

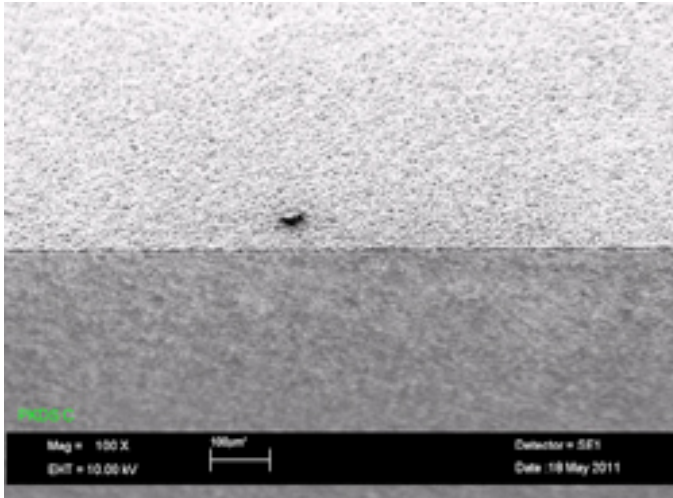
LEUCO EXPANDS MARKET PRESENCE WITH FULLY AUTOMATED PCD PRODUCTION

Leuco has remained a global leader in the supply of saw blades and cutting tools for over 50 years. With over 1,000 employees and numerous facilities across the globe they have successfully carried out a vision of innovation and customer results. Although deeply entrenched in the wood markets for many years, the entry into PCD tooling in the early 1970s enabled the company to diversify and supply tooling into other markets. That diversification and vision of innovation and optimization continues today at Leuco Tool with North American headquarters in Villa Rica, Georgia.

Jens Schulz, CEO of the US subsidiary of Leuco, sums up the Leuco vision this way, “As our customers’ demands change we have the opportunity to provide them with tooling that not only improves efficiencies, such as with the newly introduced p-System, but also allows them to be more flexible with the profiles and materials they work with. Only through innovation can we provide them this.”

Technology advances in both tool design and processing play a critical role in the continued advancement of the Leuco brand. Leuco has recently purchased a Vollmer QXD200 with the N264 pallet magazine. The QXD200 contains the most advanced technology developed by Vollmer and with the addition of the N264 pallet system will be the first machine with this configuration installed in North America. This technology and automation will enable Leuco to optimize around the clock processing of diamond tools to meet growing customer demands.

The QXD200 machine is a CNC machine capable of simultaneous movement along all six axes. This allows the tool designers to innovate and create more effective solutions for many of the new tool applications that have evolved with the composite materials and new metal alloys. The new erosion generator supplies an improved finish at approximately 30% faster times than previous machines. This finish has provided superior tool life in many applications.



Polished Diamond

Schulz added a comment regarding the quality of the finished product. “Through the polishing of cutting edges we are now able to provide the customers with a virtually chip free cutting edge. This has a great impact in industries where the tolerance demand is extremely high. It allows the cutting to be done with highest degree of accuracy. Through this we are now able to provide tooling to work in materials that before had a high degree of finished product rejections.”

As beneficial as these new features are, one of the most important features of this machine as well as some of the other machines at Leuco, is the acceptance of automation. Automation continues to play a critical role in a global economy allowing higher technology companies such as Leuco to offset any competition from companies with lower labor rates. The QXD200 holds six electrodes and/or grinding wheels that can be selected within the program for processing various types of tools. All dimensions related to these electrodes and grinding wheels are retained in the computer to reduce processing times associated with measurement and set up of the machine.

The N264 pallet magazine utilizes RFID technology to match tools with specific machining programs enabling a “lights out” operation. The magazine can hold up to 64 tools for continuous operation.



Six Position Tool Holder

Jens Schulz had some final thoughts regarding future requirements of PCD suppliers in terms of innovation, design etc. and continued development of the QXD platform from Vollmer. “As we move forward innovation will become even more critical. Our customers are requiring higher degrees of accuracy and efficiencies. At LEUCO it has always been our primary goal to stay ahead of our customers demands. Through the increased complexity of shear angles and surface finishes in PCD we are now able to perform functions that in the past were either thought as impossible, or had to be performed using multiple tools. The p-System is a prime example of this. With the radical tool design, it allows our customers to get a perfect finish using one tool instead of two. This type of innovation will only become more important in the future as the demand for higher efficiency increases and as automation plays a bigger role.”



Magazine