

PRESS RELEASE

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Vertical casting plant of Hertwich sets milestone in modernization at AWW in Germany

A new vertical casting plant from Hertwich Engineering in Austria forms the heart of the completely modernized billet caster of Aluminium-Werke Wutöschingen (AWW) in Germany. The vertical casting plant will enable AWW to produce press billets of highest quality and thanks to a special feature, even significantly longer than those manufactured so far. Challenge was the height of the existing crane as it is not sufficient to lift the longer bolts completely out of the casting pit in one go.



Hertwich VDC Vertical Direct Chill Caster

"Our assignment was to build a tailor-made plant that would significantly increase production and further improve quality," says Gerold Keune, Managing Director of Hertwich Engineering GmbH in Braunau am Inn, an SMS group company. "Our team has solved this task with great innovative competence."

"The investment in the vertical casting plant is another milestone of our AWW 2025 project. In this major project, we are modernizing our production and optimizing internal logistics," says Frank Aehlen, CEO of Aluminium-Werke Wutöschingen AG & Co. KG. Prior to this, the medium-sized family-owned company had already commissioned a new logistics hall for system components and a new extrusion line.

With the new vertical casting plant from Hertwich, AWW will be able to produce extrusion billets of 7.00 meters in length in future.

This is possible even though the new system is positioned at the same location as the predecessor system and therefore must work with a limited extension height of the existing indoor crane. By a technical finesse we bypassed these conditions: The crane lifts the long billets out of the casting pit until one fifth of the billets are still in underground. Then, the billets are moved into a so-called exit pit directly next to it. There, the billets can finally be completely lifted above hall level and placed horizontally. During production, the exit pit is sealed off from the casting pit. AWW processes the billets in its own press plant into aluminium profiles. For example, for construction and architecture, industry, or automotive engineering.

A further special feature is the casting table of the new system, that is equipped to produce 20 extrusion billets each with a diameter of 289 millimeters or 305 millimeters and a casting weight of up to 25 tons in total. It is mounted on an illuminated tilting frame that can be placed vertically to support preparation - and maintenance work. This enables safe operation as the movable maintenance platform can be positioned above the casting pit.

Hertwich Engineering, a company of the SMS group is renowned for its future-oriented, energy saving technologies and outstanding service in aluminium casthouse. The company is active worldwide with design, supply, construction and commissioning of special machinery and equipment for the Aluminium industry. Hertwich is competent for supplying complete Al-casthouse on a turnkey basis (one-stop-shopping). The product range comprises melting equipment for aluminium scrap, conti and batch homogenizing plants, sawing plants, horizontal and vertical casting machines and quality inspection stations, etc. To stay ahead Hertwich relies on its own R&D and proprietary know-how. For 50 years, the advanced technology has revolutionized the industry and the company maintains its worldwide lead.