

LOHSE builds largest valves in company history

In 2020 the LOHSE Group has followed a clear trend: The valves delivered by the company worldwide are becoming ever larger. After delivering a shut-off valve with an orifice of about 1.20 metres in the middle of last year to a Spanish paper factory in San Sebastian, the company received a contract this year that puts all previously manufactured valves in the shade.

A pulp factory in South America sent an exclusive order to LOHSE for production of two valves with an orifice of 1.80 metres, or according to the correct specifications of the Heidenheim-based valve manufacturer: two shut-off valves with a nominal diameter of 1800 millimetres. Like the model that was delivered to Spain, the entire apparatus is several metres long and weighs several tons. “These are two of the biggest shut-off valves that LOHSE has ever built”, explains Managing Director Ulrich Sekinger.

The giant valves are used under a 70 metre high pulp tower in a South American paper factory. “The dimensions are not only impressive”, Sekinger explains. “The engineering is a special challenge.” The valves, with a nominal diameter of 1800 millimetres, have to withstand an operating pressure of up to seven bar, under constant load.

“In recent years we have become an in-demand specialist for large shut-off valves for the paper industry”, says Sekinger. Of course, LOHSE also continues to produce diverse variants of smaller and more compact valves, including not only regulating valves and reject valves, but also traps, gates, rotary brakes and other valves. But in a visual comparison of a shut-off valve with a nominal diameter of 50 millimetres and one with a nominal diameter of 1600 millimetres, one cannot fail to notice the sheer mass of material. The valve plate has a thickness

of about five centimetres, with a length of almost ten metres, and weighs an impressive 13.7 tons. “Valves of this size are used primarily in the pulp industry as outlet valves under the pulp towers”, explains Sekinger. In the summer of 2019 LOHSE had already delivered a 1200 mm shut-off valve to the PAPELERA GUIPUZCOANA DE ZICUÑAGA SA. company in Spain, where it was successfully installed in a pulp tower with a height of 35 metres.

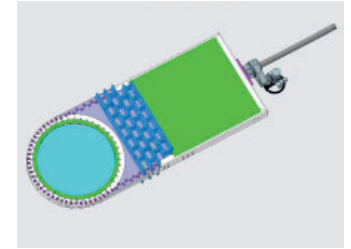
Despite the size, the engineering of such valves requires much attention to detail. The valves are

certified to DIN EN 10204, and bronze slide rails and rings provide for smooth opening and closing of the valves. The extremely high operating pressures required of valves of this size can be achieved only with an extensively ribbed housing. But fragile custom versions are also no problem. “Our company has always had a high level of product diversification”, says Sekinger. The majority of components are manufactured and assembled at the main factory in Heidenheim-Oggenhausen. In addition to production, LOHSE also offers servicing and repair

of the valves, which meanwhile are in demand in numerous different industries around the world. “Made in Germany is an important competitive advantage in this industry”, explains Sekinger.

The demand for these valves, which are also used in the new Palm paper factory, has resulted in steady revenue for the entire Group in 2020, which in addition to the valve division also includes a machine factory. “We are satisfied with this year’s business development”, explains Sekinger. “The valve division has even improved its position in comparison with the previous year.” There have been no interruptions in production or delivery due to the pandemic. The company is expected to match the previous year’s figures, according to Sekinger. For the coming year, the LOHSE Group is “cautiously optimistic”. Although the order books are full enough, a hesitation to invest is perceptible in some industries. “What the future holds is unclear especially in mechanical engineering, where some projects have been postponed and other more urgent ones are in promising negotiation.”

Nevertheless, LOHSE is preparing for the future, and will be recruiting new employees in the coming year again, as the managing director explains. The focus



3-D CAD model of the DN 1800 gate valve.

will be especially on welders and fitters. “Work experience would be desirable, but is not as crucial as the willingness to continually advance within the company”, Sekinger emphasises. Above all, it is important for new employees to enjoy the challenges of working in a diversified company that has satisfied customers in numerous sectors worldwide.



DN1200 outlet valve with electric actuator under a 35 m high pulp tower.



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