

# Press Release

## **Gottwald Customer Workshop a Success**

### **"Customer Voice" Campaign: Understanding Operators' Needs**

*Rotterdam (The Netherlands), ITL 2003, 4 November 2003* – In conjunction with its Customer Voice campaign, Gottwald Port Technology, the world's leading supplier of Mobile Harbour Cranes, recently staged a highly successful customer workshop targeted at customers from Italy, Norway and the UK.

#### **Input for New Product Ideas**

Competitive advantage comes from understanding customers' current and future needs. As a forward-thinking company, Gottwald Port Technology has always listened to its customers. To respond even more effectively to customer requirements, Gottwald recently initiated its Customer Voice campaign.

Held in Düsseldorf, Germany, from September 30 – October 2, 2003, the well-attended customer workshop provided an ideal platform to obtain even more "voice-of-the-customer" input and to identify critical features that will provide a recognised competitive advantage for companies in the cargo handling business.

The response was exceptionally positive. Alan Mundy, Manager of Engineering Maintenance at PD Teesport, who attended the event said: "I am sure I speak on behalf of all participants when I say that we have all embraced the idea of this workshop. This event offered a unique opportunity for us, as crane operators, to share experiences, to make suggestions and give feedback on how Gottwald can further improve its products and usability."

The agenda covered a wide range of topics including ease of maintenance, operation, convenience, functionality, quality and various options and accessories. Customers and experts shared their knowledge, ideas and views about future trends in the use and application of Mobile Harbour Cranes.

Manfred Beyer, Gottwald's Director of Design and Development, is very satisfied with the workshop: "This kind of event was virgin soil to us and we were very keen to see whether it would fulfil our expectations. We were all the more pleased to note that all the participants had prepared themselves very well. The workshop promoted fruitful discussions, information-sharing and ideas about what Gottwald could and should do in the near future."

Against the background of the many speeches and discussions, Gottwald opened the doors of their production facilities and the customers were given a comprehensive insight into the production process. There was huge interest in the visit to the test area. To provide a break from the workshop environment and to give participants a chance to get to know each other, Gottwald also arranged for a joint visit to the historic Old Town of Düsseldorf. This event was enthusiastically received and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Giuseppe Di Lisa, Gottwald's new Sales Director pointed out: "This was a very promising event. I would like to thank all participants for making so many valuable contributions. This workshop was another step forward in our work towards optimising customer relations", and he added: "We take our customers seriously and the ideas and needs expressed in the workshop must now be translated into action. This will of course not happen overnight. We shall now revise the existing production plans for the further implementation of new ideas and evaluate opportunities that will push our client's business forward."

### **Customers are Gottwald's Yardstick**

Ever since the company's earliest days, Gottwald Port Technology has had an open ear to what the market requires, and to the wishes of its ever more demanding customers. The proximity to customers has always had a positive impact on product development. It was in 1998, for example, that close customer contact laid the foundations for a completely new idea – the creation of the Gottwald HSK Portal Harbour Crane series. To further strengthen cooperation with customers, Gottwald intends to continue its Customer Voice campaign and run more customer workshops in the near future.

### **About Gottwald**

Gottwald Port Technology GmbH, located in Düsseldorf (Germany), is the world's leading supplier of Mobile Harbour Cranes (HMK series). The company produces a comprehensive range of Mobile Harbour Cranes with lifting capacities of up to 120 tonnes and radii of up to 56 m, in addition to the recently introduced rail-mounted Portal Harbour Cranes (HSK series). Its Automated Port Technologies Division offers a multitude of services for terminal operators. These services range from conceptual design and operational layout, basic engineering of equipment and systems to Automated Guided Vehicles and Automated Container Stackers. In 2002 the company sold 66 Mobile Harbour Cranes worldwide.

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