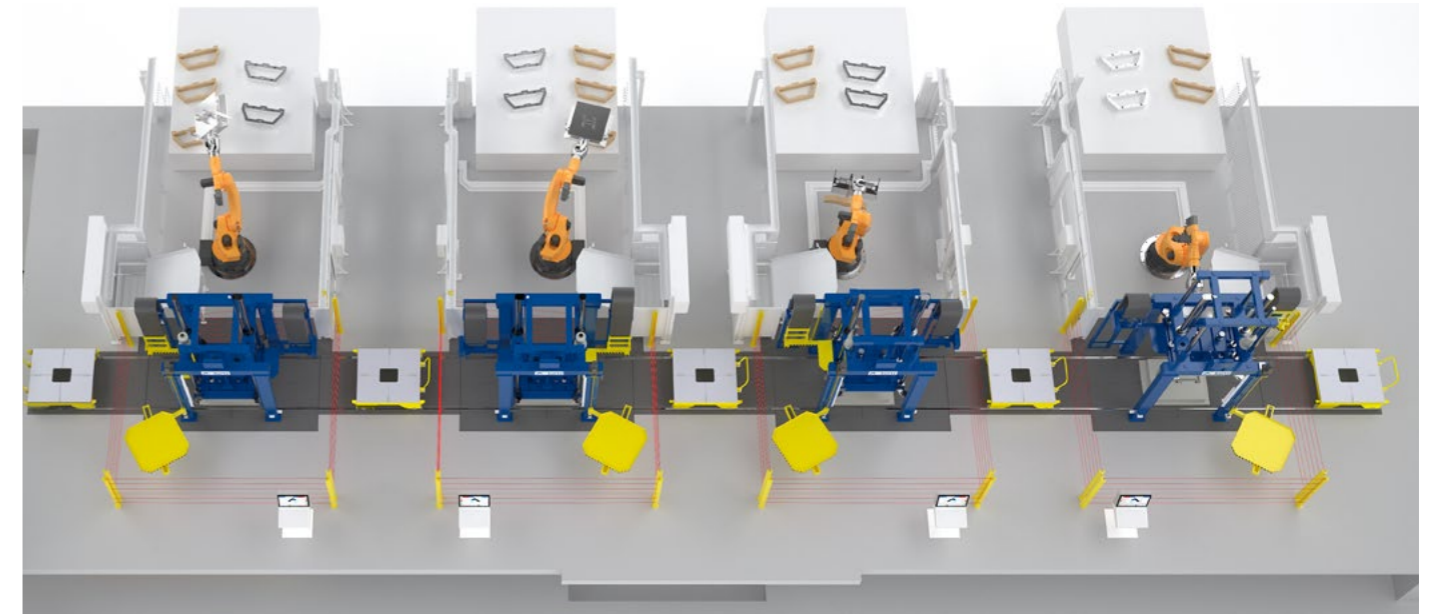




Kurtz low-pressure casting machines

Modern suspension components – all over the world!

The Fagor Ederlan Group is the leading supplier of overall solutions for suspension and powertrain components for the automotive industry. Their know-how not only covers casting and machining, rather they are experts along the entire value creation chain. As well as providing innovative solutions, Fagor Ederlan has more than 3,500 employees worldwide, thus meeting the requirements of a global player in the automotive industry – thanks to manufacturing plants in all key regions, the company is close to customers all around the globe.



Suspension components are among those under the most strain in a vehicle. As safety-related components, they must never fail under any circumstances. In addition, "lightweight" requirements apply here too: the same or even higher component stability despite reduced weight. This is achieved on the one hand by material saving, on the other with the aid of hollow casting technology, by casting round and subsequent removal of sand cores. The entire branch has enormous potential for growth, particularly in the field of modern, lighter weight suspension components. The

ongoing development towards minimisation of consumption and CO₂ emissions will continue to push this trend. The profitable production of such high-quality cast parts requires top plant engineering – during casting in particular the mechanical properties required can only be achieved by observing various general conditions. The following basics are necessary: good molten material low in oxides and hydrogen, low-turbulence mould filling combined with a purposeful, high-power solidification of the parts.

Local production in key markets

Vehicle manufacturers expect global availability of their components by default – to the same high quality, no matter where they originate. In order to avoid unnecessary transport

costs, import duties and handling, vehicle manufacturers now manufacture their products directly in the important main markets. The same applies to suppliers – which means casting must be done in the direct vicinity of the customer. To meet all these requirements, Fagor Ederlan decided to supplement production locations all over the world or to modernise existing locations and equip them all to the same standard.

Check things out thoroughly before entering a long-term commitment

The decision in favour of a system supplier was preceded by an evaluation process taking several years. Understandable, since the decision was one with an enormous impact! For this reason, thorough checks were carried out to

see which company could be trusted with this important task. Fagor Ederlan already had an older Kurtz low-pressure casting machine in operation at its main Eskoriatza plant in the Basque region, but this was not cutting-edge Kurtz technology specially designed for suspension components. Numerous product meetings took place and visits were made to existing customers all over the world to gain an impression of the capabilities of Kurtz machines and the related support. As experienced manufacturers of casting machines, the Kurtz developers design the low-pressure technology to meet these requirements exactly: The large pot furnaces guarantee maximum flexibility and economy – permitting the casting of six stub axles with only one shot, for example. The Kurtz furnace and shuttle

technology results in top-quality molten material, which can then be cast with low turbulence using the best pressure controller on the market. The gravity die casting method developed especially for Kurtz and optimised over the years takes care of the rest: fast solidification is a further guarantee of best mechanical properties and also leads to significantly reduced cycle times. In a nutshell: more good components in less time means more profit for the user. Thanks to the reference visits to existing customers, Fagor Ederlan found out at first hand about the outstanding performances the Kurtz systems deliver under real customer operating conditions. At the same time, the Fagor Ederlan team also had the opportunity to see for themselves how the Kurtz support network works all over the world.

Delivering a machine to China, for example, is not difficult – what is more difficult is looking after this machine on site, carrying out service work and supplying spare parts as needed. Thus alongside machine performance, it was at least as important for Fagor Ederlan to find out that its future machines in Mexico and China will be in good hands. At the end of the day, the low-pressure expertise gained over decades combined with the global set-up had Fagor Ederlan convinced – and got the Kurtz team the order. We would like to take this opportunity to thank the whole Fagor Ederlan team for the trust they placed in us and the extremely positive cooperation. We are looking forward to more joint projects in the future! ■

