



Global Footprint Asia

Opening of Factory Expansion in Zhuhai

EDUCATION by kurtz ersa

Ersa GmbH & Co. KG takes off with its Training Brand

55 Jahre Protective Solutions

Sales Reorganization and New Product Line



Editorial

Kurtz Ersa is growing!



Thomas Mühleck

We're on the right track! Bucking the trend in the German mechanical engineering sector and despite all the geopolitical ups and downs, we at Kurtz Ersa are growing significantly this year – more than ever before. This is very encouraging – and by no means a given!

This growth is made possible by you, our customers. You see Kurtz Ersa as a global provider of innovative solutions for major megatrends, such as in electronics production: artificial intelligence, energy supply, humanoid robotics, and autonomous driving are driving your business around the globe – and we provide you with smart solutions for the future. Wherever electronics are produced, we are your partner with our soldering systems and automation solutions. In the field of particle foam machines, we'll showcase the latest technological developments and applications. And in the field of additive manufacturing, we're on the verge of launching a new system with a true USP in terms of scalability, reproducibility, and homogeneity – read about the current status of our AM business unit on page 32.

A key to our success is our "Global Footprint Strategy". We have evolved our global production sites from a purely low-cost approach to becoming a full-range supplier – with local value creation right at your site. We are consistently rolling out this strategy: Global production expansion is moving forward – first in India, then in Southeast Asia.

At the same time, we are continuing to restructure our organization toward greater agility. We see two drivers here: "outside-in" – always driven by you – and "inside-out" through strategic initiatives originating from Kurtz Ersa. We view Kurtz Ersa as a functional organization in which all functional areas mesh seamlessly with a high degree of autonomy, much like a ball bearing. We continue to build on this model, as speed is a decisive factor.

We do all of this sustainably: We recently received the Ecovadis Gold Medal in the independent ESG rating for the first time – and we're very proud of that! While striving for profit, we demonstrably place the utmost importance on doing so in a sustainable manner over the long term. This applies equally to us here in Germany, in the heart of Europe, as well as at the international and global levels. Everything we do takes place under the umbrella of the strong Kurtz Ersa brand, enabling us to realize all potential and opportunities efficiently and quickly.

In three years, we will celebrate our 250th anniversary. Until then, we want to continue growing together with you and remain number one in everything we do. Our mission as a seventh-generation family-owned company: technological leadership combined with maximum proximity to the market and our customers. In this issue of Kurtz Ersa Magazine, read about the latest developments and exciting success stories from around the globe.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude for your trust and look forward to our shared future!

Best regards!



Thomas Mühleck
CEO, Kurtz Ersa Group

Opening of the New Factory Expansion in Zhuhai in 2026

Asia is one of the world's most dynamic regions for electronics, industrial manufacturing, and becoming an incubator for innovative technologies. For Kurtz Ersa, it is also where our Global Footprint strategy turns into daily reality: being close to customers, producing locally to the same standards as in Germany, and scaling quickly when markets accelerate. A key milestone in this journey is the opening of the new factory extension at Kurtz Zhuhai Manufacturing (KZM) in 2026.



Green outline: 2013 Ers production; yellow outline: 2003/04 Kurtz production; blue outline: 2019 extension of Ers production



2025/26: Four-story extension of Ers production, just opposite to the existing plant

A brief look back – then focus on today

Our presence in Asia has grown step by step: from Kurtz Ersa Asia in Hong Kong (1987), to the start of Kurtz machine manufacturing in Zhuhai (Project “Rice Grain”, 2004), followed by Ersa reflow production in China (2013). Continuous growth already made an extension of production capacity necessary in 2019. Each mentioned milestone, aside the incorporation of entities in Shanghai, Vietnam and Singapore served one purpose: strengthening customer proximity and delivery capability in a fast-moving region.



A sneak peek at the newest extension of the KZM production facility

A glimpse into today: a milestone you can walk through

In May 2026, we welcomed sales partners from across Asia for the Asia Sales Meeting. Alongside market updates and strategic alignment, one moment stood out: the visit to our new KZM factory extension. For many visitors, this was where strategy became tangible. The group gained first-hand insights into our ongoing growth in Asia and what it means operationally: more space, more capacity, and more flexibility. The new four-storied production building left a strong impression because it clearly demonstrates Kurtz Ersa’s long-term commitment to the region – and to the customers we serve there.

In his keynote address for the sales meeting, Bernd Schenker, CEO Asia, described the current geopolitical environment as volatile and uncertain – marked by global political tensions, wars, a faltering global economy, and economic risks such as high oil prices and the resulting inflation. His central question resonated with everyone: How can this be reconciled with the unprecedented boom in our business – and how long will it last?

His answer was clear: Kurtz Ersa is involved in all major growth trends and innovative technologies areas, such as AI, big cloud network, e-mobility, new energy, smart batteries, and the emerging field of humanoid robots. With our wide range of high-per-

formance electronic production equipment and our global footprint we are unique and offer our customer the perfect combination of innovative technology, excellent service, and competitive prices.



Factory tour at KZM during Asia Sales Meeting 2026

What the new extension delivers

The new KZM extension is a direct response to the current high demand on Kurtz Ersa machines, driven especially by world-class customers. We had to ramp up faster than anticipated – but the KZM team made the impossible possible and delivered: within only four months, the team in Zhuhai doubled in size and output. With the new ex-

tension, KZM can now produce over 140 machines per month.

The growth strategy in Asia will still continue. The next steps for further extensions of the output capacity are already ongoing. In parallel we will also significantly increase the engineering, software, and application

team. This strengthens what matters most to customers: reliable delivery capability, shorter lead times, greater flexibility, and an even stronger platform for service and application support. A special thank you to all Kurtz Ersa colleagues across departments and continents who made this milestone possible.

Focus on Sustainability: strong ratings, clear targets!

For Kurtz Ersa, sustainability is more than just a claim: we make progress measurable – with clear reporting, strong ratings and concrete goals and measures worldwide. This is highlighted in the latest Sustainability Report 2025, which sets out the results achieved.

Sustainability Report

A key milestone was the publication of our fifth voluntary sustainability report. As in the 2024 reporting year, the current report is once again aligned with the requirements of the CSRD. In doing so, we create transparency, comparability and a robust foundation for the further development of our ESG* management – with a consistently global perspective.



Ratings

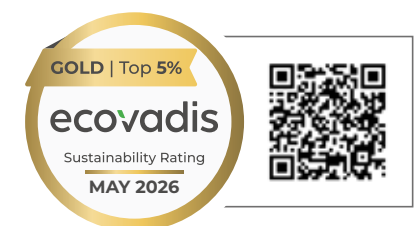
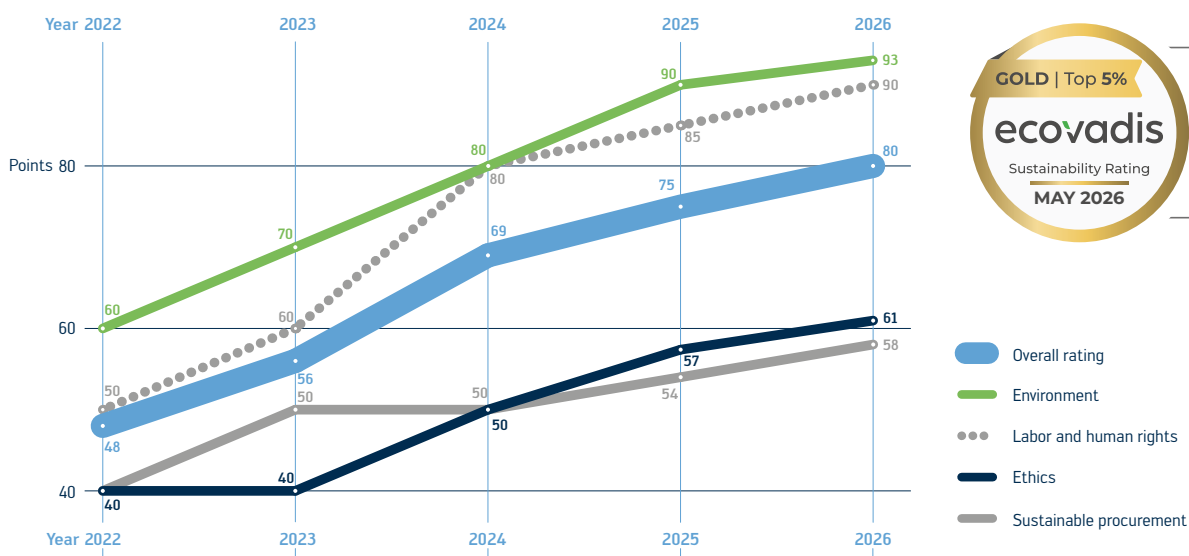
External assessments also confirm that we are on the right track: in the 2025 CDP rating, we achieved a strong "B" score in the Climate Change category. This represents a clear step forward compared with previous years, when we were still at "C".

In EcoVadis' annual ESG rating, we have also improved significantly over the last five years: from 48 points in 2022 (Bronze medal) to 80 points in 2026 (Gold medal). "It is precisely this holistic rating – which takes into account the areas of environment, labor and human rights, ethics and sustainable procurement – that makes our overall progress particularly visible," says Anna Hieble, Head of CQM+CESG at the Kurtz Ersa Group.

Goals and measures

At the same time, we are continuously working on the further development of our ESG targets and their achievement. A detailed overview of our targets, target achievement levels and supporting measures can be found in the 2025 Sustainability Report and on our website. These continue to include our CO₂ neutrality target for Scope 1 and 2 by 2029 (our "250 Years of Kurtz Ersa" anniversary), but also, for example, Scope 3 accounting, which we completed in early 2026 for the years 2023 to 2025. Another global initiative is the international roll-out of our Integrated Management System in accordance with ISO 9001, ISO 14001, ISO 45001 and ISO 50001.

Kurtz Ersa – EcoVadis Sustainability Rating



*ESG stands for Environmental, Social and Governance.

Kurtz Ersa on the Path to Becoming a Global Umbrella Brand

By the end of 2026, the Kurtz Ersa Group will standardize its brand portfolio and consolidate all product brands under the umbrella brand “Kurtz Ersa”.

