

Haitian unit to introduce all-electric presses

Contributed by Administrator
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EBERMANNSDORF, GERMANY (September 25, 2007) -- Zhafir Plastics Machinery GmbH and its parent company, Haitian International Holdings Ltd., will introduce two new lines of all-electric injection molding machines at K

2007. The first, unveiled at a September 19 news conference at Zhafir's headquarters in Ebermannsdorf, has the trade name Venus, and is an upgrade from Haitian's existing HTD series.

The second, dubbed Mercury, was touted as an "innovative machine of the future," but the company is keeping additional details under wraps until the show.

Venus will be available in a range from 40-400 metric tons of clamping force. Helmar Franz, Haitian's chief strategy officer, said Venus will have much better performance than the KTD that it replaces, with four times the acceleration to peak injection speed, its servo-motor taking just 20 milliseconds to reach 2,000 revolutions per minute. Initially available in 230 metric tons of clamping force, a 400 metric ton version will be available by the end of 2008.

Franz said the Mercury all-electric series will have a "revolutionary solution on the injection side." But since the patent situation is still being clarified, Franz said he could not reveal more details before K 2007. He predicted that the company will sell 500 to 1,000 of the Mercury machines per year. The company will start delivering the presses by the end of 2008 or early 2009.

Franz said the Venus will cost "at least 20-25 percent less than the Japanese competition," such as machines from JSW, Nissei and Toshiba, but he admits that technically it is not in the same high class league as, for example, Netstal's all-electric Elion machine.

Saying that "not everything that is beautiful is affordable," Franz said that if costs can be adequately managed, the Mercury should later compete strongly with machines from Fanuc, Sumitomo and the European producers' all-electric machines.

First up will be construction of a European assembly plant. Zhafir bought 20,000 square meters of land alongside its Ebermannsdorf headquarters where the company will build what Franz called "one of the most advanced assembly plants in Europe."

As it will take one year to build the German plant before it starts up in early 2009, the Venus machine will be made initially in a new Zhafir plant in Ningbo, Zhejiang province. Once the German plant starts up, it too will make the Venus, but is expected to be the sole production site for the Mercury, on account of the sophisticated European components that it will use.

As in 2005, Franz reiterated the philosophy of building all-electric machines in Europe primarily for the fast-growing Asia markets, especially China and India, on account of the advanced components and engineering competence in Europe. Zhafir eventually will have 50 assembly employees and 15-20 engineers in Ebersmannsdorf.