The German machine tool industry
A can-do partner for Malaysia

German machine tools are in demand all over the world. The products are innovative and technologically unsurpassed; the companies operate on an international scale, offering their customers products, solutions and services from a single source. The performance of Germany’s machine tool industry has been crucial in establishing the superlative reputation of the “Made in Germany” tag.
With cutting-edge technology to global vendor supremacy: a portrait of the German machine tool industry

Machine tools “Made in Germany” are the key to success, particularly in times of globalised change. They supply industrial manufacturers with technologies of innovative excellence, which help them to meet and master the challenges of both the present and the future, thus guaranteeing sustained technical progress. Besides the products themselves, it’s primarily the single-sourced solutions and services that have crucially underpinned the sector’s magnificent reputation for generations now, and will continue to do so in the future.

The factors behind the success of the companies concerned include a highly qualified workforce, the good infrastructure in place throughout Germany and the dense network of can-do suppliers. And they include discerning customers, with whom very often joint development and trialling projects are conducted, plus not least the performatively excellent teams of researchers, who make sure that the very latest findings are incorporated in the machine tools produced. With all these pluses, the German machine tool industry ranks among the world’s top producers and exporters on the international machine tool market, helping its customers all over the world to be and remain successful.

The machine tool industry plays an absolutely key role for industrial manufacturing operations: It supplies production technology for metalworking jobs in all branches of industry, thus making a crucial contribution towards upgrading productivity levels in the entire industrial sector. The automotive industry and its component suppliers, the mechanical and electrical engineering sectors, the aircraft industry, medical technology, manufacturers of metal products, and many more, they all benefit from their partners in the German machine tool industry.
Malaysia’s export-driven economy has in the recent past lost some of its dynamic due to the weakening of the global economy and the decline in the price of oil. This has not been without its repercussions for Germany’s machine tool manufacturers: from 2015 to 2016, exports to the ASEAN nation fell by 16 per cent to 28 million euros.

For the near future, too, the prognoses remain cautious. Malaysia’s GDP is expected to grow by just over four per cent. The principal drivers are still the construction industry, particularly in terms of public-sector infrastructural measures. Investments are also channelled into expanding power generation capacities and into the aircraft industry.

Despite a slackening of momentum, Malaysia continues to offer opportunities for German machine tool manufacturers. The country’s mechanical engineering sector is in poor shape, which means further industrialisation will depend on imported machinery, not least in the comparatively sophisticated user industries like electrical engineering and electronics. The prognoses for machine tool sales in Malaysia are cautiously optimistic. Following declines in recent years, machine tool consumption is predicted to rise by a mere 0.4 per cent in 2017, but for 2018 to 2020 annual growth rates of around three per cent are already being predicted.

Among the international importers of machine tools to Malaysia, Germany ranks fourth. In 2016, the sector actually achieved a slight improvement in its relative position, from six to nine per cent market share – though this is against the background of falling exports to Malaysia overall. German manufacturers primarily supplied laser processing machines, presses, parts and accessories, and machining centres.
Blue Competence: sustainability and efficiency in manufacturing

Germany’s machine tool manufacturers are at the leading edge of technological progress, and that includes sustainability and energy-efficiency as well.

Numerous disparate measures are already improving resource-utilisation in the machine tool industry and its products. High productivity and energy-efficiency need not be mutually exclusive. And: in the medium term, investment in energy-efficient machines is profitable because the total cost of ownership will be lower. If customers from Malaysia are informed about this, they could specifically request these technologies.

The German machine tool industry is part of the Blue Competence initiative of the German mechanical engineering sector. It communicates all its capabilities under the Blue Competence brand. This initiative provides the requisite information on the vital considerations involved for sustainability and energy-efficiency in manufacturing, on what the German machine tool industry is already doing, and on what challenges remain to be solved in cooperative endeavours with customers and vendors.

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Well-known German makers of machine tools and manufacturing technology present their offerings in what is called the “Red Book”, the VDW’s reference directory.

For metal-processing and production-technology professionals around the world, this is a firmly established instrument and the definitive compendium of the technological capabilities offered by German machine tool makers. Customers can find over 400 types of machine and more than 2,000 different products, all listed right down to technical details. The “Red Book” provides a precise and detailed overview of everything on offer. Information can be searched for by product or company, and links take you to the companies’ own websites. Reflecting German manufacturers’ presence on the international market – nearly 70 per cent of German machine tool production is exported – the content is provided in five different languages. The “Red Book” is available on the internet under www.vdwredbook.com.

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German Machine Tool Builders’ Association

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VDW: door-opener for your business with the German machine tool industry

The VDW (German Machine Tool Builders’ Association), based in Frankfurt/Main, represents the interests of the German machine tool industry. 300 companies, which account for about 90 per cent of the sector’s total turnover, are voluntary members of the association.

The VDW on the one hand is the face of the industry to the public, politicians, business partners and the scientific community. But first of all it is a service provider for its members. Based on an in-depth knowledge of the industry, the VDW informs them with supreme competence, provides advice, and supports them concerning individual questions and problems.

As one of the few trade associations that organise exhibitions for the international machine tool industry, the VDW has long decades of experience in this field. Under the quality seal of “A VDW Trade Fair”, it stages the EMO Hannover under the slogan “The World of Metalworking” on behalf of the European Association of the Machine Tool Industries (CECIMO), next scheduled for 18 to 23 September 2017. The VDW also organises its own international exhibition for metalworking technologies, the METAV in Düsseldorf, next scheduled for 20 to 24 February 2018.

In addition, the VDW accompanies its members to manufacturing technology exhibitions in the most important export markets. The association applies for German joint company participations at the German Ministry of Economics. This assists small and medium-sized companies to penetrate new markets.

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