In recent years, the Kurtz Ersa Group has acquired several companies, each of which brought its own established brands – including Schiller Automation, Häcker Automation, and ATV (Semiconductor). While this represented a strategically sound expansion of the existing portfolio of the mechanical engineering company Kurtz Ersa, it led to a fragmented brand landscape. For outsiders and customers, it was not always immediately clear which technologies and solutions belonged to the Group. That is now changing fundamentally.

One brand, one identity

The Global Board and Advisory Board have jointly decided to consistently implement the “Radical Branded House” model – mea-

ning the reduction of all brands in the portfolio to the umbrella brand. Accordingly, all machines and products will bear exclusively the Kurtz Ersa logo in the future. The individual product brands will be integrated step by step, resulting in a consistent brand identity by December 31, 2026. The only exception is the Ersa Tools division, which will be granted an extended transition period until 2029 due to its extensive soldering tool product portfolio.

Strength Through Consistency

The advantages of this strategy are clear: maximum clarity in communication, more efficient marketing, and a strengthened perception as a provider of technological solutions for industry. “Kurtz Ersa” consistently stands for premium engineering that

leads to sustainable production solutions – characterized by technological leadership, reliability, and international strength. Visually, the new consistency is evident, among other things, in the distinctive Kurtz Ersa angle on the machine’s sheet metal housing. In Asia and the Americas, the umbrella brand is already successfully established – now follows the global rollout to clearly communicate the strength of the Kurtz Ersa Group to the outside world through a consistent branding strategy.





55 Years of Protective Solutions

+++ International Realignment +++ New Head of Global Sales Frank Johne +++

Kurtz GmbH & Co. KG has established itself in a wide range of application areas – fields that play a significant role in making our lives and daily routines more comfortable and safer in the long term. For 55 years now, we have been supplying intelligent solutions for particle foam processing from our headquarters in Kreuzwertheim to the world – tailored to each customer's specific requirements.



Frank Johne, Head of Global Sales
Kurtz GmbH & Co. KG

To counteract the rising cost and competitive pressures in this market segment, the management of Kurtz GmbH & Co. KG has decided to link the sales activities in the "Protective Solutions" division with the new business unit Additive Manufacturing, thereby strategically expanding the business. To this end, the position of Head of Global Sales for Kurtz GmbH & Co. KG was newly created.

Frank Johne has held this position at the company since February 1, 2026. A native of the Black Forest, he has lived in the Tauber-

franken region for 23 years and has been active in machine sales for just as long. During an interview, this married father of a family shared some insights into his work, as well as his ideas and current projects. "While we are still relatively in the early stages with additive manufacturing technologies, in the field of particle foam we can draw on decades of experience as well as a broad product portfolio. This allows us to cover a wide range of end products for our customers," says Frank Johne by way of introduction. "We've had the necessary manufacturing expertise in-house for over fifty years now – as well as cross-material





process know-how." This is particularly important, as many systems are custom-built for individual customers.

Yet this variety and diversity of machinery also present major challenges. While the global market for expandable plastics is no longer growing significantly, many companies must also hold their own in a weakening economy and amidst ever-changing political conflicts. "The overall conditions could be better", Frank Johne continues, "yet these conditions apply equally to all market participants. There's no point in worrying, so we do what we do best – we build good, reliable, and durable machines."

Product Launch to Mark the Company's 55th Anniversary

In times like these, many companies choose to downsize their existing product portfolio. This saves on development costs and consolidates procurement capacities. At the same time, however, the product range also loses flexibility for customers. "What

I've learned in my professional career so far," Johne continues, "is that we have to rise to the challenge. Nevertheless, it's okay to sometimes take an approach that goes beyond the textbook. This is also true in the current situation. To continue being the strong partner our customers have come to expect while also meeting their desire for even greater flexibility, we're currently working on a new product line."

As before, the new system focuses on flexibility and the ability to implement customized customer projects – starting this fall, customers will be able to see the first system in the new series right here in Kreuzwertheim to develop real-world application scenarios together with Protective Solutions. "Especially in turbulent times, proximity to the customer is crucial – and for us, this is also fostered through international partnerships. This allows us to ensure short supply chains, strengthen our regional presence, and meet the growing demand for local sourcing", says sales representative Frank Johne.

At the same time, Kurtz GmbH & Co. KG has been working on machines for metal 3D

printing for some time now. "I can't – and don't want to – reveal exactly what we're doing there in detail at this point," says Johne, "but I'm nevertheless extremely pleased to say that we'll be launching a new machine in the additive manufacturing sector before the end of this year." To give a little insight, he adds: "We start where others stop. That's where we feel at home."

Both business segments – Protective Solutions and Additive Manufacturing – are and will remain in constant motion to provide customers with high-performance solutions tailored to changing market conditions. Frank Johne concludes: "This involves – despite all the geopolitical turbulence – targeted investment in the future of these areas, because we see their potential and because we are convinced that our commitment, based on regional proximity and a high-performing sales and service network, will be successful internationally in the long term."





Napina Auto & Electronics Ltd.

Electronics as a Driver of Success

Napino Auto & Electronics Ltd. is one of India's leading manufacturers of automotive electronics. Since its foundation in 1997, the company has developed from a specialist in classic components to a broad-based system provider with a global orientation. This growth has been accompanied over the years by several soldering systems from Ersal – most recently by the installation of a HOTFLOW reflow soldering machine in March 2025.





Napino headquarters in Manesar; source: Napino

Napino Auto & Electronics Ltd. is a prime example of India's rise to become a high-performance high-tech location for automotive electronics. With around 4,000 employees, several production and development sites throughout the country, and clearly defined quality and process standards, the company now acts as an end-to-end partner for national and international OEMs. Its services range from design and development to manufacturing, testing, and validation, right through to worldwide delivery.

The product portfolio is correspondingly broad: controllers and rectifiers, capacitor discharge igniters, ECUs, cable harnesses, instrument clusters, starting systems, LED modules, body control units, and components for e-mobility, IoT, and EV applications. This diversification is the result of a consistent strategy of addressing technological trends at an early stage and developing in line with global mobility requirements. Napino operates plants in Manesar, Bhiwadi, Haridwar, Halol, and Pune, among other locations. In total, the company operates over 13 SMT lines, which are supplemented by modern AOI and X-ray systems, microanalysis laboratories, and extensive stress and endurance testing in use.

The automotive sector in particular places high demands on electronics production: maximum process stability, low error rates, reproducible quality, and complete traceability. Added to this are trends such as miniaturization, fine-pitch components, and increasing levels of automation. For Napino, this means, among other things, the use of nitrogen-compatible soldering processes, robust flux management, and systems that can be seamlessly integrated into automated manufacturing and traceability concepts.

The collaboration with Ersa began back in 2017. During a visit to Germany, the decision was made to purchase the first selective soldering systems in an informal atmosphere, but with a clear technical focus. What began as a prag-

matic introduction quickly developed into a strong partnership. Today, Napino has five selective Ersa soldering systems in operation – two ECOSELECT 2 (2017 and 2018), one VERSA-FLOW 3/45 (2018), one Ersa full tunnel wave soldering system with N₂ technology (POWERFLOW PRO, 2024) and, in 2025, two HOTFLOW reflow soldering machines. “The use of the POWERFLOW PRO N₂ wave soldering system has significantly improved the soldering quality in the wave soldering process. Ersa N₂ wave technology is particularly favored in the automotive sector due to its high process stability, reduced error rates, and consistently high solder joint quality,” explains Christian Ott, the responsible Ersa Area Sales Manager.

From a manufacturing perspective, the effects are clear: high productivity, stable processes, and consistently high soldering quality. Malfunctions are rare and service requirements are low. Internally, this is described with a tongue-in-cheek but clear conclusion: with the Ersa systems, “you sleep well at night,” as Md Imtiaz, Head of Plant at the Manesar site, puts it. This is supported by close cooperation with service partner Kurtz Ersa India, which impresses with fast response times, good spare parts availability, and reliable support for all sites.

Looking ahead, Napino plans to further expand its capacities, add additional nitrogen-capable soldering systems, increase automation levels, and integrate Industry 4.0 concepts such as MES and end-to-end traceability more strongly. The goal is to continue to be able to manufacture complex, finer, and more miniaturized assemblies for automotive, EV, and IoT applications safely and economically in the future – and thus continue to leverage electronics as a key driver of the company's success. Md Imtiaz adds: “With each additional machine, we have been able to confirm our decision to choose Ersa – we will continue to rely on this partnership for our planned future growth!”



Christian Ott of Ersa (right) and Sameer Verma of Kurtz Ersa India (left) with Md Imtiaz, Head of Plant at Napino Auto & Electronics Ltd.



Broadcast Expert Lawo relies on the Ersascope HR 600 XL for Big Board rework

When broadcasting live from international sporting events, major political gatherings, or cultural highlights, picture and sound must be flawless – second by second. In this premier league of broadcasting, Lawo is a global leader with its systems: as a technology partner for live media production workflows, covering the entire spectrum from infrastructure to processing and routing to the user interface. The broadcast experts also place the highest demands on their own equipment – in the rework sector, the Ersascope HR 600 XL system consistently delivers first-class results for Lawo's valuable circuit boards.

In Rastatt, Baden, Lawo employs around 200 people to develop high-quality, flexible solutions used worldwide in television and radio production (broadcast), recording, opera, and theater. "Lawo's core business – broadcast – is considered the premier class in terms of performance, functionality, and reliability. Here, every detail must function reliably. User interfaces – both software and hardware – must enable fast, secure, and intuitive operation. At the same time, it is important that workflows can be designed to be flexible and transparent," says Andreas Krug, Team Leader of Electronics Manufacturing at Lawo.

