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PRESS INFORMATION

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Sepro is Having Another Record Year; Collaboration Called Key to Success

At the end of 2015, and for the third year in a row, Sepro Group will celebrate record sales. The only question is exactly how big an increase the final figures will reveal. Bookings through mid-October have already exceeded the total recorded in 2014, which was €79.2 million and the company anticipates it will surpass that number by at least 13%, exceeding €90 million. Sepro is headquartered in La Roche sur Yon, France.

Jean-Michel Renaudeau, CEO of Sepro, attributes the company's remarkable growth to its on-going commitment to collaboration. "Today," he explains, "Sepro is among the top three suppliers of robots to the global plastics industry and some people might ask how a relatively small, independent French company could achieve such results. The answer is that we did it by multiplying our own capabilities through partnerships with other companies who want to change the robotic automation market. By being open to collaboration with injection-molding-machine manufacturers, other automation companies, and research institutions, Sepro has been able to make big things happen in a short period of time."

Since the depths of the Economic Crisis in 2009, Sepro's turnover has increased almost 250%. This remarkable record of success is the result of a major commitment to research and development, and to business and technology partnerships. Virtually every product the company sells today has been developed or redesigned in the last seven years. Sepro has invested heavily in expanding operations in the United States and Germany, its two largest markets outside France, while also building its base in developing markets like Brazil and China. A new daughter company will open in Canada in 2016.

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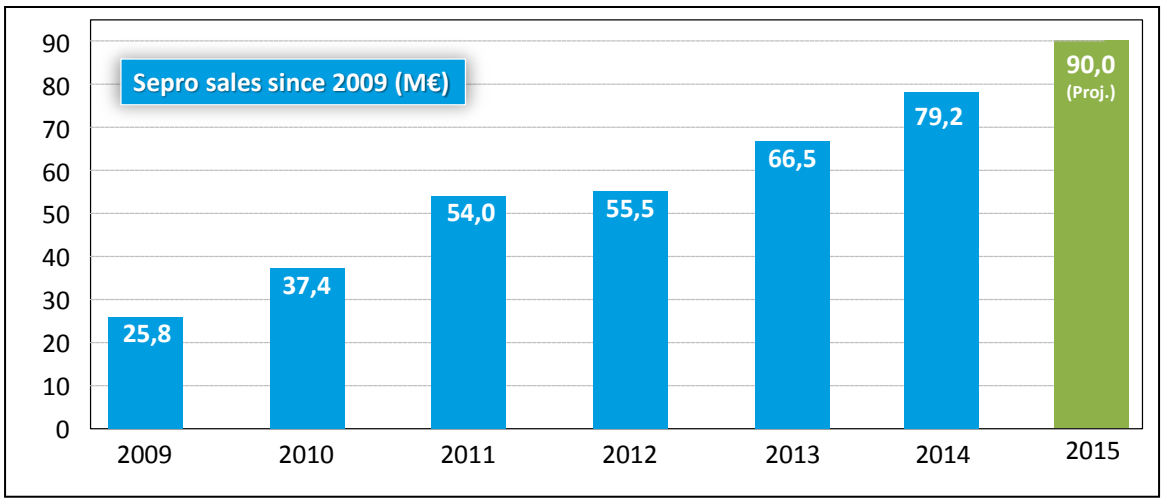

As an example of collaboration with technology partners, Renaudeau points to his company's work with Stäubli Robotics that led to development of all-servo wrist that adds two additional axes of servo motion to the proven 3-axis Cartesian platform to create a 5-axis robot with exceptional flexibility. Sepro added its proprietary Visual 3 control to a Stäubli 6-axis articulated-arm robot so users could program the robot with the Cartesian coordinates that molders are familiar with.

Sepro also has partnership agreements with seven different injection-molding-machine manufacturers, allowing those companies to offer their customers a complete automation package that includes the molding machine and the robot. Some are private label agreements in which the robots are offered under the molding machine brand name and, in some cases, robot controls are integrated into the IMM controls. In other situations, a Sepro robot and Sepro controls are simply offered as a part of the equipment package. At the present time, these OEM packages account for over 15% of Sepro sales.

RESEARCHING THE FUTURE OF ROBOTICS

However, technological leadership is not only about the products a company can offer today. It is also about looking toward the future. With that in mind, Sepro is also actively working with organizations such as the Robotics Institute at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, PA. Established in 1979, the Institute was the first such institution at a U.S. university. It conducts basic and applied research into practical and theoretical approaches to robotic science. Working with Sepro, researchers are assessing the way humans, computers and robots interact with a vision toward developing the next generation of robot and injection-molding machine controls.

Of course, this collaboration has been and will continue to be good for Sepro, but Jean-Michel Renaudeau makes it clear that it is also good for customers. "Because we collaborate," he explains, "we don't have to convince molders that the robots we make will meet their needs. Instead, we talk. We learn what they require and then we show them that, with Sepro, they have a choice – in fact, they have a free choice. Because we offer the broadest range of robot sizes and designs, because we make them available

separately or as part of a complete machine package, because we are set up to serve them anywhere in the world, Sepro simply gives processors more options. That is the real benefit of collaboration and I am convinced that this has been the secret to our success in recent years."

Sepro Group was one of the first companies in the world to develop Cartesian beam robots for injection-molding machines, introducing its first CNC controlled "manipulator" in 1981. Today, Sepro is one of the largest independent sellers of Cartesian robots. Customers around the world are supported by wholly-owned daughter companies in Germany, Spain, Benelux, the United Kingdom, the United States, Mexico, Brazil and China. Numerous direct sales and service offices as well as independent business partners, distributors and service hubs extend Sepro's global network to over 40 other countries. To date, Sepro has equipped more than 30,000 injection-molding machines worldwide.

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