

Joern Rohde, ROHDE Schutzgasöfen GmbH Interview

In the European heat treat market Joern Rohde of furnace builder ROHDE Schutzgasöfen GmbH is quite a well known figure. Recently he provided an interview to the German heat treat magazine "Der Wärmebehandlungsmarkt" (The Heat Treatment Market) a publication which comes out 4 times a year. The interview was done by the CEO of the magazine, Dr. Sommer whose company provides metallurgical testing.

Heat Treatment Market (HTM): It's nice to interview you again this year. At the moment everyone is talking about climate protection and energy efficiency. How do you take this trend into account in your company?

Joern Rohde (JR): The energy efficiency of our systems has always been a very important issue in which we have invested a lot of time. It is essential for our customers to operate energy-efficient plants in order to remain profitable on the market. In our company, we are constantly developing and improving the energy efficiency of our plants. The results of the theoretical energy efficiency are precisely determined before delivery during the hot acceptance test on our test field. In addition, we are involved in projects to increase the efficiency of furnace plants and thus learn more every day.

HTM: That sounds very interesting. So could you be a little more specific?

JR: We have a very current practical example of the energy efficiency of our systems. We have supplied a new customer from the Stuttgart area with gas-heated gas nitriding systems of type KGU 100/120/180. Since this customer has already operated and operates gas nitriding systems from other manufacturers, he wanted to convince himself of the efficiency of our systems. Already in the decision-making process, the customer took the opportunity to visit the plant and to have his new plant presented by us down to the smallest detail on the basis of a 3D-model. We were able to explain our solutions to him in detail and take away his concerns about existing problems. The operation of the systems shows that our efforts have paid off.

HTM: Can you give us exact numbers?

JR: Our customer can quantify the savings exactly as he records the consumption values of all his systems. The special thing is that in this case we were able to compare our systems directly with those of a market competitor. Within a few days, the customer had run a comparison batch with the same batch content and the same process. The systems both have an external cooling unit from the same manufacturer, so the electricity costs should not be underestimated and provide us with information about the amount of energy that has to be used as cooling capacity. You can see the exact numbers from the graphics. In this case, according to our customer, this saves more than €10,500 per year in operating costs per system. Over the service life of such a system, our systems pay for themselves through this effect alone.

HTM: Of course, this gives you an enormous advantage in this day and age. What do you think is the cause of this increase in efficiency?

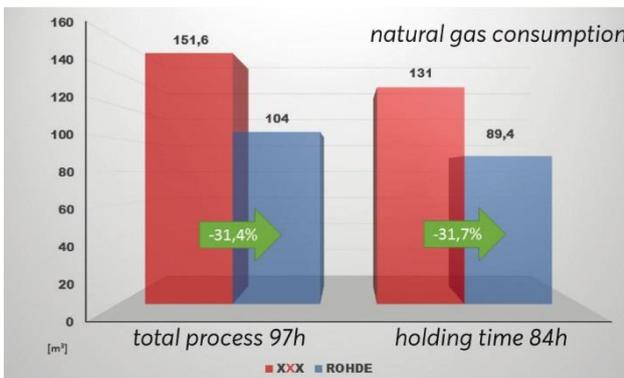
JR: Energy efficiency has always been an issue for us, because those who waste energy unnecessarily give away their money. Today, our customers are faced with the challenge of profitable production, even though costs continue to rise and this trend is expected to continue. We took this problem on board years ago and optimized our products so that our customers can save energy costs. Without going into too much detail, everyone can easily see the difference between our systems. Take a look at the external

dimensions of the comparable usable space. The customer does not have to pay for the energy that I keep in the overall system, quite simply. When purchasing a new system, I recommend that customers pay attention to the consumption data for electricity, natural gas and the cooling capacity required. This will enable them to effectively reduce their heat treatment costs and a clear conscience is given free of charge.

HTM: The development of your company over the last few years has been very successful, as we have witnessed. What are the reasons for this constancy?

JR: We are actually celebrating our 40th anniversary this year, which makes me very proud. Since my father founded the company, we have continued to develop, but always with small, well-considered steps. We have proven and tested structures in the company, but we have always been open to new ideas. In addition to international business, which is constantly growing, we can also benefit from our new location. But the real engine of our growth is customer satisfaction. In every detail of the plant, we try to offer our customers the best technical and sustainable solution with the quality seal “Made in Germany”.

HTM: Then, we finally wish you continued success and thank you for the interview.





Joern Rohde (left) Hirschvogel Automotive Group, Denklingen, Germany