An example of a specific application is "Remote Production": audio and video signals are captured on-site and transmitted via

fiber optics to a remote control room, where the actual production takes place. Agile resource management and adjustment via a unified platform (HOME) based on open standards creates additional efficiency. Lawo solutions are developed and manufactured 100% in-house according to the highest quality standards. After all, what needs to run absolutely reliably in the OB van, in the studio, or at the event venue must first be produced just as reliably in the manufacturing process. The quality of Lawo solutions is based on high-quality production resources, meticulous workmanship, and flawlessness – backed by tiered quality checks throughout development and manufacturing. The result is robust, durable systems whose service life can be further extended through professional refurbishment. "We employ specially

trained teams that can repair customer circuit boards or, desolder, reball, re-assemble, and solder highly complex components. This saves resources in the long term and minimizes costs," says Andreas Krug.

Expansion into High-End Rework

A look back at recent years shows that Lawo relies not only on optimized processes but also on appropriate technologies when it comes to quality: In 2016, the company opted for an Ersascope system for the first time and acquired an ERSASCOPE BGA inspection system to visually inspect hidden solder joints. The next step followed in 2020: With the purchase of the high-end rework system HR 600 XL, Lawo specifically expanded its rework capabilities – with the goal of being able to process its own



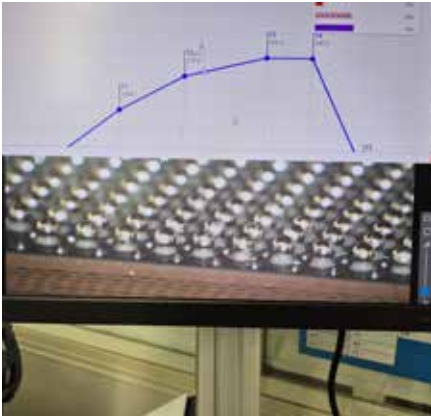
Component inspection at Lawo using the Ersascope ERSASCOPE



Component drying in the SuperDry drying cabinet



Harald Gillig, Lawo process technician, performing BGA reballing



Remelting after BGA reballing



Automatic BGA placement



Automatic BGA soldering

high-quality PCBs reproducibly and without any loss of quality. In doing so, Lawo underscores a principle that is crucial in the top tier of the broadcast industry: Quality is not merely a concern during final inspection, but the result of stable processes, modern technologies, and solid in-house expertise.

Big Boards: Large, Complex, and Demanding to Rework

Technical development in electronics has been proceeding along two tracks for years: higher integration density and increasing computing and data rates – without complex assemblies necessarily becoming smaller. Especially where large amounts of data are processed, powerful platforms remain in demand. In manufacturing and rework, this means: Anyone who wants to reliably handle such assemblies needs processes and systems that remain reproducible even with high thermal mass, many layers, and large dimensions.

In practice, the term “big boards” is used when PCBs reach a width of approximately 380 mm or more and are constructed with multiple layers. Such assemblies can easily exceed six layers, with typical PCB thicknesses ranging from 3 to 10 mm. The challenge: heat distributes differently, process windows narrow, and the demands on control and repeatability increase – especially when replacing high-quality components or performing critical rework. For Lawo, rework is therefore not a “repair corner” that runs on the side, but a quality-relevant process step. It’s all about controlled heat input, safe component handling, and documentable processes – so that rework supports the quality level rather than jeopardizing it.

Practical test before making a decision at the Demo Center

Before deciding on the HR 600 XL, Lawo engineers wanted to know exactly how the system would perform with their own real-world assemblies: What headroom does it offer for large, multi-layer PCBs? And how reproducible is a process across different scenarios? To find out, the team traveled to the Ersma Demo Center in Wertheim – bringing their own PCBs along. The test under real-world conditions aligned with Lawo’s commitment to validating decisions not theoretically, but through its own applications. Particular attention was paid to the reballing – a repair process in which the spherical solder joints on a BGA are renewed.

During reballing, the affected ball grid array (BGA) components are first dried to remove residual moisture. Then, using a stencil, flux and new solder balls are applied to the component. The components prepared in this way are subjected to a soldering profile in the rework system to remelt the new solder balls. The component is then positioned and soldered into the assembly.

Result: The test run at the Demo Center was successful and met the high standards of the broadcast experts from Rastatt. “Our systems must function with absolute reliability in live operation for years on end – which is why it makes perfect sense for us to rely on processes in both production and rework that are reproducible and controllable. The practical test with our own

PCBs was decisive in this regard,” says Harald Gillig, process engineer at Lawo.

HR 600 XL: Process reliability for demanding assemblies

With the HR 600 XL, Lawo expanded its machine park with a rework system that truly shines where standard solutions reach their limits: with large-format, thermally inert, and complex assemblies. For Lawo, this means above all: greater control over the process and thus increased reliability – both for critical rework and for the precise replacement of individual components. This makes rework a strategic component of in-house manufacturing: it enables high-quality assemblies to be processed efficiently and with quality assurance, shortens response times, and keeps expertise in-house – a clear advantage in an environment where technical excellence and time-to-performance matter. When a manufacturer produces in the top tier of the broadcast industry, rework processes must be just as precise and stable as the products themselves – the HR 600 XL provides the technological foundation for achieving reproducible results even with large boards.



*Finally, peace of mind during an audit:
Certified HR training with EDUCATION
by kurtz ersa brings reliability to
your processes and pays off.*



“Without training, nothing will work in the future”

How Ersä GmbH & Co. KG is expanding the boundaries of a mechanical engineering company with a new training brand

At Productronica, the world's leading trade fair in Munich, Ersä GmbH & Co. KG presented not only numerous new machines but also its new training brand, “EDUCATION by kurtz ersä.” We spoke with Rainer Krauss, Head of Sales at Ersä GmbH & Co. KG, about what lies behind this initiative, the significance of training for the company, and how customers will benefit from it.



Mr. Krauss, it's not every day you see a medium-sized machine manufacturer with its own training brand. What can we expect from it?

“EDUCATION by kurtz ersä” is our approach to consolidating the now very numerous activities in the areas of training, continuing education, and knowledge transfer in general. But a separate brand wouldn't have been necessary for that alone. Rather, we also want to position ourselves as a provider in this field. Of course, the market knows us as a machine manufacturer, but our role as a knowledge provider is becoming increasingly important. In recent years, we have already welcomed several thousand training participants. The topic of training now holds a status comparable to that of a product category. We are reflecting this with our own training brand.

But you've been offering training for a long time. What has changed now?

That's true. Training is practically part of our DNA. But demand is constantly growing

and, above all, becoming increasingly international; Europe is pushing hard, and the rest of the world is also demanding more knowledge.

Without training, nothing will work in the future. Products are becoming increasingly complex, error rates are expected to continue falling, and the workload on staff is rising at the same time. Many experts are retiring, and those coming up through the ranks no longer have the time to learn the ropes the way they did 20 or 30 years ago. It is not uncommon today for a single person to be responsible for an entire production line or several lines. Staff turnover has always played a major role in many countries, but it has also increased significantly in Central Europe since the pandemic. So there is a need for well-trained staff, but they change frequently. It's a vicious cycle.

And your response to this is the training brand?

Indirectly. We're currently massively expanding our training offerings, both in traditional in-person training and in e-learning and

hybrid learning concepts. So it felt right to give this a new, standalone framework. If you add it all up, we'd probably already qualify as an education provider.

Give us a rough estimate. How many people are trained each year?

We currently offer about 160 individual training courses per year, with over 1,000 participants. Of course, this varies widely. In terms of numbers, many of the courses are the traditional operator or maintenance training sessions you'd expect from a machine manufacturer. These are usually small groups, but the training is intensive and in-depth. The same applies to our courses on hand soldering and repair soldering, which we offer as part of the AVLE program. For our know-how seminars in the machinery sector, which are also very demanding, groups of up to 20 people are possible, and these are regularly full. And then there are occasional events like the symposium “Soldering in Electronics Production,” which last year just barely reached 100 participants. So, we cover it all.

Those are impressive numbers. Are there any hot spots? I mean, specific industries or regions that are growing particularly fast in this field?

Surprisingly, no. We're seeing a broad-based trend instead. In the past, training was heavily driven by the DACH region. Simply because many people shy away from training that isn't in their native language. But recently, we've seen a significant increase in interest from other European countries. The topic is also gaining momentum globally. In North America, the seminars have been running successfully for some time, and more and more training sessions are taking place in Asia as well. India, for example, is a market with tremendous momentum. There, it is a challenge to train staff as quickly as production is growing.

In terms of industries, virtually every sector is represented in our training programs. In high-reliability sectors such as automotive or aerospace, valid certifications are a particularly important factor, as they facilitate the verification of employees' qualifications. Other industries are currently seeing a significant increase in production volumes. Many companies in these sectors are either dealing with new processes or new personnel and therefore require training accordingly.

You mentioned AVLE. What is that?

AVLE stands for "Ausbildungsverbund Löttechnik Elektronik" (Electronics Soldering Training Association). It's an alliance of several companies that were fed up with the lack of available training for hand soldering. We're a founding member and can say that the soldering certification introduced through this initiative is an absolute success story. The four AVLE modules are among our most popular training courses; something takes place almost every week within this framework. People come from electronics production, but also from repair cafés, government agencies, or as private individuals. The courses always include a theoretical and a practical component, so you really learn manual soldering from the ground up.

A soldering license implies an exam, right?

Exactly. Performance must be assessed; otherwise, the value of the training is quickly called into question. We place a high priority on this aspect – every certificate must be earned through an exam. This enhances its value and is part of the success story of our training programs. Exams have long been established for the AVLE and our know-how seminars. But they are also increasingly required for in-house seminars

and customer-specific technology days. The exam is the foundation of a trustworthy certificate. Take the TÜV, for example, which automatically lends credibility to any document as a brand.

That's an interesting point. So a trusted certificate is extremely important?

Absolutely. We're already perceived as a very strong brand in this sector, and we'll carry that trust over to "EDUCATION by kurtz ersa." We've worked hard to earn that trust, and it's certainly one of the reasons for the strong growth in our training programs.

Here's an example: A few months ago, we hosted experienced specialists from one of our European offices at a know-how seminar. They already possess a great deal of knowledge.

But they told us that they see how much less discussion their colleagues need to have when they can present an appropriate certificate. Ultimately, this also makes their work easier. And that's based on trust in our training programs.

Let's talk about the rest of the offerings. What do the know-how seminars cover?

