

New V-Series Black press brake tooling

**ISMR SAYS:**

"New and future tooling trends include increased functionality, automation and smart tooling"

# THE TOOLING EQUATION



Klaus Neumann

Wilson Tool's European sales director, Klaus Neumann, discusses new tooling launches and market trends with *ISMR*

**W**ilson Tool International was founded by Ken and Ruth Wilson in St Paul, Minnesota (USA) in June 1966 and has since grown to become the world's largest independent tooling manufacturer. With manufacturing plants and dedicated sales offices across the world, its three divisions (Punching, Bending and Wilson Xtra Accessories) represent a comprehensive line of tooling systems and accessories.

Well known in Europe for its wide range of punch press tooling, two years ago it moved more seriously into the press brake tooling arena in Europe (although it has been selling punch press tooling in the US for 20 years). Today, it is the largest independent manufacturer of tooling systems for punch presses; press brakes and punch and die components for the stamping industry.

Earlier this year, Wilson Tool celebrated its largest European press brake tooling order following delivery of TRUMPF-Style press brake tooling to KMF Precision Sheet Metal Manufacturing, the largest privately-owned sheet-metal subcontractor in the United Kingdom. *ISMR* sat down with Klaus Neumann, Wilson Tool's sales director for Europe, at Blechexpo in Stuttgart to gauge his views on new tooling launches and future market requirements.

**Press brake and punch tooling**

"Here at our booth at Blechexpo, we are showing our V-Series Black press brake tooling. The tool produces no distortion or marking on sheet metal. The press brake dies incorporate replaceable inserts that decrease friction and enable better performance. Unlike traditional V-dies that can warp and distort material, V-Series Black dies produce clean, crisp bends with no distortion, making them the best solution to produce small flanges, small bend radii and bends close to holes," Neumann explained.

The rotating inserts used in V-Series Black dies also enable fabricators to bend a wide range of materials using the same die, reducing set-up time and minimizing the amount of tooling required. Additional benefits include tighter tolerances during manufacturing which result, said Neumann, in increased bend accuracy and shorter lead times. V-Series Black press brake dies from Wilson Tool are available for virtually all major styles of press brake tooling, including American, European and WT Style.

"We are also promoting our EXP™ range of punch press tooling and our TRUMPF tooling range on our booth here in Stuttgart. EXP™ punch technology is the first tooling in the industry to feature a standard holder with truly

universal punches. We also equipped the complete Schiavi press brake here at the show with our tooling and a hydraulic clamping system," added Neumann.

In October 2015, the company introduced a new, complete line of press brake tooling called LVD Style. Available to the North American market, LVD Style press brake tooling is made in the USA so that Wilson Tool can provide shorter lead-times.

In September, Wilson Tool launched the Dura-Die parting tool – its replaceable die inserts are made from Wilson Tool's Ultima tool steel, which enables greater wear resistance to achieve maximum grind life. The die base is made from shock-resistant steel, allowing it to withstand even the highest punching force. Combined, these two steels give fabricators great durability and performance. >>

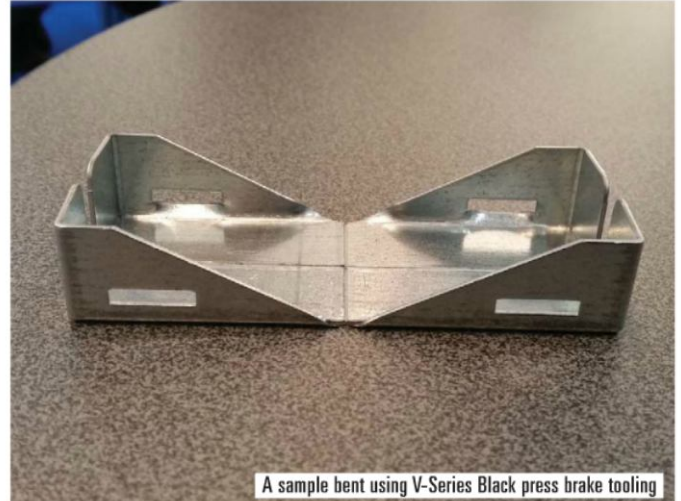


Wilson Tool Dura Die parting tool

## FACE TO FACE



New LVD Style press brake tooling from Wilson Tool for the North American market



A sample bent using V-Series Black press brake tooling

### » Taking a view

"In Europe, we have increased our business in nearly every market compared to last year," Neumann told *ISMR*. "Of course, some markets are problematic such as Russia and the Ukraine. Factors such as the weakness of the euro also play a part.

"When we speak with customers, they tell us that they are busy. Some people wonder whether the laser will replace the punch press in the future – many of our customers are now buying lasers. But lasers will never completely replace punch presses. Lasers cannot form materials. Customers are interested in the best way to process parts using either a laser or a punch press. Punch presses are still very strong workhorses and are cheaper to run than a laser. It's a question

of choosing the right machine for the right application....."

Wilson Tool intends to develop its press brake tooling range, without neglecting its punching business, and will continue to launch products in both areas. It celebrates its 50th anniversary next year and, it told *ISMR*, regularly visits customers to look for tooling solutions to fit their needs. The company runs technology days, seminars and open days to educate customers and discuss ways of reducing secondary operations and meeting manufacturing challenges.

"There are a lot of applications for special tooling which we also produce for customers. The US market is our biggest market and we have been in Europe since 1986. Asia is a growing market for us," Neumann added.

### Smart tooling and increased functionality

Neumann identified several tooling market trends to *ISMR*, including increased functionality, automation and smart tooling.

"Customers want to have tooling that has more functionality e.g. QR codes on the tooling and software changes. Automation is also key – we are working with a customer now on automated press brake tooling. A future trend will be intelligent tooling i.e. selecting the right tooling for the application...

"The smart tooling concept includes a printer in the tool – the tool is connected to a network via Bluetooth so that you can programme logos and serial numbers and print it from the tool. There needs to be a driven application, and possibly even a servo motor, in the tool. The trend will be 'a tool within a tool'."

Wilson Tool will also be exhibiting at the SteelFab Trade Show from 17 – 20 January 2016 (Hall 3, Stands 1832 and 1823). ■

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Klaus Neumann points out to *ISMR* the scratch-free surface of a sample bent using Wilson V-Series Black press brake tooling