PRESS RELEASE

Corporate News/ Metal Forming/ Metal Processing/ Automotive/ Suppliers

An alliance for lightweight construction

Automotive supplier Bilstein & Siekermann and forming specialist HEATform join forces

The strategic cooperation between Bilstein & Siekermann GmbH + Co KG (Germany) and HEATform GmbH (Germany) promises completely new possibilities in the design and manufacture of structural parts for the automotive industry. HEATform's innovative forming technology for hollow bodies allows high degrees of forming and complex shapes of high-strength alloys in aluminum and steel. This opens up new design opportunities in terms of design, function, geometry and thus also for the weight of structural components. In combination with Bilstein & Siekermann's know-how and state-of-the-art production methods, this enables new approaches for the economical production of lightweight and rigid structural components in automotive engineering. It also opens up new possibilities in the development and production of electric cars.

Hillesheim/Wiesbaden, September 2018 - A high-tech industry such as the automotive industry demands innovative production methods using materials to master the challenges of the markets. Product development and production accept fewer and fewer limits that are set by processing techniques. More than ever, companies are in demand, that push the boundaries of what is possible.

The innovative HEATforming process has already established itself in the field of metal processing. This allows the forming of hollow bodies with gas internal pressure (HMGF - Hot Metal Gas Forming) and thus the production of components with hither to unknown degrees of freedom with regard to design and functionality. Even complex shapes with axial or radial undercuts - up to a three-dimensional shape and small radiuses - are possible. This significantly expands the existing possibilities of hydroforming and superplastic forming (SPF). This applies in

particular to high-strength alloys for which previously only low degrees of deformation with large radii were possible – such as AL6082, AL7xxx, ferritic stainless steels or 22MnB5.
Additional mechanical processing methods as well as heat treatment and surface refinement lead to ready-to-install products or complete assemblies, which can now be offered from a single source.

New-found freedom for the automotive industry

With their cooperation, the companies Bilstein & Siekermann and HEATform herald a new era in automotive engineering that offers new approaches to making vehicles even lighter. Particularly in the development and production of electric cars, further possibilities are now opening up to reduce weight and thus increase range.
"Bilstein & Siekermann's know-how in volume production as a certified automotive supplier and HEATform's knowledge in the field of hot forming of hollow bodies complement each other very well. It will enable the HEATform process to become even more widespread and thus compete with established production technologies. Together we make an important contribution to making vehicles lighter and better," explains HEATform Managing Director Karl Kipry. "Our experience in the development of automated manufacturing processes and our goal of offering the market new innovative technologies motivates us to invest in the HEATform process both in Europe and Asia", adds Bruno Hirtz, Managing Director of Bilstein & Siekermann. The collaboration between the companies started on January 1, 2018.

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About HEATform:

HEATform GmbH was founded in 2004 in Wiesbaden to market the developed and patented HEATforming process for industrial applications. HEATform is the pioneer in the industrial production of hot forming of hollow bodies (also known as Hot Metal Gas Forming - HMGF). With this technology, metallic hollow bodies, tubes and profiles can be formed by means of internal low pressure up to a forming ratio of over 200 percent and a cycle time of 20-40 seconds. Since 2008, the process has been used for the production of various products in various industries, primarily among automobile manufacturers and their suppliers. In the meantime, various licensing partners and customers around the world are adapting the process for their forming products.

About Bilstein & Siekermann:

Bilstein & Siekermann GmbH + Co KG (BSH) from Hillesheim in Germany was founded in 1956 and manufactures complex metal formed parts, including various screws, bolts and sleeves. These cold extruded and turned parts are used in the automotive industry, but also in mechanical and plant engineering. BSH generates annual sales of around 24 million euros. In 2015, the Chinese subsidiary Bilstein & Siekermann Cold Forming (Taicang) Co. Ltd. was founded, which produces locally for the Asian market. Since 2003, the company has been a shareholding of SDax-listed INDUS Holding AG based in Bergisch Gladbach.

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