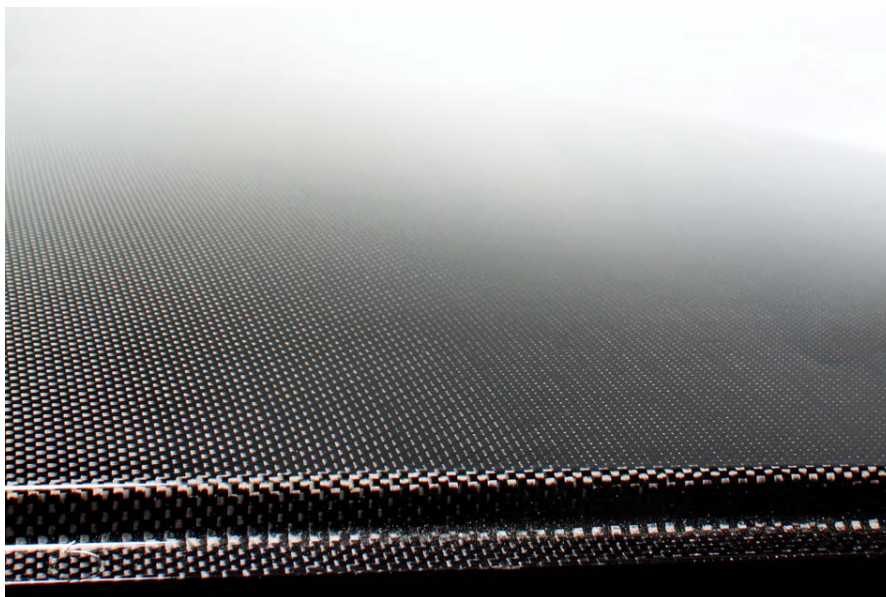




Lightweight construction in focus – Hennecke invests in a customer center for high-volume RTM applications

Due to increasing requirements for efficiency and ecology, interest in lightweight solutions for the automotive industry has been growing for years. The focus is especially on one process: Resin Transfer Moulding (RTM). Thanks to comprehensive investments in a new RTM center, Hennecke GmbH now offers sufficient scope to potential customers as well as raw material partners to manufacture, test and develop high-performance parts until they are suitable for mass production. In the process, the polyurethane specialists can score with technical aspects of the RTM technology that ensure unlimited suitability for mass production in terms of automation and cycle time.



Part manufactured by the HP-RTM process.

Apart from new drive concepts, reduced vehicle weight is a major element to ensure more efficiency in future automobile manufacture. Lightweight construction in motor racing has long provided for improved performance and increasingly found its way into mass production. In the car body sector, automobile manufacturers meet these requirements by using fibre-reinforced structural components that are convincing both in terms of low weight and crash behaviour. As the manufacture of such high-tech parts in the classical RTM process is partly characterized by extremely long process times because of the great amount of manual work involved, the industry is desperately searching for manufacturing methods that are suitable for mass production and an adequate implementation of high volumes. However, increased automation alone can only optimize cycle time to some degree. The aim is to find a solution which decisively reduces the specific curing times of parts.

By introducing the so-called High-Pressure RTM process (HP-RTM), Hennecke GmbH has tackled this problem and pursued familiar paths in polyurethane processing technology in a new way. The focus of the HP-RTM method is

on a task that is well-known and tried and tested in PUR processing: the high-pressure injection of reactive mix into a mould within seconds. In combination with the appropriate raw material system, the HP-RTM process provides for accelerated reaction and extremely short curing times. In addition, Hennecke GmbH's decades-long experience of high-pressure metering takes effect. This applies to excellent mixheads for instance, which furnish high-quality and reproducible results at all times. Moreover, the use of the patented Hennecke constant-pressure injector ensures homogeneous injection pressure – no matter whether RTM raw material systems with or without filler are being processed.

In future, customers and raw material suppliers will have the opportunity to find out more about these and further advantages at Hennecke's headquarters in Sankt Augustin. However, with the decision to establish an RTM center for testing, development and mould trials by customers and

raw material partners, Hennecke GmbH provides not only its equipment, but also the know-how of experienced process engineers. Hennecke Managing Director Mr. Alois Schmid points out: "We intend to assist our customers with the implementation of their ideas and plans already *before* they purchase a processing plant and support them in their investment decision-making process". According to Jens Winiarz, Hennecke's responsible Sales Manager for Composite Spray Moulding (CSM) and new technologies, close cooperation with raw material suppliers is one of Hennecke's good traditions: "In our customer center for CSM polyurethane spray technology, we have already tested successful raw material systems and develop PU based sprayed products. The RTM center will carry on this way."

Further information on Hennecke GmbH

With over 60 years of experience and a substantial annual budget in research and development, Hennecke GmbH manufactures machines, production lines and systems for all PU core technologies. The company's product portfolio comprises high-pressure metering machines, mixheads, elastomer, moulded foam, CSM, refrigerator, sandwich panel, slabstock and recycling lines as well as mould carriers, tank farms and peripheral units. The polyurethane specialist is one of the suppliers with the widest range of equipment and longest track record in the world market.

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