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Digital coating processing – effective, sustainable and transparent

When tools are reconditioned, the cost of order processing is often very high. Oerlikon Balzers and c-Com are therefore developing an app for this together.

Cooperation between Oerlikon Balzers and c-Com

In an effort to make manufacturing as cost-effective as possible and to use raw materials in a sustainable manner, many tools are reground and recoated. The tool passes through multiple stations in the reconditioning process, which are generally implemented by differing companies. To ensure that the orders can be processed and assigned accordingly, the tools are recorded multiple times. This process is very time-consuming for everyone involved, i.e. the machine operators, regrinders and coaters. Physical process cards pass through the entire process chain together with the orders. A regrinder who has sent tools for coating is not aware of the current order status. This results in frequent inquiries. Coaters, regrinders and even tool users do not have an overview that indicates how often a tool has already been reground or recoated. In some cases, the number of times a tool has been reground is indicated only on the tool shank. Overall, the benefit is offset by the large amount of time and effort required.

In cooperation with Oerlikon Balzers, c-Com is therefore developing an application that will enable considerably more effective and transparent order processing. The prototype was presented at the EMO trade fair in Hanover. The only requirement for using digital coating processing is that the tools be serialised with a unique identification number.

The application from c-Com exchanges data with the “myBalzers” customer portal of Oerlikon Balzers. This way, order processing is digitalised from start to finish, and all supporting documents are available online. Documents such as delivery notes, invoices or order confirmations can be shared easily. The status of each coating

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order can be called up in real time. Inquiries about the order status are no longer necessary – a quick look at the application provides all the information.

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In addition, the entire order processing process is sped up because the recorded order data is available for all subsequent process steps. Tools are returned to machine operators more quickly after reconditioning. Given the fact that manual data input is greatly reduced, the process is also less prone to mistakes.

Machine operators also have access to all the important information on their tools at all times. Thanks to the collaborative approach of c-Com, they can access all the information in the cloud. They know how often their tool has been reground and can obtain comprehensive information on the coating. This data is tremendously useful for optimising processes. The cause of difficulties with the tool's performance can be identified and eliminated more quickly.

The interconnectivity of the entire supply chain and the resulting comprehensive transparency, which is one of the overall goals c-Com is pursuing with its open-cloud platform, is expanded considerably by involving the coaters.

Captions:

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