That's the umbrella term for our process training courses – perhaps the flagship of our training offerings. These courses really delve into the details and bring participants up to a specialist level. We offer know-how seminars on wave and selective soldering, stencil printing, and reflow soldering. These are one- or two-day courses, always combining theory and practice. We have dedicated trainers for these courses, all of whom are experts in their respective fields. The seminars are all manufacturer-neutral, so the knowledge gained can be applied to any compatible system. This is an important aspect because the target audience for the training is growing. We have many participants who do not own corresponding Erska systems. And yet they confirm to us that the knowledge is of enormous practical help to them.

Are the seminars only available in German?

No, we also offer English-language courses directly in Wertheim every year, which are primarily booked by participants from other European countries. Interest is growing noticeably year after year. That's why we'll also be offering a know-how seminar on hand soldering and rework for our international customers in the future. Given the




Discover New Horizons.
Certified Kurtz Erska eLearning.



developments in this field, this is almost overdue. Rework is currently experiencing such momentum, and assemblies and components are becoming increasingly expensive, so it really matters that you know what you're doing.

In addition, we regularly offer seminars in various countries. Depending on the country, we organize these ourselves or with our local partners.

But those are all in-person training sessions. You also mentioned online concepts?

It is the digital offerings that are developing the fastest. We launched our e-learning platform in 2024, as the first provider in the soldering technology sector. Initially, the focus was on service topics, but in recent months we've also added process courses on wave/selective soldering and reflow soldering. We've since significantly expanded the service section of our e-learning platform with new machines and a series of troubleshooting guides, including videos. This has been very well received. The content is available in both German and English.

Does e-learning then compete with your existing offerings? And what exactly is hybrid learning?

From our perspective, the digital option isn't competition, but rather a complement. There are things that can never be taught online – situations where the customer needs to see and touch something, to develop a sense of it. We're also convinced that a live instructor in the room is perceived differently than an avatar or even a webinar. That's why we adapt our presenta-

tion style accordingly in these formats. However, e-learning can vastly expand target audiences. It helps us distribute knowledge much more widely. The barrier to entry is simply lower due to lower costs, no travel, and full flexibility in scheduling.

We see both areas growing. E-learning is rapidly increasing its user numbers, while at the same time we also saw a sharp rise in demand for in-house seminars at the client's location last year.

Hybrid learning actually combines the best of both worlds. Part of the content is delivered online, and part is delivered in a face-to-face training session, which can perhaps be shorter as a result. We're already using this approach for the pre- and post-training phases of our know-how seminars and are getting very positive feedback. That's why we plan to offer even more of these options in the future.

That's quite a diverse range of offerings. The move toward establishing a training brand makes sense in that context.

That's not even all. The service division is continuously expanding its training offerings for operator, programming, and maintenance training. So-called in-house seminars – that is, know-how seminars held on-site at the customer's location – are becoming increasingly popular.

In the style of the know-how seminars, we also offer customer-specific technology days. Here, a package is put together from our existing topic blocks, tailored specifically to a customer's requirements. This can focus on reliability or PCB design or be adapted for specific target groups.

And, of course, we are constantly developing new topics to address market trends and technological advancements.

I have one last question: How do you assess the developments in AI models? How do you think this will influence training?

That's a very interesting question that we've already discussed internally. It revolves around the vision that AI will solve all problems directly, pushing employees' knowledge into the background. Based on our current assessment, public AI models are still quite far from being a real help in the field of soldering. They likely lack the training data and the ability to form new connections; here, AI still lags far behind a human employee.

But its importance will increase in the future, and we are working on AI on many fronts. Sooner or later, there will certainly be good AI solutions in the field of soldering. But until then, well-qualified personnel are still the best solution for success.

Dear Mr. Krauss, thank you very much for the interesting conversation.



EDUCATION

by kurtz ersa

Ersa Expands its i-TIP Series with PERFORMANCE SOLDERING TIPS

Solder up to 30% faster – the new tips for demanding applications

Ersa, the world's leading supplier of soldering tools and systems, is expanding its proven i-TIP 0142 soldering tip series with five new performance variants. The new P-tips were developed specifically for users who demand the highest standards of heat transfer and efficiency.

**The principle:
More mass, more power**

The performance soldering tips continue to rely on the proven geometry of the contact surface, but feature a significantly larger

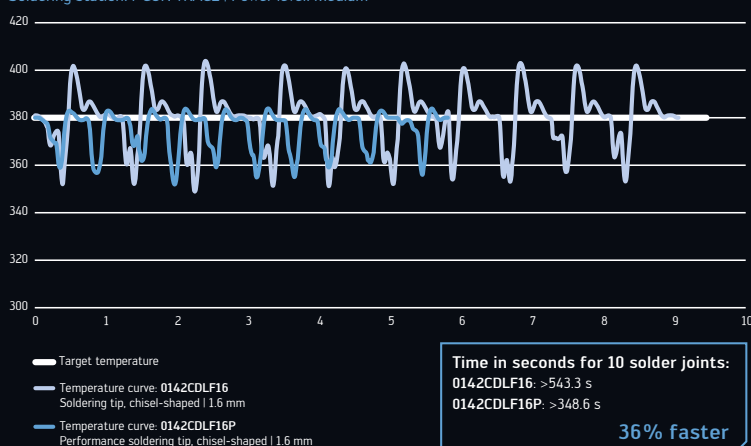
heat reservoir. The result: measurably faster heat transfer directly at the solder joint. In test series, performance gains of more than 30% were achieved compared to standard tips. Users who work on high-mass solder joints or solder without pre-heating the assembly benefit particularly.

**Easy transition,
full compatibility**

Since the basic tip shape of the performance tips remains identical at the contact surface, assigning the correct part

number is extremely simple: Simply add a "P" to the existing part number – for example, 0142CDLF50 becomes 0142CDLF50P. The new tips are compatible with all i-CON soldering stations; we particularly recommend the i-CON TRACE industrial soldering stations, the i-CON VARIO MK2 series, and the models in the i-CON 1 and i-CON 2 families, all in the MK2 version. Of course, the P-tips are also equipped with the popular Tip'n'Turn function for quick, tool-free tip replacement.

Performance comparison:
Test series with 10 solder joints – performance soldering tip vs. "standard soldering tip."
Soldering station: i-CON TRACE | Power level: Medium



Performance benefits at a glance:

- ✓ Faster heating of the solder joint
- ✓ Greater heat storage capacity
- ✓ Overall faster and more efficient soldering

Available performance variants:

- ✓ 0142CDLF16P
- ✓ 0142CDLF20P
- ✓ 0142CDLF24P
- ✓ 0142CDLF32P
- ✓ 0142CDLF50P



The Kurtz Ersä exhibition team for IPC APEX EXPO 2026

Kurtz Ersä looks back on successful appearance at ***IPC APEX EXPO 2026***

Kurtz Ersä, Inc. returned from a well-attended IPC APEX EXPO 2026, where it connected with visitors from around the world and showcased new and existing technologies at its booth. This year's event attracted 3,582 visitors, providing excellent opportunities for demonstrations and technical discussions.

Kurtz Ersä showcased several systems, including the locally manufactured HOTFLOW THREE (reflow), the new VERSAFLOW FIVE and VERSAFLOW 4 Core Edition (selective), and the SRO i-LINE vacuum reflow system.

The rework systems on display included the HR 600 XL, HR 600 P, HR 600/2, HR 550 XL, and HR 550 models. Also on display at the booth was the CFX-certified i-CON TRACE manual soldering platform for networked factory environments.

In addition, Kurtz Ersä received two 2026 NPI Awards for VERSAFLOW FIVE and the SRO i-LINE. Both systems were recognized for helping manufacturers improve throughput and process control in selective and semicon reflow soldering applications. Kurtz Ersä used the event to honor

its sales partners: ELECTRI-REP, Inc. was named "Machine Sales Representative of the Year," and in the Rework & Inspection category, the award went to PMR Representatives.

"APEX is always a great opportunity to spend time with customers and discuss real-world production challenges," said Ernie Grice, Vice President of Sales at Kurtz Ersä, Inc. "We had great conversations about throughput, process control, and the future of manufacturing." Many thanks to all booth visitors!



Joe Clure during his presentation at IPC APEX EXPO



Award-Winning: The new SRO i-LINE wins the NPI Award



Ersä booth at IPC APEX EXPO

TECH DAYS

Over two days in April, Kurtz Ersä Romania welcomed a total of 68 participants to Tech Days 2026 – in Timisoara and Râșnov, located approximately 400 kilometers apart. At both locations, Ersä experts and partners presented the full range of modern soldering technology: from wave, selective, reflow soldering, professional rework and hand soldering stations to intelligent energy management and tools ready for automation in the electronic business. A special highlight was the live link to the Demo Center in Wertheim, where machines for selective, reflow, and wave soldering were demonstrated directly by Ersä technicians – a format that generated great enthusiasm among the participants. In Timisoara, attendees were also able to try out the HR 600 P rework system and the i-CON TRACE, the first and only hand soldering station with traceability features. In Râșnov, the event took place directly at the customer's site. This year's Romanian Tech Days underscore the momentum of Kurtz Ersä Romania S.R.L., founded in January 2025 – now with its own branch in Timisoara and a high-performing local team, following over 25 years of successful partnership in the Romanian market.





RECORD ATTENDANCE AT THE 7TH ELECTRONICS PRODUCTION TECHNOLOGY FORUM

For the seventh time, Wertheim became the meeting place for the electronics production industry in mid-June. Around 200 industry professionals took the opportunity to learn about new technologies, processes, and partnerships in a practical setting at the Electronics Production Technology Forum on June 17 and 18.

Following the successful 6th Technology Forum with 140 participants the previous year, the 2026 edition went one better: 19 partner companies presented their solutions and innovations. The participation of renowned partners – ranging from machine manufacturers to material suppliers – as well as case studies from EMS practice actively contributed to the event's success.

