

**PRESS RELEASE**

* **Vacuum chamber presses** **from Wickert** **for elastomer production at Schmalz Vacuum technology**
* **Also in use on Wickert presses**

*Landau, the 2. July 2024*. Wickert Maschinenbau has supplied J. Schmalz GmbH with three WKP 4000 S vacuum chamber presses. Schmalz, which claims to be one of the world's leading companies for vacuum technology and manual handling, uses the presses in its new plant in Bydgoszcz, Poland, and in the technical center at its headquarters in Glatten in the Black Forest.

In Bydgoszcz, Schmalz uses the presses to manufacture components for vacuum cups made of rubber and silicone. These parts are used in many industries - including at Wickert itself in press construction.

**Vacuum ensures quality and process reliability**

The WKP 4000 S has heating plates with a surface area of 600 x 600 millimetres and offers a pressing force of 4,000 kilonewtons. Their vacuum chambers prevent air inclusions during the pressing process, which reduce quality. This means that the parts of the elastomer suction cups in contact with the product in sizes between 20 and 400 millimetres are produced cleanly and reliably.

Markus Odermatt, Head of Production at the Plastics Center at Schmalz, praises the high production quality, the precise temperature distribution and the solid "Made in Germany" design. He particularly appreciates the customer-oriented implementation: Wickert has tailored the presses precisely to Schmalz's product range and requirements.

Special requests such as interior lighting, central discharge and an integrated compressed air booster were quickly implemented. The stable fixed piping is also an important plus for Odermatt: "The risk of hose ruptures is eliminated. Wear is reduced and safety is increased."

**Ergonomics was essential**

According to him, a key argument for the investment was the fixed working height of the upper piston presses. As the elastomer parts manufactured by Schmalz became larger and larger, employees found it increasingly difficult to operate the previous presses in view of the changing working heights. Odermatt emphasizes: "Ergonomics are important to us. That's why we paid particular attention to it."

**Simple operation and communication**

Wickert delivered and installed the presses at the end of 2023. They will expand production capacities and the clamping force/locking force range.

Dominik Haug, an employee in the Global Operations Network department, particularly likes the remote access to the control system. This means that a technician at Wickert's headquarters in Landau can directly operate the machines in Bydgoszcz, around 1,000 kilometers away, if required.

"Even an on-site visit is less complicated these days, as it can be done by car and there is no language barrier," says Haug. "If necessary, a competent Wickert employee is there quickly." He finds the bilingual user interface particularly practical: "Switching between Polish and German makes it much easier to communicate with the Polish employees at the machine."

**Technical center: development and tests**

At the technical center, Schmalz uses the press for sample parts, tool testing, and evaluating technical improvements. Among other things, an integrated monitoring system measures the energy consumption per part. "This could be exciting for the future," says Odermatt.

**Partnership at eye level**

Wickert has been using vacuum suction cups from Schmalz for material handling on its presses for years. Now Schmalz itself is becoming a Wickert customer. For Steve Büchner, sales engineer at Wickert, the relationship is more than just a classic supply relationship: "We are united by our pursuit of quality and innovation. This makes the collaboration particularly pleasant and fruitful."

**About Wickert Maschinenbau GmbH**

Wickert Maschinenbau GmbH is a medium-sized, family-owned company based in Landau in der Pfalz. It develops and produces complex, fully automated systems that are then integrated in its hydraulic presses. All machines and systems have a modular structure and feature pressing forces of between 20 and 100,000 kN, with a customer-specific layout in each case. The provided systems are used to process elastomers, composites, plastics and powder materials. The presses are used in the production of pharmaceutical sealing plugs, as well as the production of safety parts in automotive brake systems and bi-polar plates for fuel cells. Other applications for Wickert presses include e-mobility, laboratories and research facilities.

Stephanie Wickert and Stefan Herzinger act as partners and managing directors of the family-owned company, founded in 1901, which is supported by an Advisory Board chaired by Hans-Joachim Wickert. Wickert manufactures exclusively in Germany's Landau/Pfalz region, from where it supplies customers in Europe, America and Asia. In 2024, 200 employees generated a turnover of around € 47 million.

**Photos:**

Ein Bild, das Kleidung, Maschine, Person, Mann enthält.

KI-generierte Inhalte können fehlerhaft sein.

Photo 1:

Wickert Maschinenbau has supplied three WKP 4000 S vacuum chamber presses to J. Schmalz GmbH. The vacuum tank is mounted above the control unit to save space (Photo: Schmalz).

Ein Bild, das Kleidung, Person, Mann, Lächeln enthält.

KI-generierte Inhalte können fehlerhaft sein.

Photo 2:

Markus Odermatt (left), Head of Production at the Plastics Center, and Dominik Haug, Global Operations Network (Photo: Schmalz).

Ein Bild, das Bautechnik, Blau, Electric Blue (Farbe), Majorelle Blue enthält.

KI-generierte Inhalte können fehlerhaft sein.

Photo 3:

The product-contacting parts of the elastomer suction cups in sizes between 20 and 400 mm are produced on the vacuum chamber presses ... (Photo: Schmalz)

Ein Bild, das Kobaltblau, Electric Blue (Farbe), Blau, Plastik enthält.

KI-generierte Inhalte können fehlerhaft sein.

Photo 4:

... manufactured reliably and to the highest quality (Photo: Schmalz).

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