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Isodal: success story of a small family firm

Isodal, founded in 1997, began producing precast concrete elements as an experiment with the simplest of equipment and a high degree of physical labour. Today the small family firm from Wichelen in Belgium is a modern precast concrete element manufacturer, which supplies the local market just-in-time with high-quality lattice girder floors. Two companies in the Progress Group assisted in this transition from manufacturing to producing, which implements the Industry 4.0 concept: Ebawe Anlagentechnik and Progress Maschinen & Automation.

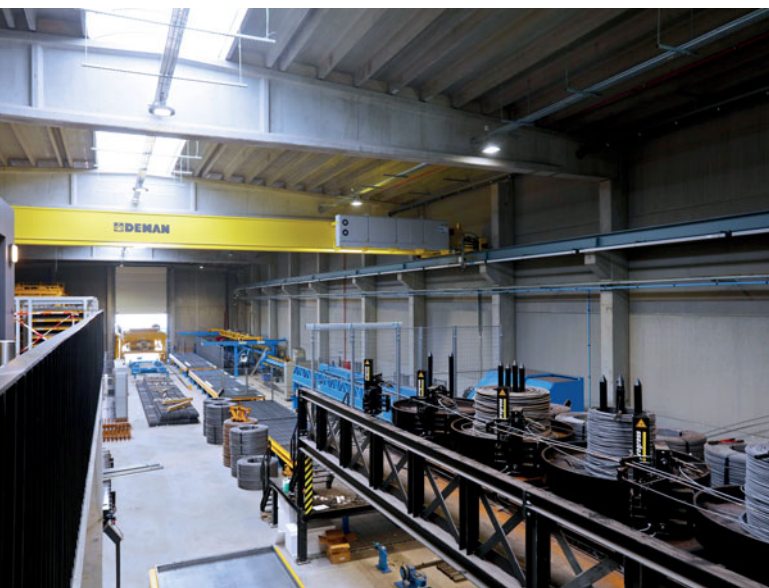
"In the early years we carried out all the individual operations manually on fixed production tables," recalls Tyron Van Hee, the owner of the firm. "We did not even have a batching plant." When the younger generation took over 11 years ago, however, Isodal invested in such a plant and at the same time installed a straightening and cutting machine of the MSR type from Progress Maschinen & Automation "Even this plant was second-hand, but we were very satisfied with it from the start. This good experience laid the foundation stone for our later cooperation with the Progress Group," explains Van Hee.

Need to change the production methods

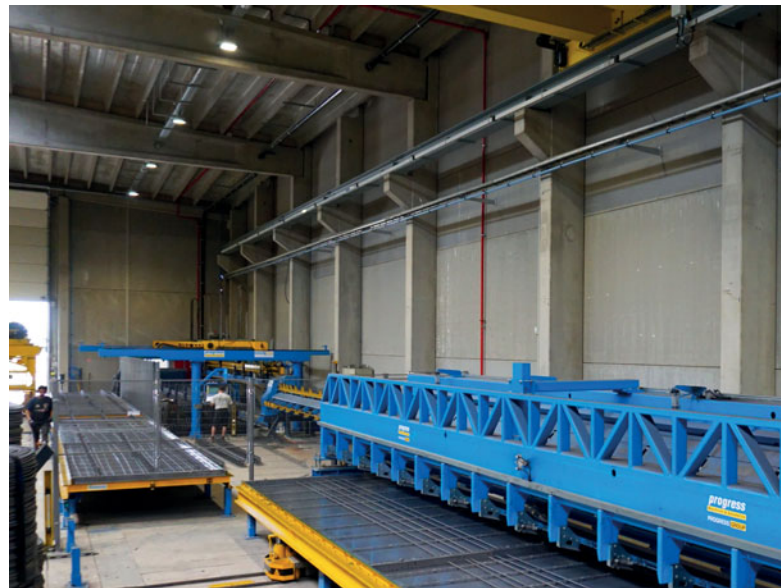
Eventually, Isodal decided to change the production process and to invest in a carrousel plant. "I did not take the decision lightly, for ultimately we are only a very small company," adds Tyron Van Hee. "But we had no other option - we wanted to remain small, but had to increase our output and improve our quality, in order not to lose our connections."

Investment in a carrousel system with specific automation

The concept for the carrousel plant, developed by Ebawe Anlagentechnik, envisaged a system comprising 30 pallets, a plotter, automatic manufacture of made to measure mesh, a concrete spreader, a pallet stacker, a stacking shelf, a transport cart and the ebos® control system. Van Hee explains, "It was very important that we should have, as far as we could afford, the maximum of individual operations running automatically. For example, we wanted to insert the made to measure mesh automatically. Consequently, Progress Maschinen & Au-



The carrousel system was installed in the smallest possible space and has automated significant individual operations.



The pallet itself moves transversely below the run-off of the recently installed MSR straightening and cutting machine, in order to incorporate the longitudinal bars in their correct position.



Positive customer feedback has already been received: thanks to the new plant, Isodal is now producing lattice girder floors with accurate dimensions and a perfectly smooth surface.



Satisfied with the result: Tyron Van Hee (Owner, 2nd from right) and his team, together with Chris Kricke (Ebawe chief installation technician, 1st from left).

tomation proposed a solution, in which the pallet itself moves transversely below the run-off of the recently installed MSR straightening and cutting machine, in order to incorporate the longitudinal bars in their correct position. "Just automating this step alone has made our work considerably easier," comments Van Hee.

The automatic plotter and the concrete spreader speed up the process even more. Furthermore the ebos® software solution, which has been installed, guides all the aspects of the production process and assists Isodal in planning, managing and further improving production.

Plenty of orders thanks to high-quality products

With a capacity of 700 m² per shift, the firm primarily supplies relatively small residential construction projects. According to Tyron Van Hee the large number of orders received and the positive feedback from the customers are proof that the investment was the right step to take. "We now not only produce 40% more with fewer staff, but we have also seen the quality improve. Our lattice girder floors now have accurate dimensions and a perfectly smooth surface," states the satisfied owner. ■

FURTHER INFORMATION



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