The keynote address by ASMPT CEO Josef Ernst on the topic "The Future Made in Germany – How We Remain an Industrial Leader in the Electronics Market" set the tone, followed by technical pre-

sentations on topics such as smart rework, press-fit assembly, and flux-free soldering for power electronics, as well as zero-defect manufacturing through digitization. The two-day program offered the tried-and-true mix of practical presentations, interactive hands-on sessions with machines and systems, and individual process consulting. A particular highlight were the technology sessions on selective soldering, wave soldering, reflow, and rework, which could be booked individually and facilitated direct exchanges with experts. As usual, an attractive supporting program rounded out the event.

"Nowhere else will you find more expertise, technology, and opportunities for expert dialogue on electronics production. On behalf of Ersä, I would like to thank all partners, speakers, and participants!" summarized Ersä's Head of Global Sales, Rainer Krauss, at the end of the event.





Kurtz Ersä strengthens its presence in the growing Indian market

Sustainable tech solutions for electronics production take centre stage at Productronica India 2026 in Delhi

At the start of Productronica India 2026 in Greater Noida (Delhi metropolitan area), system supplier Ersä, together with its expanded team from Kurtz Ersä India, once again presented itself as a comprehensive technology supplier for the growing electronics production sector in India. The exhibits on display focused on high-performance solutions for the entire process chain: the HOTFLOW THREE reflow soldering system sets new standards for high-volume applications in terms of soldering quality, profitability and sustainable performance, whilst the HR 600 P rework system with scavenger function addresses high-precision repair processes for ultra-fine SMDs. The exhibition portfolio was rounded off by the intelligent Ersä soldering stations of the i-CON series – led by the IPC-CFX-certified IoT soldering station i-CON TRACE, which enables end-to-end traceability and MES integration. The scale of the trade fair – 1,000+ exhibitors and 60,000+ trade visitors from over 50 countries – reflects the dynamism of the In-



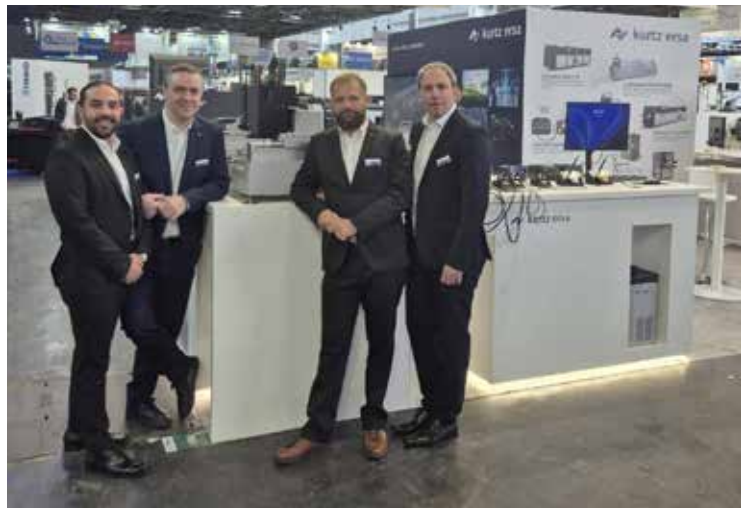
dian market: Driven by massive growth in electronics production in sectors such as AI, IT and EVs (electric vehicles or e-mobility), India is continuing to gain importance as an electronics hub – both within India and on a global scale. Previously held once a year, alternating between Bangalore and Delhi, there will therefore be two editions of Productronica India for the first time in 2026. “India is rapidly developing into a key market for global electronics production. For us, Productronica India is therefore an ideal platform to showcase innovations whilst further strengthening our ties with customers and partners,” explained Rainer Krauss, Ersä’s Head of Global Sales and Managing Director of Kurtz Ersä India.

With the joint appearance of its local and international teams, Kurtz Ersä underlined its strategic focus on the Indian market and sent a clear signal regarding the further expansion of its sales and technological presence on the Indian subcontinent.



Kurtz Ersä at Global Industrie 2026 in Paris

From March 30 to April 2, Kurtz Ersä presented pioneering solutions for networked electronics production at Global Industrie in Paris – France’s leading industrial trade fair with around 2,500 exhibitors. The highlight was the French premiere of the VERSAFLOW FIVE: This new premium system for selective soldering sets new standards with its automatic nozzle changer and marks an important step towards autonomous production. At the joint booth with partner Seica, Kurtz Ersä also showcased the HR 600 P rework system with automatic residual solder removal and the IPC-CFX-certified i-CON TRACE soldering station for complete traceability. Digital 3D models complemented the live exhibits. In short: numerous technical discussions, great interest in the Ersä innovations, and an all-around successful trade fair appearance!





From Electronics to the Semiconductor Industry

Kurtz Ersä with a Dual Presence in Shanghai

From March 25 to 27, Productronica China and Semi-con China took place concurrently in Shanghai – the perfect location to meet customers and partners from the electronics production and semiconductor industries. In addition to global trends, discussions focused on the pressure for mass production and the increasing demands for high-tech in Asia.

AI remains the clear driver of demand. Large technology companies continue to invest in expanding computing capacity. PCBs are becoming increasingly complex, especially in the area of large processors such as GPUs and CPUs, as well as in high-density designs that require stable temperature control and low-oxygen processing conditions.

The HOTFLOW THREE exhibit, with its superior heat transfer and very low ΔT , is ideally suited for precisely these applications. Ersä's rework systems also excel in the post-processing of large BGAs. With its first joint appearance in China, Kurtz Ersä demonstrated that it also covers key semiconductor requirements for power devices such as IGBTs and SiCs, MOSFETs, and advanced packaging technologies, and that it is ready for future challenges!





Nordlaks strengthens its supply chain with in-house fish box production and machinery from Kurtz Protective Solutions



Nordlaks, based in Stokmarknes, Norway – one of Norway's leading seafood suppliers – has taken its packaging supply to a new level: by establishing its own fish box production facility and utilising machinery from Kurtz Protective Solutions, the company is securing greater independence, consistent quality and a scalable foundation for further growth.

Images: Nordlaks



The situation: Packaging must not be a bottleneck

In the seafood industry, fish boxes are a critical factor. They must be hygienic, robust and standardised – and above all: available at all times. With rising volumes and high throughput in processing and dispatch, it became clear to Nordlaks that external dependencies and delivery times could become a risk. The aim was a solution that could be seamlessly integrated into the company's own production planning and also reliably cover peaks in demand.

The solution: Scalable in-house production with high-performance machinery

With the POLY FOAMER L E, which features an electric spindle drive without hydraulics, Nordlaks is establishing a production system geared towards high output, stable, clean processes and reproducible quality. Thanks to the VSD 1500 pre-expander, which serves as a key component for consistent material supply and process stability, this equipment lays the foundation for producing fish boxes in the required quantity and quality at the company's own pace – predictable and scalable.

The implementation: Kurtz Protective Solutions as a partner

It was not just a matter of supplying machines. Kurtz Protective Solutions was involved in the planning and execution of the new production facility right from the start. From layout planning through to the design of the infrastructure and support during the construction phase, Kurtz Protective Solutions was involved as a partner alongside the customer in this exciting project.

End-to-end automation: From the box to the salmon processing plant

A key factor in the project's success is the consistent automation of the entire production chain. The fish boxes are not only manufactured but are subsequently removed from the machine fully automatically. Quality check, printing of the boxes using an inkjet printer, and then transported via a fully automated logistics system was provided by partner companies of Kurtz Protective Solutions – right through to direct integration into the salmon processing plant's operations. This enables Nordlaks to reduce manual handovers, lower the risk of errors and shorten lead times. At the same time, the supply of boxes to the processing line is ensured reliably and with precise timing.

Result: Greater control, consistent quality, improved planning

With in-house production in Stokmarknes, Nordlaks gains significant control and flexibility: box capacities can be adjusted at short notice, response times to production peaks are reduced, and consistent quality improves handling, stacking stability and process reliability in downstream areas. The combination of scaled moulded part production and stable pre-foaming ensures efficient processes and supports robust operation in the demanding day-to-day seafood industry.

Conclusion: With the systems from Kurtz Protective Solutions, Nordlaks in Stokmarknes has turned packaging into a strategic competitive advantage: scalable, automated and optimally integrated – from pre-foaming to quality control of the fish boxes.

Pioneering: Making EPS Production More Sustainable with CoreLess Technology

Anyone looking to optimize their particle foam processing should use cost-effective systems. That is exactly what Hordijk has done – the Dutch company invested in a Kurtz POLY FOAMER with CoreLess technology, a system that is both high-performance and sustainable for efficient EPS processing.



CoreLess technology is used in Kurtz's PRO FOAMER and POLY FOAMER shape moulding machines. Pictured here: the world's largest machine equipped with CoreLess technology



The world's largest CoreLess molded part

The history of the Delft-based family business Royal Hordijk dates back more than 100 years. Initially, the company produced wooden materials, wooden crates, and building materials made of wood. Gradually, wood was replaced by aluminum and steel, and plastic began to be used for packaging. In 1969, Hordijk began processing EPS to manufacture packaging for cucumbers. Today, Hordijk is known far beyond the borders of the Netherlands as an EPS processor, producing packaging, insulation boards, building materials, technical parts, and planters.

Constantly seeking ways to make its products even more sustainable and efficient through appropriate manufacturing processes, Hordijk recently took another significant step forward with its EPS production: "We have invested in a new Kurtz POLY FOAMER equipped with CoreLess technology – one of the most energy-efficient and innovative shape moulding machines currently available on the market," reports Sander de Jager, Operations Manager at Hordijk EPS Verpakkingen en Isolatieproducten.

CoreLess – Simply Strong

This machine produces a foundation U-shell – an efficient construction product used to build a robust foundation for new residential homes and additions in the Netherlands.



The team (from left to right): Doroteo Olmedo, Sebastian Schreck, Sander de Jager, Thomas van Zeijl

When processing particle foam, the focus is on the highest and most consistent quality, the fastest possible cycle time, and maximum energy savings. This is precisely where CoreLess technology comes into play, with consistent mass reduction, the smallest possible steam chamber volume, and thermal decoupling of the individual cavities.

From Product Development to Production System Development

For this U-shell project, the three project partners – Hordijk, Kurtz Ersä, and Doroteo Olmedo S.L. – joined forces. The goal was to create the largest CoreLess machine currently available, equipped with the world's largest energy-efficient CoreLess mold – and insights gained directly from the construction site were incorporated into the development of the new product line of EPS foundation U-shells.

