

Kobra Formen GmbH, 08485 Lengsfeld, Germany

Trend towards individuality and exclusivity in modern mold construction

Kobra Formen GmbH has been manufacturing and distributing high quality molds for the concrete stone industry for 18 years. The construction of a mold is always a very customer and product-specific business. Concrete stone moulds are not standard products and are predominantly manufactured as made-to-order items, despite a high degree of automation in the manufacturing process. Even in these economically difficult times, Kobra is receiving increasing inquiries for complex special molds and demanding new stone developments. This trend towards individuality and exclusivity is considered by the quality supplier to be both an opportunity and a vindication of its strategy.

Serving a multifaceted market requires in all cases a high degree of attention to the customer's needs and internal best practices, as well as product experience. The essential cornerstones of the mold constructor's philosophy are approachability and a high speed of reaction together with a pronounced standard of quality throughout the company. This maxim has been followed with great care by every single Kobra employee ever since the company was founded.

The international sales organization forms a strong link with customers. Trust and experience are of considerable importance in the industry. With the aid of prototypes made of polyurethane or demonstrative 3D printed models, the sales employee uses a successful balance between digital product development and customer-friendly presentation – sophisticated new developments and laying systems become tangible.

At Kobra, all orders are clarified by using three-dimensional stone and layout drawings. Even in the early phase of an inquiry or proposal, the company's customers are able to examine precise drawings with illustrated examples of product application. This allows the customer to adapt the product to individual needs in order to save time. The company has specialized in recent years in the derivation and transfer of natural stone shapes and surfaces to concrete products and is one of the leading companies in the industry in this field.

Kobra currently has a digital archive containing 20,000 stone drawings, 14,000 board layouts and 2,500 laying patterns and guarantees its customers adequate product protection. Digital stone models are the starting point for a continuous dimensional tolerance chain between the stone design, construction and production phases. In conjunction with the expansion and further development of proprietary hardening methods, this process enables a significantly higher quality to be achieved than that of conventional annealed steel molds.

Thanks to 'Optimill Carbo', Kobra is able to achieve milling radii as small as 1.2 mm and milling accuracies of +/- 0.3 mm with a stable surface hardness of up to 62 HRC. Kobra's technical equipment and personnel, as well as intensive cooperation with machine manufacturers, enable it to manufacture molds for every stone and every concrete products machine. Kobra continues to innovate in the development of new products and product lines. An important development area is the specific use of alternative wear-resistant materials for improving the wear characteristics of its molds.

The applications for machine-manufactured concrete stones can vary enormously. For example, concrete weights for installation in washing machines are currently being developed for a customer, requiring a mold construction with a support sheet for profiled stone undersides and heated pressure plates. According to the mold con-



Multifaceted application possibilities for concrete stone molds – 527-part mold for mini-briquette stones for the processing of aggregates in industries outside the concrete industry

structor, inquiries for special product solutions are increasing in frequency. In implementation, no distinction is made between normal stone formats and unusual or unique product applications – each order passes along the same routes in the company and is accorded the same quality processes through to the delivery of the finished mold.

The research and development of innovative technology as well as procedural know-how has been successfully established in mold construction, enabling outstanding, reproducible stone qualities to be achieved. Kobra is able to equally serve customers who require molds for standard formats and for niche products. Concrete manufacturers benefit from the high quality standard of completely milled, hardened concrete product molds and value the company's fast and competent service. Alongside several service and repair centers, the customer support department has a worldwide team of service technicians who can be dispatched at short notice for fast problem solving on site. A customer-oriented way of working is always the top priority for Kobra. The company will continue in the future to focus on values such as innovation, quality and service in order to serve concrete manufacturers with application-oriented, economical tools. ■

FURTHER INFORMATION



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