

press release

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Title: Over 25 years' Continuous Casting Technology for Brass & Bronze alloy sections

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In the twenty-seven years that Rautomead Limited has been supplying its continuous casting technology and equipment to the worldwide non-ferrous metals production industry, the company's solutions have not simply evolved, but have been specifically developed to meet the ever-more-demanding requirements of the industry.

Delivering in-house expertise

Rautomead's continuous casting technology is designed to provide metals processing companies with the expertise, equipment and know how to produce their own semi finished "near net shape" bars and hollow sections in-house. Often, the continuous casting process has been installed to by-pass the more traditional process sequence of billet casting and extrusion, thus saving substantial costs of conversion from refined metal to semi-finished products.

Opportunities for small-scale producers

The fact that continuous casting can be economic on a relatively small scale (50 – 200 tonnes per month) has led to opportunities to install such machines at locations where no previous metal-making activity was possible and where scrap arisings required to be sold for recycling by others. The user was enabled to take control of quality and the cost of the product and provided with independence from the large producers through gaining the capability to melt and cast using both internally-generated and externally-sourced feedstock.

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Industrial evolution creates geographical customer spread

Whereas many years ago, Rautomead's customer base for such continuous casting technology was UK-oriented, in more recent years, their customer installations for brass and bronze bar production have been focused around Taiwan, India, Malaysia, Thailand, Latin America, Middle East and China. The most recent installations have been in China and the Middle East - a changing pattern reflecting the general trend of primary manufacturing away from Europe to the new emerging economies.

The following recent examples of Rautomead's customer installations illustrate this trend:

Tomghsia Industry Co, Taiwan: Rautomead RX 1400 machine used for production of solid and hollow bronze bars.

S.V. Metals, Thailand: Rautomead RT 650 machine purchased for recycling brass scraps and swarf - converting them to bars for subsequent manufacture of LPG valves.

SMI, Saudi Arabia: Multiple Rautomead RT 850 machines employed to manufacture bronze hollows for use as bearings in SMI water pumps and replacing imported bronze hollows.

Samco, Iran: Rautomead RT 650 machine for brass and bronze tubes and Rautomead RMK 030 for brazing alloy production.

EU opportunities

Across the UK and Europe there are still opportunities where metal manufacturers can compete. Such companies, however, must have the technology and capability to produce high quality products to tight composition tolerances and to be able to respond quickly to customer demands.

Examples of successful companies in this sector include:

Dens Metals, Dundee, Scotland: utilise Rautomead RSL upward casting equipment to produce batches of small diameter bronze solid and hollow bars to react quickly to customer requests and to minimise inventory holding.

Copper Alloys, Stoke-on-Trent, England: use recently installed Rautomead RT horizontal casting technology to make “bespoke” alloy and section products for customers who have unique demands for particularly tight tolerance and product size requirements.

Global benefits

Regardless of the location of the individual metal manufacturers, Rautomead continuous casting technology provides:

- independence from traditional mill suppliers
- ability to make specialist alloy and sections
- near net shape casting to minimise subsequent manufacturing processes
- means of recycling “in house” generated swarf and scraps
- internal control over product quality including material composition
- reduction in manufacturing costs
- reduction in inventory holding

Over 290 installations globally

Rautomead has over 290 customer reference installations worldwide. The company is also one of very few suppliers of continuous casting technology that can provide upward vertical, horizontal or vertical downward casting equipment according to the particular production requirement. At their headquarters, in Dundee, Scotland, Rautomead offers a technically advanced research and development facility which can be commissioned to make samples or undertake casting trials to assist customers' complete feasibility studies and investigations into the suitability of Rautomead continuous casting technology for their particular requirements.

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