



Date: 13.10.2022

MAPAL precision tools for Portugal: ÁLAMO Ferramentas Technology partner and expert in the die & mould sector

MAPAL is represented in Portugal by the company ÁLAMO Ferramentas. Managing Director Rui Moreira founded the sales agency in 2009 to concentrate exclusively on promoting the sale of the MAPAL tool and service range. Other products, such as dosing pumps, are offered on a smaller scale. The company is based in Marinha Grande and employs nine people to serve clients throughout the country. A second office is located in Oliveira de Azemeis.

ÁLAMO Ferramentas' customers come from many backgrounds. In addition to companies in the automotive industry, general machine engineering and the aerospace industry, the commercial agency primarily serves companies from the die & mould sector, which has a long tradition in Portugal. Manufacturing high-quality dies and moulds began in the 18th century with the manufacturing of glass products. With the advent of polymers and their industrialisation in the 1940s, mould making for glass evolved into mould making for plastics. Using the existing expertise in this area, many new companies broke into the Portuguese market, benefiting from the great expansion of this new industry. There are currently around 600 companies operating in the die & mould sector in Portugal, most of which are small and medium-sized enterprises. Portugal is the eighth largest manufacturer of moulds in the world and number three in Europe, behind Germany and Italy.

New products for the die & mould sector

ÁLAMO Ferramentas has been supporting its customers in the development of efficient and resource-saving manufacturing processes for years now. The entire MAPAL tool portfolio is used for this. If required, the experts develop customised machining concepts for the customers and support them in optimisation tasks. "We strive to achieve optimal results and select tools that meet the high demands of our customers", emphasises Moreira. MAPAL and ÁLAMO Ferramentas work hand in hand together, particularly

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in the die & mould sector. “Aside from the tools typical for mould making, such as ball nose, corner radius and high-feed milling cutters, the drills from the ECU drill series are in high demand in the sector”, reports Moreira. These drills can be used to machine different workpiece materials. Drill reamers from the MEGA-Drill-Reamer series, which are used for both drilling and reaming, are also frequently used. With the support of MAPAL, ÁLAMO expanded its range of end milling cutters. The new products are based on standard products from MAPAL, but are optimised with mould-specific features, for example for machining corner radii or for relief cutting. The first series of these tools, with machine workpiece material hardnesses of up to 48 HRC, was an instant success. In the meantime, end milling cutters for workpiece materials up to 58 HRC are also available. The tools in the OptiMill-Uni-HPC-Pocket and OptiMill-Tro series are also popular, as are drills from the Tritan series and HighTorque Chuck hydraulic chucks. “With these products, our customers achieve optimal results. They prove our high level of competence in the die & mould sector. We’re very proud that the customers appreciate this”, emphasises Moreira.

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Unrivalled range of services

ÁLAMO Ferramentas has also expanded its range of services and introduced a CAD/CAM service for its customers two years ago. “More often than not, offering this service is actually a door opener, because there is no competition in this area in Portugal”, reports Moreira. The experts at ÁLAMO Ferramentas plan the machining strategy for the entire part and define both the tools to be used and their cutting parameters. Based on the simulation, the customer immediately recognises the time required to complete a part and can decide at an early stage whether machining the part is worthwhile for them. “The feedback we get from customers about this service is very positive”, says Moreira.

Good perspectives

Market researchers predict good growth prospects for the Portuguese die & mould sector. The use of products made from plastics and recycled materials continues to increase in all areas of life. This means that, more than ever, innovative machining concepts and efficient manufacturing

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processes are needed. ÁLAMO Ferramentas wants to continue to offer its customers economic added value and help them stand out from the competition. MAPAL's sales representative is expanding capacity at its headquarters in Marinha Grande. The company has acquired a new hall there. "Once the construction work is completed, we will move our office there and set up a technical centre with a demo CNC machining facility and a training area for customers", Moreira reports.

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Captions:

The ÁLAMO Ferramentas team (from left to right): Ana Nunes (Administration), Rui Moreira (Managing Director), João Nascimento (CAM Expert Sales), António Santos (Technical Consultant Region South), Wesley Reis (Mechatronics Expert Sales),

PRESS RELEASE



Date: 13.10.2022

Marco Vieira (Technical Consultant Region North), André Bastos (Technical Consultant Region Central) © ÁLAMO Ferramentas

Words:	750
Characters:	4.018
Characters with spaces:	4.760

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