

L-R: Okan Konyaloğlu, Chairman of Askon Demir Çelik, Demiraslan Konyaloğlu, Honorary President, and Melike Konyaloğlu, Vice Chairman of the Board.



ISMR SAYS:

"ARKU levelling technology is supporting Askon Demir Çelik on its path to growth with new customers and increased order volumes."

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If you want to survive as a company in today's market environment, you have to stand out from the competition. Turkish steel service centre and supplier, Askon Demir Çelik, manages to do this in a variety of ways, and with considerable success.

The company from Denizli in western Turkey, which was founded in 1932 and has 539 employees, has seen a massive growth in exports. Askon Demir Çelik entered the international market in 2018. Today, it generates an annual turnover of 10 million euros in 32 countries.

Most of its exports go to Europe, but the company is also active in countries such as China and South Korea. Its customers mainly come from sectors such as mechanical engineering, mining, the defence industry, ground support equipment and automotive.

A strategy for growth

There are several strategic decisions behind Askon Demir Çelik's growth. To stand out from the competition, for example, thick plates and special steels make up a large part of its product range. The company also offers additional services; components and assemblies instead of steel sheets and laser-cut parts, or supply chain management instead of just deliveries. Quality also plays an

important role in its strategic considerations.

However, the human resource policy through which the company is driving its growth is particularly noteworthy. "We are

experiencing a

shortage of skilled workers in every country we work, including Turkey," explained Murat Özdemir, the company's deputy general director.

As the situation was becoming more difficult by the day, Askon Demir Çelik took the initiative and founded an academy three years ago. The company also trains women at the academy for office and production roles.

PARTNERS IN PROGRESS

Turkish steel service centre and supplier, Askon Demir Çelik, shares its strategy for growth and the results of its latest machinery investments with ISMR.

Askon Design Centre, a sister company of Askon Demir Çelik, offers a selection of decorative sheet metal items (subject to particularly stringent flatness requirements). Here, you can see one of these decorative items (before and after the precision levelling process).



The finished decorative items are marketed worldwide.



With levelled sheets, subsequent processes (such as welding, bending or folding) are more consistent.

“We primarily level special steels of up to 15mm thick with the smaller machine and up to 40mm thick with the larger one,” reported Özdemir.

Mechanical engineering customers in Turkey, as well as more widely in Europe, particularly value flat and stress-free metal sheet and plate.

“These machines are particularly suitable for levelling laser-cut, punched and flame-cut parts,” added Toygar Üner, Sales Director, Bilol Makine Mümessillikleri (ARKU’s Turkish sales partner). “Within a very short time, the FlatMaster® delivers the parts flat and virtually stress-free. Subsequent processes (such as welding, bending or folding) are faster and more reliable,” he added.

“Askon Demir Çelik has invested 25 million euros into its machinery over the past four years”



Askon Demir Çelik trains specialists at its new academy.

Askon Demir Çelik’s customers are also impressed by the benefits.

“We have levelled sheet metal and parts for some customers, even though they didn’t ask for it, free of charge. This convinced them so much that they are now ordering levelled materials,” confirmed Özdemir.

The partnership principle

The ARKU levellers have also made life easier for Askon Demir Çelik’s employees. Before the two FlatMaster® machines came to Denizli, employees at Askon Demir Çelik had to level their sheet metal or parts using press-brakes or roll-bending machines.

“Our female welders and laser machine operators previously worked at home or in agriculture. Now they can earn their own money here,” emphasized Özdemir.

To further promote women, the company joined the UN Women Empowerment Programme and the UN Global Compact initiative in 2022.

“People always move things forward, regardless of the technology,” Özdemir confirmed.

An eye on quality

To achieve the necessary quality for its export business, Askon Demir Çelik has invested 25 million euros into its machinery over the past four years. This included two FlatMaster® precision levellers from ARKU, a smaller FlatMaster® 55 and a larger FlatMaster® 120, which were later joined by the EdgeBreaker® 4000 deburring machine.



The two ARKU levelling machines have made work easier for the specialists at Askon Demir Çelik. L-R: Büşra Süpçin, Sales Support Assistant; Burcu Ağaçayak, Sales Support Executive; Batuhan Arslan, Sales Representative; Caner Uyar, Sales Executive and Murat Özdemir, Deputy General Manager.

FOCUS ON SURFACE FINISHING



“This not only required a lot of experience but can sometimes be a labour-intensive and time-consuming process. With our levelling machines, Askon Demir Çelik can save time and energy, whilst improving quality,” ARKU told *ISMR*.

“Just a few days of training are enough for someone to be able to operate the ARKU machines,” highlighted Özdemir.

However, the company’s contract manufacturing activities mean that its employees are constantly dealing with new parts. According to Özdemir, its skilled workers must continue to gain experience after training until they have mastered all the mechanics of levelling.

Askon Demir Çelik became aware of ARKU through its close contact with ARKU’s Turkish sales partner, Bilol Makine. Although Özdemir and his colleagues visited trade fairs to find out about the levellers, Bilol Makine also established contact with other ARKU users in Turkey with whom Askon Demir Çelik specialists were able to exchange information.

“They helped us to understand the added value of levelling and deburring with ARKU machines,” said Özdemir. However, it was another offer that tipped the scales.

“We put our trust in ARKU and Bilol Metal for after-sales service and quality,” continued Özdemir, adding, “Bilol is always at our side.”

In conclusion

All in all, Özdemir confessed himself to be very satisfied with the ARKU machines.

Askon Demir Çelik was not only able to acquire new customers, as a result of its new levelling capabilities, but its existing customers have also increased their order volumes or used the new services.

However, the service centre still has big plans....

“In five years, we want to be one of the best

“Askon Demir Çelik was not only able to acquire new customers, as a result of its new levelling capabilities, but its existing customers have also increased their order volumes or used the new services”

steel service centres in the world,” outlined Özdemir.

“To achieve this, we need the right processes, the right employees and the right technology, including machines. ARKU Maschinenbau gives us good support to achieve our goals and is one of our most important partners,” he concluded. ■

About ARKU

ARKU, founded in 1928 as a family-owned company, is a global specialist in roller levellers and press feeding technology with nearly 60 years of experience. ARKU offers an extensive range of high-capacity and precision levellers, as well as deburring and edge-rounding machines. This portfolio is completed with the addition of part-handling solutions for levelling and deburring machines.

With its headquarters at Baden-Baden, Germany, and ISO-certified facilities in Cincinnati (USA) and Kunshan (China), the company operates in over 30 countries. ARKU also offers toll processing services at its four levelling and deburring locations with its machines.

ARKU’s product range includes precision levellers; deburring and edge-rounding machines for parts; automated parts handling via robots; in-line levellers; cut-to-length lines; press feeding lines and coil entry lines for roll formers.

The company also provides engineering expertise to manufacturing industries including automotive; railway equipment; shipbuilding; construction and furniture, as well as laser job shops and others.

ARKU has now opened a second plant in Bühl, 15km from its main site at Baden-Baden. All its deburring machines and smaller straightening machine models are now produced there.



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