By investing in this new technology, Hordijk made a conscious decision to prioritize sustainable solutions. "Thanks to CoreLess technology, consumption of steam, compressed air, and energy can be significantly reduced, while at the same time production capacity increases and the carbon footprint is reduced," says Hordijk Operations Manager Sander de Jager. In doing so, Hordijk reaffirms its strategic focus as a pioneer in sustainability and energy efficiency.

This also includes providing robust, sustainable solutions for the construction and industrial sectors and working closely with customers and suppliers to continuously improve and further develop its products. Compared to similar systems, Hordijk has been able to reduce its energy consumption by more than half with CoreLess technology – and cycle times have also dropped by over 50 %!

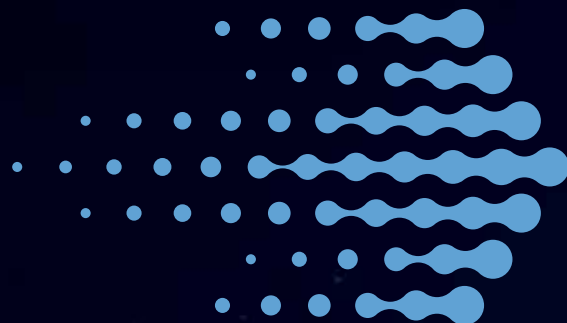
Sebastian Schreck, Area Sales Manager at Kurtz Protective Solutions, reflecting on the successful project: "Our customers are looking for and need sustainable process solutions, especially in terms of energy savings and cycle times, but at the same time they also require the highest degree of flexibility. Machines equipped with CoreLess technology can be converted to a system with a standard steam chamber if necessary, should the application or the machine's area of use change. These requirements were successfully coordinated and implemented in this project."



Side view of the POLY FOAMER XL CoreLess production machine

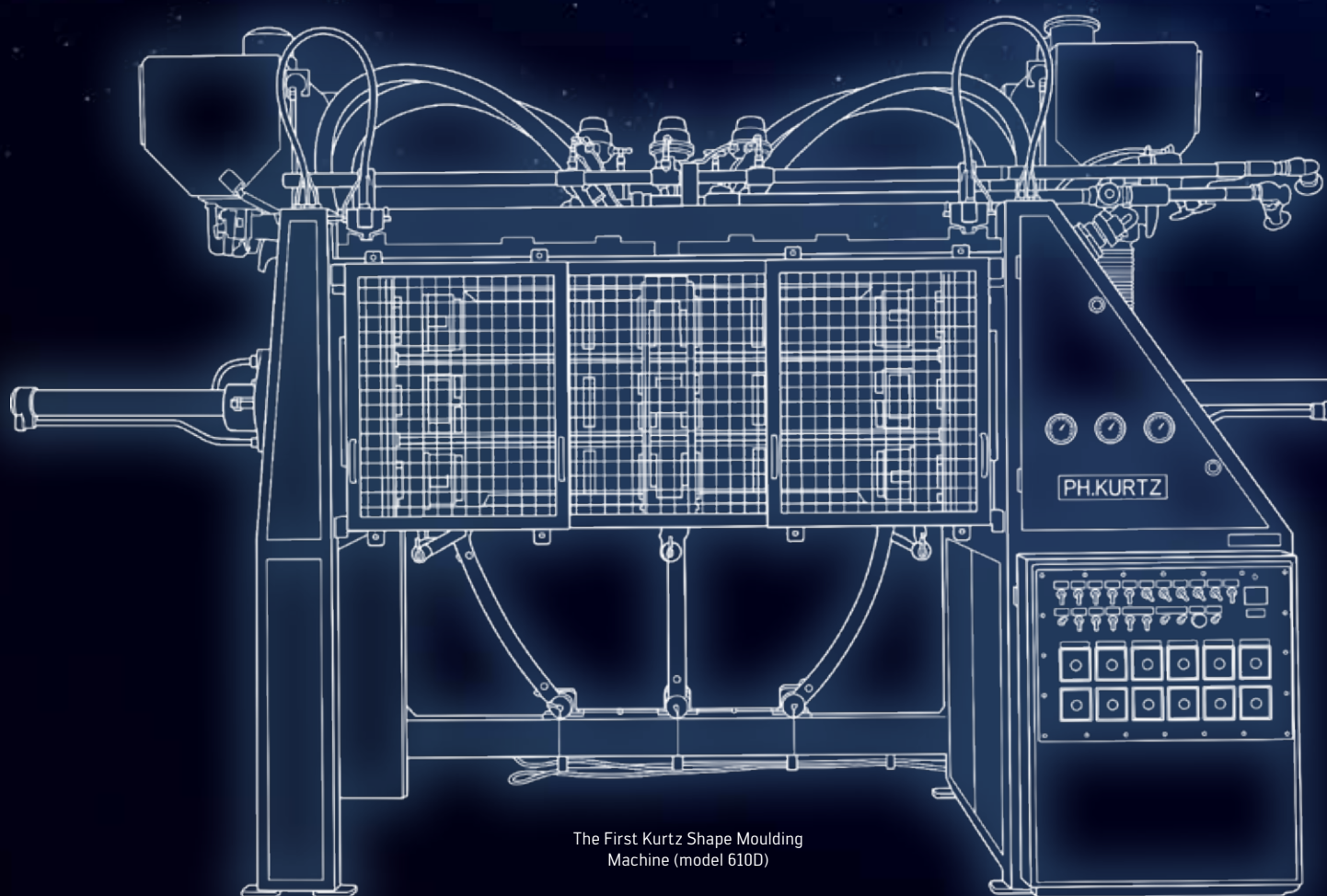


The U-shaped formwork element in use during the pouring of a foundation



FOAM FORWARD

since 55 years



The First Kurtz Shape Moulding
Machine (model 610D)

55 YEARS OF PROTECTIVE SOLUTIONS

A REASON TO CELEBRATE!

The Protective Solutions division has now been around for 55 years – it's hard to believe how quickly time has flown! It all began in 1970 with the search for a proprietary product. Responding to an ad, Otto Kurtz, then Managing Partner, met with Johann Friedrich Jegelka, who had the idea to develop an EPS shape moulding machine ...

Despite initial skepticism on the part of raw material manufacturers and processors, the team believed in the project's success and began developing the first machine – a 610D, which was built and launched in 1971. It featured a fixed steam chamber in the center and two movable chambers to the right and left of it, an absolute innovation at the time. This allowed for double the productivity on the same foaming area. The customer for the first system was the Buddenberg company in Bad Driburg, which remains a valued customer of ours to this day.

7,500

**Shape Moulding Machines
since the start of production**

From the very beginning, the ability to adapt to existing mold systems on the market was absolutely essential and the key to our success. With internationalization – led by Walter Kurtz through the establishment of the first branches in the U.S. and the Far East – we achieved a breakthrough. Since then, over 7,500 shape moulding machines have been built. Over time, we have carried out a great deal of pioneering work, such as the use of upward-extraction systems, the development of LTH technology, ROTO FOAMER and PANEL FOAMER, the launch of machine manufacturing in Zhuhai (2004), and the construction of

what was, at least at the time, the world's largest shape moulding machine – a K3220 with a 6.4 m² foaming area, capable of simultaneously producing twelve 3-meter-long insulation panels in various thicknesses.

Today, we are the leading manufacturer of shape moulding machines, which are produced at three locations – in Germany, the U.S., and China. Just in time for our anniversary, which will be celebrated in style this fall, we are introducing the POLY FOAMER NX3 – a redesigned, consistently advanced generation of machines. We have retained proven features, such as the ability to accommodate different formats on the same platform using an interchangeable front chamber. In addition, new features have been incorporated to allow the machine to be optionally equipped with configurations that previously required custom-built machines. The standard opening stroke has been increased by 100 mm, which benefits automated tool change and enables the production of deeper components.

POLY FOAMER NX3

available starting in Fall 2026

The first machine in this new series – the L-size model with maximum mold dimensions of 1,400 mm x 1,800 mm – will be available starting in October 2026. Next, at short intervals, come the PRO FOAMER L systems in the 5-bar version and the POLY FOAMER in size M. A key goal of our development was to create a machine with greater functionality while reducing the number of variants. The cost for the same equipment remains the same as for the current model.

We look forward to personally introducing the next-generation NX3 and, at the same time, our anniversary machine, and we are very excited to see our customers' reactions. GOOD LUCK!



Kurtz ROTO FOAMER – specialist in high-end EPP/ EPS processing (insert molding), used e.g. in the automotive industry

Semi- automatic Tool Change

Our goal: Instead of reacting to each situation as it arises, we will in the future follow a clear sequence – step by step, reproducible, and with consistent quality. Behind this approach is our Protective Solutions division, which turns experience into standards. Or, as one user puts it: “In the past, every change was different. Today, we start the sequence, follow the steps – and the quality remains consistent.”

The pressure on production is mounting – and with it, complexity. When orders are reprioritized every hour, it's not just the production rhythm that falters, but above all the stability of the processes. Unplanned setup times create gaps in the schedule; downtime costs output and frays nerves. Instead of simply accepting this dynamic, we work together to develop practical solutions: standardized, guided processes that make setup operations predictable, create transparency, and tangibly safeguard productivity. This transforms constant uncertainty into an orderly workflow – with processes that function reliably even under time pressure.

To ensure this reliability in day-to-day operations, we carry out the tool change as a clearly guided sequence – traceable, safe, and without detours. First, the fully prepared tool is placed on the tool-change cart. After opening the machine, it can be inserted either from the operator side or from the front. The cart is then aligned at the designated position and secured with the locking pin to ensure it remains centered.

The crane then takes over: The hook automatically grips the tool and lifts it along the guide into the steam chamber. There, it is locked in place and securely fastened on the side of the fixed press frame MI using pneumatic locks. The change cart can now be removed, and the crane hook opens to release the tool.

In the next step, the machine closes, and the tool is additionally locked on the side of the movable press frame MII. The locking mechanism of the mounting frames then opens. Finally, the clamping jaws of the filling plate are tightened, the media connections are established – in particular the connections for the filler and air distributor – and the tool change is complete.

