

## Press Release

BR 7755  
January 2009

### Bosch Rexroth launches Innovative Strategy for Automation

Global company increases UK machine builders' competitiveness by reducing time, cost and risk attached to production of automation solutions.



Bosch Rexroth's innovative approach offers machine builders the widest range of solutions from a single supplier and economies of scale regarding procurement, servicing and training.

**To address the needs of modern industry Bosch Rexroth has launched a strategy for automation that will enable UK machine builders to become more competitive within the global market.**

Rexroth's automation strategy directly confronts the challenges in relation to minimising time to market and production time, overall cost of ownership and risk management that machine builders are increasingly facing. It also acknowledges and counters the well-documented trend concerning the gradual

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erosion of engineering knowledge from within UK industry, as experienced by Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM's ), System Integrators and End Users.

Traditionally, conventional machine designers have grouped their product choices into distinct areas: hydraulics; electric drives; pneumatics; safety; controls; conveying and mechanics. Each of these areas will normally have several companies bidding to have their products included on the Bill of Materials (BOM) and inevitably selected suppliers tend to focus on their 'bit'. This approach can cause problems because it complicates the bidding process, increases the time and energy it takes to source a solution and ultimately increases the burden placed on the machine builder, should there be a failure, for detecting culpability and organising repair or replacement across the wide supplier base.

With the largest range of technologies available from Rexroth, the company's automation strategy offers the lowest cost of ownership to the machine builder. One simple benefit is that due to the reduced supplier base the cost of procurement is significantly reduced. Working with a single supplier enables a reduction in administration and financial management becomes easier.

In practice Rexroth engineers from within its UK and Irish based application support team work directly with those designing a machine. Rexroth engineers have access to over 250,000 products across the defined disciplines and more importantly understand that the overall design of a machine has a greater impact on the customer's competitiveness than solely focusing on component cost. An automation solution designed using Rexroth products brings other benefits to the machine builder such as the use of common mechanical standards across many of the company's technologies and ease of product interoperability, as many of the products have been designed to work together and are therefore highly compatible. These factors reduce time to market and mitigate risk, as

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responsibility for interoperability lies with Rexroth and not with the machine builder and a broad supplier base.

Demonstrating the fact that Rexroth's approach helps deal with the challenges that industry faces are the benefits that translate through to the areas of field service and training. Stuart Williams, Automotive Manager for Rexroth says, "Our approach to automation continues to save machine builders cost once the equipment is installed. Presently, when a machine experiences a failure in the field the machine builder may have to request on-site visits by service engineers from two or more component suppliers in turn before the true problem is ascertained and a repair is affected. This can result in days of labour being charged to the machine builder and a period of significant downtime for the end user. Further to this obvious issue with inefficient handling, down the line, there may be difficult to quantify but negative effects on the relationship and goodwill between the machine builder and end user."

"When Rexroth is used as sole supplier, we take total responsibility and therefore, as with many aspects of our automation strategy, customers benefit from an economy of scale. A simple example of this is training. If there are seven different suppliers' technologies on one machine and an end user is running a three shift system that's an awful lot of training sessions. Rexroth can reduce the time and cost of training dramatically."

Particularly relevant for small to medium sized machine building companies is the fact that Rexroth's global presence means that end users can be supported using Rexroth's infrastructure all over the world. Service can be co-ordinated seamlessly from the manufacturing country to the country in which the machine is operating. This is a major element when considering the total cost of ownership as opposed to the initial savings that can be made during the bid process. It will be a main driver in the end user's decision making process in the future.

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The issue of warranty is also simplified by consolidating suppliers as warranties for all the elements of a machine can be harmonised, allowing peace of mind because the entire machine is fully covered for a defined period. Additionally, the management of spares is rationalised and problems of overstocking, or even more seriously the non-availability of spares, can all be consigned to history.

The automation strategy from Rexroth takes a rounded view of the machine building process and acknowledges that no single technology can meet all efficiency and commercial targets in isolation. Considerable savings, not least in the crucial area of energy consumption, can be made by the intelligent interlinking of a variety of technologies and this approach will benefit UK machine builders by making their solutions more competitive and attractive.

**- Ends -**

### Editor's Notes:

Bosch Rexroth AG is one of the world's leading specialists in the field of drive and control technologies. Under the brand name of Rexroth the company supplies more than 500,000 customers with tailored solutions for driving, controlling and moving machinery used in industrial and factory automation as well as in mobile applications. As The Drive & Control Company, Bosch Rexroth develops, produces and sells components and systems in more than 80 countries. In 2007 Bosch Rexroth AG, part of the Bosch Group, achieved sales of about 5.4 billion Euro with approximately 33,000 employees.

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