

Wasa AG, 64293 Darmstadt, Germany

# Expansion of the plant equipment to reduce delivery times

**Solid plastic production boards have been manufactured at the production location in Neubrunn for 27 years now. Altogether, around 19,000 production boards made of wood, plastic and wood/plastic composite leave the plant in southern Thuringia every month. It is above all the capacities of the machines used to manufacture the Wasa Uniplast® Ultra solid plastic board that have now hit their limits, for which reason Wasa has decided to extend its plant equipment.**

"As pleasing as such a high workload is, delivery times of 11 to 12 months meet with little understanding on the part of our customers. And rightly so." Matthias Bechtold, chairman of Wasa AG, which is based in Darmstadt and is responsible for sales, summarises with this statement the reasons for the decision to increase the existing production capacities for the Wasa Uniplast Ultra solid plastic board by the late summer of 2018. Until now three machines have been used to manufacture the glass fibres reinforced solid plastic board. "They are running 24 hours a day, seven days a week. They were never switched off at all in 2017 – production continued around the

clock even over Easter and Christmas. There is no other way that we could or can cope with the current very good order situation", says Matthias Bechtold.

The costs for the investment in the latest equipment will run to about 1.5 million euros. "Through the planned work we will achieve an increase in capacity of around 30 percent", says Dr Arno Schimpf, who is responsible as technical managing director at the production plant in Thuringia for the production board and wetcast mould lines. "Apart from procuring 15 new moulds for the manufacture of the production boards, our order list also includes a completely new extruder unit with special screw geometry for the homogenisation of the thermoplastics employed", Schimpf continues.

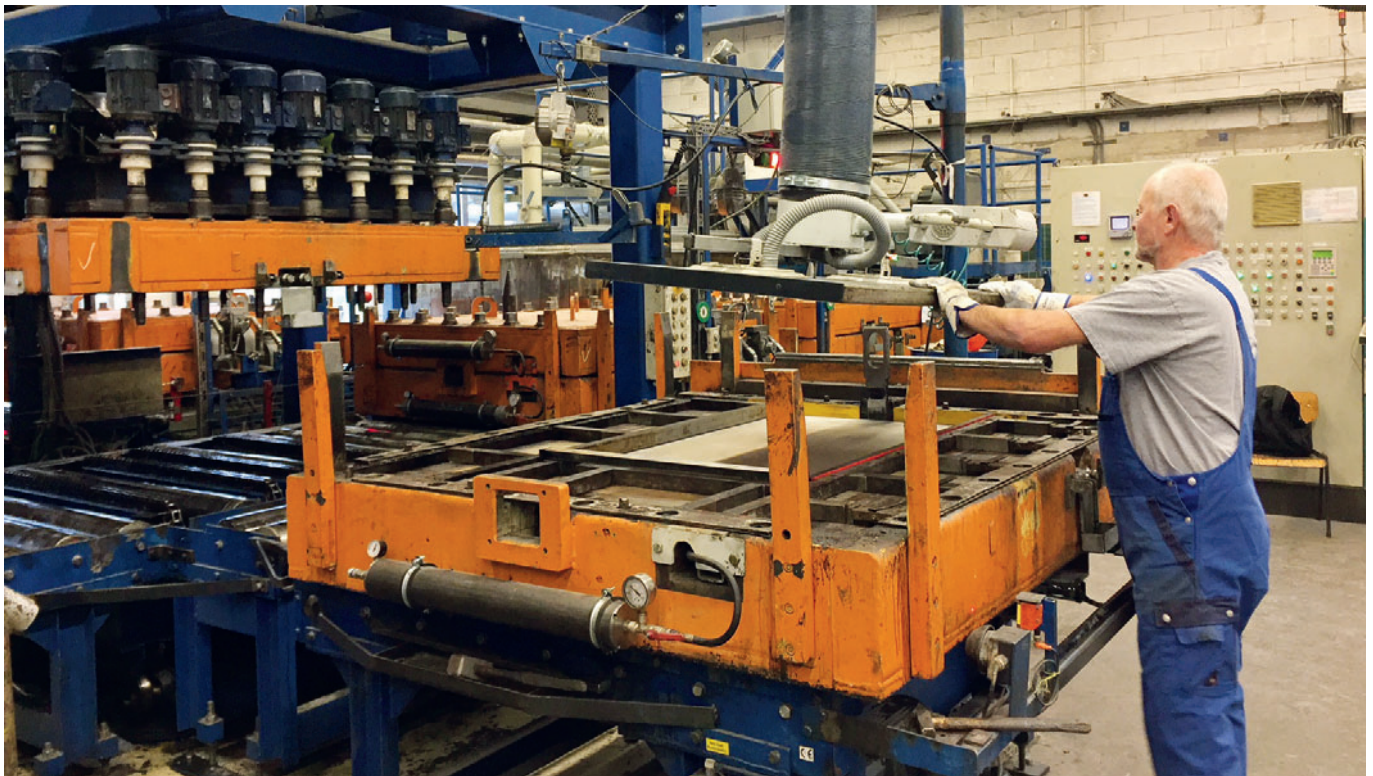
The forms in which the solid plastic boards are manufactured using the extrusion method are equipped with a sophisticated cooling system. This energy-efficient and innovative system with absorption cooling is rounded off by a heat recovery system.



*Around 19,000 production boards leave Wasa's plant in Thuringia every month.*



*Wasa Uniplast® Ultra boards are produced in these moulds 24 hours a day, seven days a week.*



Despite the high degree of automation, each individual board is measured and its quality checked by an employee after demoulding.



The new twin-aisle production hall (right) had become necessary due to strong growth and was inaugurated very recently.

As part of the reconstruction of the plant as such, the ensilage of the raw material and the transport of the plastics from the silos to the machine workshops will be completely revised. "The measures in this area will meet the highest demands for the reproducibility of the material batches and product mixtures and will enable an even more precise dosage of the raw materials employed", says Dr Arno Schimpf. This rebuilding work will be supplemented by the installation of new mixing technology.

In the quality management area, quality assurance will be characterised by an even higher degree of automation in future. In order to do make allowances for digitisation, without which production and process engineering is no longer conceivable today - keyword Industry 4.0 - special process visualisations have been implemented. These make it possible to monitor the essential machine processes outside the production halls too. Production control can thus be significantly optimised.

The goal and the big challenge will be to coordinate the construction measures efficiently so as to ensure that the plant continues to run as well as possible. ■

FURTHER INFORMATION



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