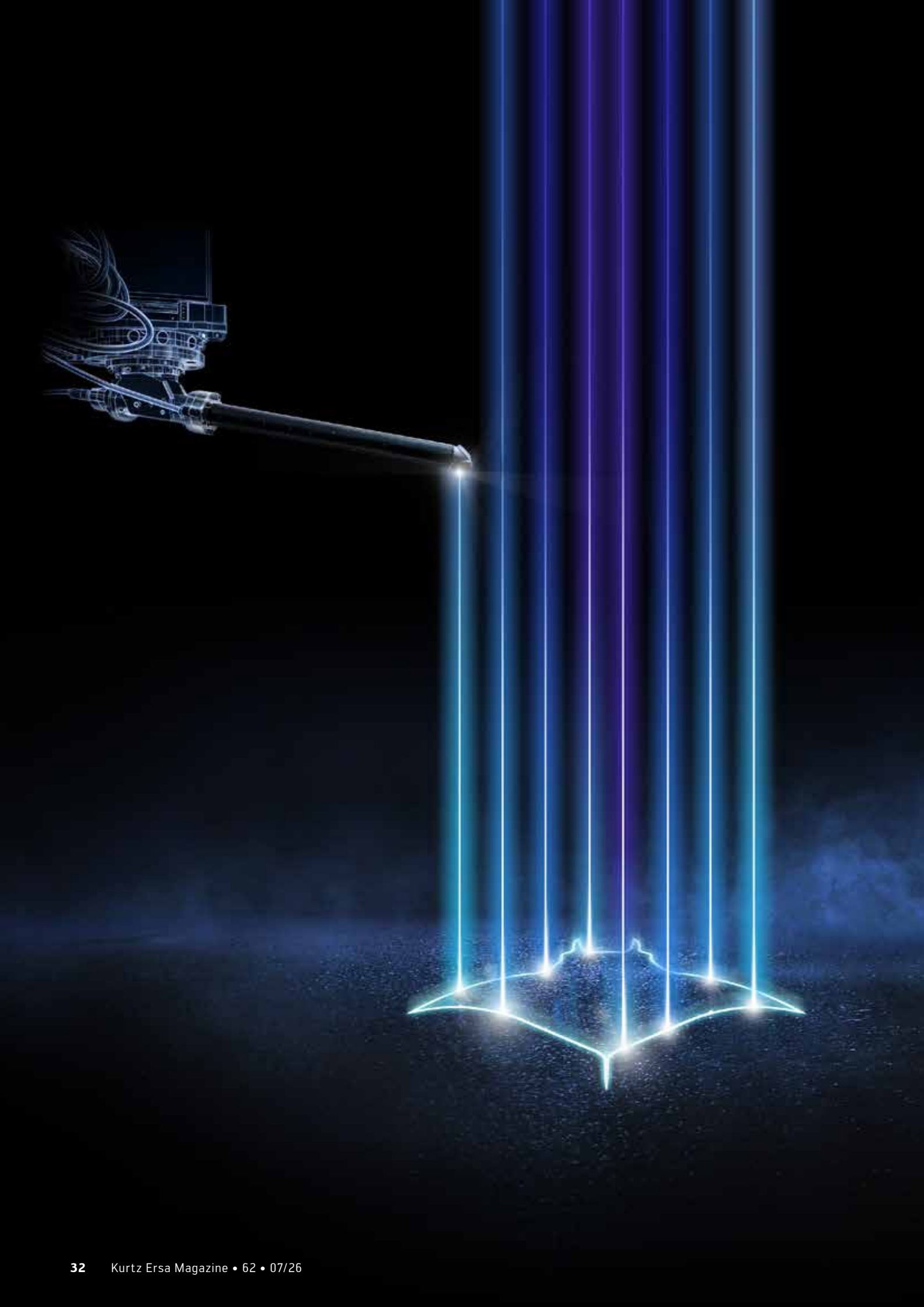
Before vs. After – Overview

Aspect	Conventional (manual)	Semi-automatic
 Downtime	High – many manual steps during the stop	Reduced – more parallel processing time, automated sequences
 Staffing requirements	2 people or more	1 person is sufficient
 Reproducibility	Depends on the operator	Process-controlled and repeatable
 Safety	Ladder/crane work, risk of crushing	No more work at heights, reduced exposure to hazards
 Qualification requirements	High	Significantly reduced
 Predictability	Variable	Standardized, more predictable

In conclusion, it can be said that semi-automatic tool change demonstrates its strengths wherever cycle time, safety, and reliability are key. It is particularly well-suited for manufacturers with frequent tool changes and a clear focus on OEE, for plants with limited availability of skilled workers, and for companies with strict EHS guidelines and audit requirements. Series manufacturers who prioritize predictability and repeatability thus lay the foundation for consistent quality – shift after shift.

Available for: PRO and POLY FOAMER models in sizes M and L with the Fast/Blocked System.





Advanced Additive Manufacturing: New PBF-LB/M Solution for Industrial Use

When innovation in mechanical engineering meets Additive Manufacturing, the result is more than just a new product – it sets a new standard. This is exactly what our colleagues in the Additive Manufacturing division are currently working on at full speed: a new system for metal 3D printing using the PBF-LB/M process.*

*PBF-LB/M, short for Powder Bed Fusion – Laser Beam/Metal.

We can't reveal everything just yet. That's part of a launch with substance. What we can say today is that this fall is going to be exciting. With the planned market launch, we're expanding the Kurtz Erska portfolio with a solution that's been consistently designed with real-world applications in mind – for industrial use, reproducible quality, and results that deliver in everyday operations. The Flying Ray S is the first building block of our AM portfolio and the foundation for a scalable, customer-specific solution.

Metal 3D Printing: PBF-LB/M

What is PBF-LB/M? Powder Bed Fusion (PBF-LB/M) is a powder-bed-based additive manufacturing process that is already widely established in industry. In "Powder Bed Fusion – Laser Beam/Metal," a component is created layer by layer directly from metal powder. A thin layer of powder is applied to a build platform, after which a laser beam precisely melts the required areas according to the design data from the 3D file. This process repeats layer by layer until the component is fully built up. This allows for the realization of complex geometries – such as internal channels, functionally

integrated structures, or bionically optimized lightweight designs. The process has established itself in many industries, ranging from prototyping to small-batch and spare-part production. Demands are increasing: for build volume, process stability, automation, material diversity – and, above all, for integration into existing production environments. This is exactly where our solution comes in. Our Flying Ray S does not use a new process, but it gets the most out of PBF-LB/M thanks to our unique pivot arm technology.

Consistent deposition ratios: In the powder bed, the details matter

For industrial applications, consistent process stability and reproducible quality are particularly crucial. At Kurtz Erska, the laser is guided over the powder bed via a pivot arm with constant irradiation ratios, creating uniform conditions for energy input and component quality – not just at specific points, but across the entire build area. Our approach is typical of mechanical engineering: We look not only at the printing process, but at the entire system. From well-thought-out usability and robust,

maintenance-friendly design to aspects such as process monitoring, data availability, and efficient workflows. In short: We start where others stop – with the details that ultimately determine availability, quality, and unit costs.

AM Fall at Kurtz Erska

What does this mean in concrete terms? This fall, you can look forward to insights that reveal the direction of our thinking: industrial scalability – moving away from systems where quality must first be ensured through extensive testing, documentation, and qualification efforts, and toward a platform where processes can be developed, transferred, and later scaled. The most important date has already been set: In November, we'll be presenting our new PBF-LB/M printer for the first time at the Formnext trade show in Frankfurt am Main. There, we'll showcase the system and, above all, discuss the requirements that guided us during development – as well as how metal 3D printing can be integrated into existing manufacturing strategies. [*Mark your calendars for November now – and visit Kurtz Erska at the trade show from November 17–20, 2026, in Hall 12.0, Booth C31!*](#)

KURTZ EVENTS / TRADE SHOWS

Kurtz Protective Solutions kicked off the new year with two events held in quick succession. A customer seminar in Brazil, where market-relevant technology was presented and business partners rounded out the program with expert presentations, marked the start of 2026. This was followed by participation in Chinaplas, Asia's largest trade fair for the plastics industry.

Customer seminar in São Paulo

with an engaging program and many attendees



60 participants attended the Kurtz Protective Solutions seminar in São Paulo

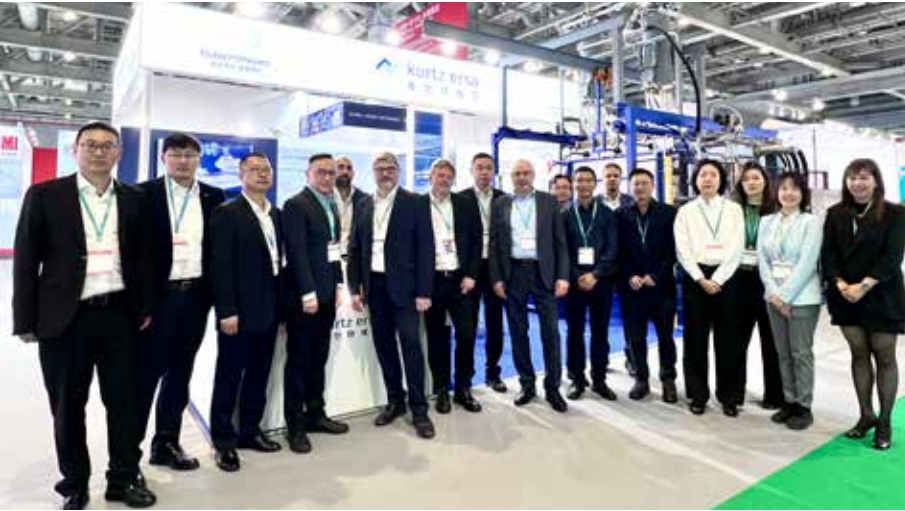


» The EU-Mercosur Agreement, which provisionally entered into force on May 1, is just one of many reasons why we decided to provide even closer on-site support to our customers in South America with our own staff. Until now, sales representatives have been working on our behalf, and we thank them for their efforts. Our American subsidiary, Kurtz Ersä, Inc., now covers the entire American continent for sales and service.

