool construction was its extensive strategic focus on customer benefits. Considerable transparency toward employees and the early integration of apprentices in workflows also received special praise.

Dr. Winfried Blümel, member of the PWO Management Board responsible for tool construction, was delighted about this great success: “PWO has been making deep-drawn components for almost ninety years. This means that we have expertise resulting from the experience of generations of employees. Based on this we keep strategically advancing our core competency in tool construction, while at the same time making a major contribution to technological progress. The excellent performance of more than 200 highly-specialised employees in tool construction at our base in Oberkirch in developing, planning, manufacturing and servicing tool for metal forming has made a significant contribution to PWO being able to position itself successfully as a global strategic partner to the international automotive industry and its tier 1 suppliers. The Management Board would like to thank you, this is an award which you certainly deserve!”

Progress-Werk Oberkirch AG
The Management Board

PWO company profile: On the way to becoming a global automotive supplier

PWO has established itself as one of the world's leading suppliers of high-end metal components for automobile safety and comfort. Drawing on its experience spanning almost 90 years since the company's inception in 1919, PWO has amassed a wealth of knowledge within the field of metal forming and joining. The company's Oberkirch facility in Germany currently has a workforce of approx. 1,100 employees. Operating additional sites in the Czech Republic, China, Mexico and Canada, the Group is represented worldwide and employs some 1,900 people in total.

As a partner to the automobile industry, PWO develops and produces tailor-made solutions in volumes reaching several million units, all of which are supplied just-in-time and in zero-defect quality. Working in close collaboration with its customer base, the Group is expanding its international production sites with a view to extending its reach as a supplier to foreign markets. PWO's future target is to propel Group sales revenue from EUR 260 million in 2007 to around EUR 350 million in 2010. In the same period, EBIT is to be expanded from EUR 16.8 million to over EUR 25 million.