Brazil is the largest market in South America – so it made sense to host a seminar there, to which customers from Central and South America were invited. On February 24 and 25, over 60 guests came to São Paulo to learn about our portfolio, the foaming process, applications, and ways to avoid waste in production. Many thanks also to our industry partners, who rounded out our program with updates on raw materials, block systems, and mold technology, contributing to the event's success. Of course, there was also plenty of time for networking.



Engaging discussions with industry experts at the Brazil seminar



Kurtz Erska, with almost 250 years of industry heritage, is presenting at CHINAPLAS 2026 which is a major global event for the plastics industry

Chinaplas in Shanghai

with a booth in the German Pavilion

» The trade show in Shanghai lasted just four days (April 21–24) and had already surpassed the total number of visitors for the entire K 2025 by the second day. Colleagues from China, the United States, and Germany were present at the booth. On display was the QUICK FOAMER L, a machine with automatic tool change produced at our plant in Zhuhai. This system is specifically tailored to the needs of modern Asian industrial facilities. Tool changes are performed from the rear in a locked configuration and are nearly fully automatic. The machine is built very low to accommodate the two-story construction commonly found in Asia, where the produced molded parts slide through the hall floor to a lower level. There, they are sorted manually on tables and conveyed further. In addition to visitors from the Asian economic region, customers from Central and South America, Oceania, and Eastern Europe were also well represented. We are now busy following up on the numerous trade show leads!



Andrea Carta, General Manager & CEO Moulding Machines, being interviewed at Chinaplas



From Lab Solutions to High-Volume Production

Micro Assembly

The modular machine concept from Kurtz Ersa Smart Production bridges the gap between standard machines and custom machine engineering. The flexibly scalable platform architecture enables high-precision micro assembly systems that can be tailored exactly to customer needs.

A Modular Toolkit for Automation

The technological foundation is a comprehensive process operating system with decentrally networked control modules. The basis of all systems consists of various standardized base machines featuring robust machine frames, high-precision axis systems, and master PC controls. The individually customizable manufacturing processes are flexibly implemented via more than 100 different process modules. Thanks to uniform interfaces, they can be easily integrated into all machine types via plug-and-play. This reduces development costs as well as delivery times and ensures maximum future viability and sustainability of the customer's production technology.

Cutting-Edge Technologies on a Single Platform

The modular machine platform combines a wide variety of key technologies from the modern micro assembly world in a single system. In addition to the precise handling of three-dimensional components, the system masters the high-precision dispensing of adhesives and pastes as well as complex methods for thermal joining and laser soldering. A technological highlight is the in-house developments in the field of active alignment for optical applications. During the assembly of camera or laser modules, this solution enables the active alignment of optical components in six degrees of freedom in the nanometer range. The fully integrated automated optical inspection (AOI) monitors and documents all steps directly within the running process. Coupled with integrated traceability, all process data, component parameters, and test results are recorded. In total, more than 40 freely combinable core processes and technologies are available on the platform.

Efficient Fixture Construction and Scaling

A central economic advantage of this platform philosophy is the complete integration and scalability of a wide variety of processes. The OurPlant Smart Tools already showcase their strengths during product development and fixture construction for high-precision micro processes. Internally developed processes and new products are initially validated on the compact desktop solution. During subsequent scaling, the determined process parameters and utilized modules can be transferred one-to-one to the larger, fully automated production systems. This reduces the technological risk during production ramp-up in high-volume series, and the customer benefits from a significantly shortened time-to-market phase.

in Excellence

Unified Control Ensures Future Viability

Kurtz Ersa Smart Production consistently relies on standardized interfaces and maximum flexibility. As a result, users can also implement highly specific or internally developed processing heads or fixtures. The straightforward system integration into existing production lines saves valuable development time. Since all machine types – from laboratory to series production systems – run on the same intuitive process operating system, OurPlant OS, the training effort for operating personnel is significantly reduced. Existing processes can be adopted directly without any programming effort. This paves the way for seamless scalability of manufacturing capacities.

More Than Just Well-Established

With more than 30 years of use in micro-assembly, the exceptional design of this platform has long been well-established. Renowned customers from the worlds of sensor technology, medical technology, laser technology, optics, semiconductors, and the automotive supply industry use these systems for their most demanding fields of application. The numerous installed systems have proven themselves in 24/7 manufacturing environments just as they have in applications with quality requirements exceeding Six Sigma*. The question of whether such a decentralized control architecture, far removed from conventional PLC controls, is suitable for industrial use has thus long been answered impressively. Instead, this new smart machine engineering world holds significant growth opportunities for Kurtz Ersa and its customers.

*Learn more
about the modular
micro-assembly system:*



*Six Sigma is a management system for process improvement, a statistical quality objective, and a quality management method. Its core element is the description, measurement, analysis, improvement, and monitoring of business processes using statistical methods. It is a method with a comprehensive set of tools for the systematic improvement or redesign of processes. In process improvement projects, the project structure plan follows the Define – Measure – Analyze – Improve – Control (DMAIC) approach; source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Six_Sigma





Strong Kurtz Ersä Running Team at the Start of the WÜ2RUN 2026

The weather forecast for the WÜ2RUN 2026 on June 11 was rather mixed – but the weather gods were kind to the athletes who had registered for the 20th-anniversary corporate run in Würzburg: It remained dry throughout the entire race and during the after-party as well. This allowed the more than 600 runners to tackle the 7.4 km course under ideal running conditions; the starting gun for the main field went off right on time at 7:30 pm. The route started at the TG Würzburg stadium, followed the banks of the Main River, continued toward the Old Town with the Vierröhrenbrunnen fountain, crossed the Alte Mainbrücke bridge, and returned to the finish line on the other side of the Main. The entire route was lined with fans, families, and friends cheering on all the runners – a wonderfully peaceful sporting event, just as one could hope for. A diverse group of 33 runners from Kurtz Ersä took to the starting line – everyone was there, from Works Council member Dirk Beyersdorf to Global Board member Andrea Carta. Our colleague Christina Schmitt delivered an outstanding athletic performance, finishing in 32:56 minutes – the fastest time among our group and the fastest woman to cross the finish line. Congratulations to all the runners, and a heartfelt thank you to the organizing team led by Franziska Pfannes, who did everything possible to ensure we could focus entirely on the race!



**POWERED BY
YOUR IMPACT.**



We have the Hammerwein!

On May 21, 2026, the Kurtz Ersa Hammerwein selection took place for the twelfth time – an event that has long been firmly established and once again brought together numerous representatives from business, politics, and the public. Forty-six invited guests enjoyed a delightful evening at the historic manor house on the Eisenhammer.

Following a welcome address by Advisory Board Chairman Rainer Kurtz, Burkhard Hensch, cellar master at the Hensch Winery in Bürgstadt, opened the evening with an expert presentation on “Opportunities and Challenges in Sustainable Viticulture” and provided fascinating insights into current developments in the wine industry.

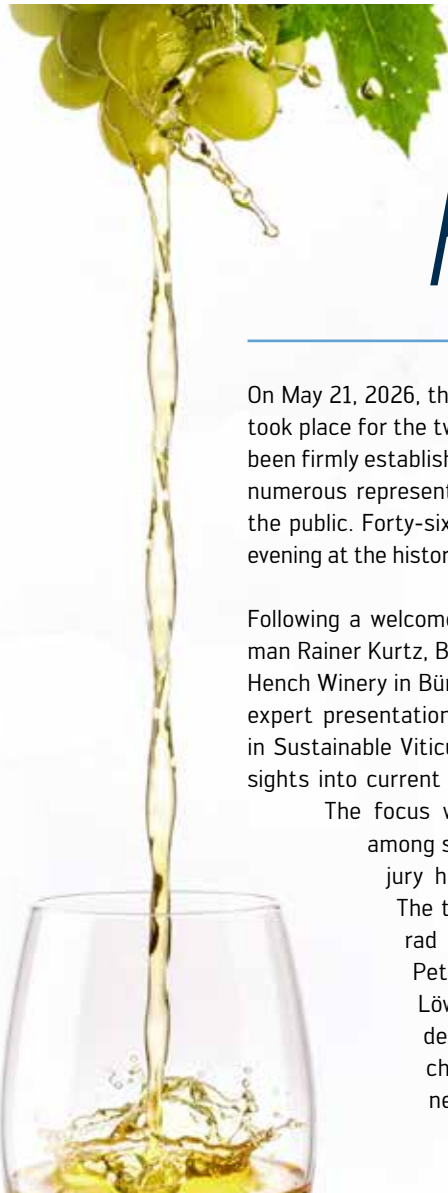
The focus was on selecting the winner from among six nominated wines that an internal jury had shortlisted for the final round.

The tasting was expertly guided by Konrad Michel (Burgkellerei Wertheim) and Peter Arnold, cellar master at the Fürst Löwenstein Winery. The experts guided the guests through the distinctive characteristics of the nominated wines with great expertise.

A six-course menu paired with the wines rounded out the culinary experience. After an intensive tasting, Rainer Kurtz ceremoniously announced the winner at 10:30 pm: the 2025 Pinot Noir, white-pressed, from Weingut Hensch. The family-run winery in Bürgstadt has been EU-certified organic since 2013 and practices biodynamic viticulture. The oldest part of the winery, located in the center of Bürgstadt, dates back to 1563. The award-winning Hammerwein traditionally accompanies Kurtz Ersa throughout the year and is served at trade shows, internal events, and technology days.

The nominated wines in 2026:

- 2024 Würzburg Riesling
- 2024 Homburger Kallmuth Silvaner Erste Lage, dry
- 2024 CF Sauvignon Blanc, dry
- 2025 Silvaner Estate Wine
- 2024 Würzburg Stein Silvaner Erste Lage, Franconian Quality Wine
- 2025 Pinot Noir, white-pressed



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Technology fan?

In the HAMMERMUSEUM the history of Kurtz Ersa comes alive – experience the enthusiasm for technology with which we are also successfully on the move in the 21st century. Please refer to our website for current opening hours.



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