

PRESS RELEASE

Weinsberg, 6th July, 2009

Compact solution for heavy loads

Custom manipulator with three synchronous hoisters lifts aluminium profiles up to 18 metres in length

Schletter GmbH, the largest supplier of solar mounting systems in Europe, has commissioned Vollert Anlagenbau to design a custom manipulator with three hoisters that can work together or separately to lift profiles weighing up to 9 tons with a maximum length of 18 metres. The manipulator will be used in a new buffer warehouse and is extremely compact to ensure optimal utilisation of vertical space.

Schletter GmbH, headquartered in Kirchdorf/Haag in northern Bavaria, has been specialising in lightweight construction for 40 years. With approximately 400 employees and a production area measuring 30,000 m², the company manufactures components for the automotive and railway industries in addition to modular mounting systems and support structures for solar equipment. A new facility will provide space for additional presses and a thermal aging oven. Vollert Anlagenbau in Weinsberg was commissioned to link the individual production plants and handle inventory in the 140-metre long, 17-metre wide buffer warehouse using a special-purpose crane.

Limited Ceiling Height and Heavy Loads

Engineers had to take two key requirements into account. The manipulator must be able to lift profiles measuring 6, 12, and 18 metres in length using ultra-compact hoisters and running gear so that vertical storage space can be optimally used. The ceiling height of the warehouse is limited to approximately 8.7 metres on one side due to building regulations. An overhead manipulator spanning 17 metres with running gear that can move sideways through the facility provided the solution here. The trolley houses three hoisters, each of which can lift three tons or be combined with another or both remaining hoisters to lift a single load in unison. "Synchronous operation is critical to prevent heavy profiles from deforming in transit," explains Henry Schulze, project manager in charge at Vollert. "The solution also has a vertical lift height of 5.40 metres despite the low ceiling." Up to five transport buckets can be stacked on top of each other. The controller and transport guidance system from Vollert automatically ensure that all stacking operations are carried out properly and make the best use of available space. Around 50 percent of the profiles are 12 metres long; 25 percent measure 6 and the remaining 25 percent 18 metres in length.

The heavy-application specialists at Vollert need roughly one year to plan and construct the plant. The new warehouse should be ready for service at the beginning of 2010. Progress can be tracked via an Internet Web cam at www.schletter.de.

About Vollert Anlagenbau GmbH

As specialists for heavy loads and large parts, Vollert Anlagenbau GmbH develops turnkey intralogistic concepts for the aluminum and metal industry. As a general contractor and full-service provider, the service range encompasses state-of-the-art material flow, storage and packaging technology as a stand-alone solution or integrated into a larger logistics environment.

Whether fully automated mega-high bay systems for aluminum coils, intelligent material flow systems for the leading aluminum extrusion press manufacturers, the world's most efficient storage and retrieval machines for the storage of sheet metal plates, automatic crane systems for 50 tons and more or the most modern surface coating systems – Vollert is everywhere.

Vollert's plant and machine solutions are used in more than 80 countries worldwide. Its subsidiaries in Asia and South America also strengthen the sales activities. Vollert employs 250 people at its company headquarters in Weinsberg. **www.vollert.de**

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Image 1

Schletter's new production facility is currently under construction. Aluminium profiles will be manufactured here in lengths of 6, 12, and 18 metres from 2010. A custom manipulator from Vollert provides for efficient transport and automatic storage in the 140-metre long buffer warehouse.

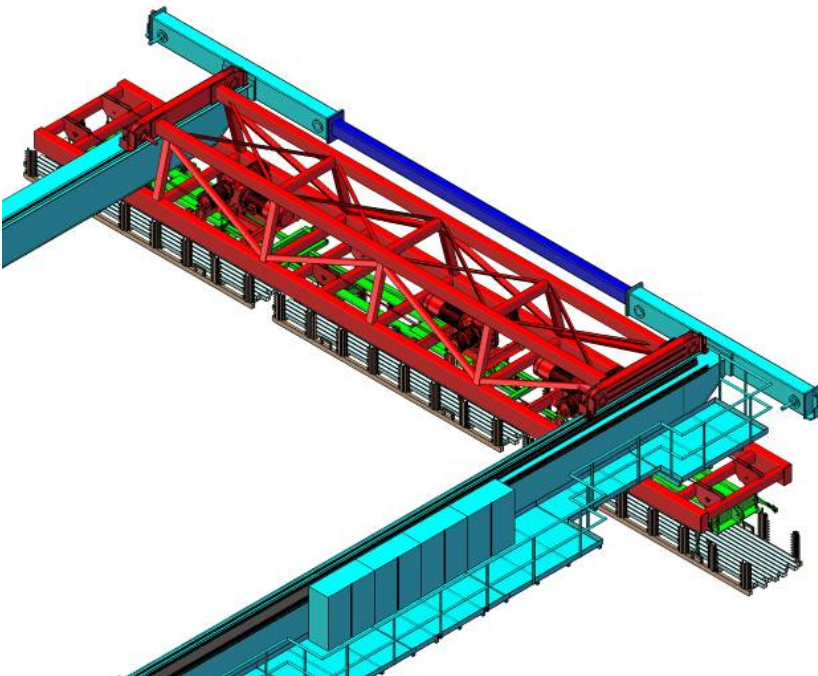


Image 2

CAD simulation of the customer manipulator: Hoisters on the trolley (red) enable synchronous lifting of up to three transport buckets containing profiles between 6 and 18 metres in length (grey). The compact design also maximizes lift height to ensure optimal use of space.

SOURCE: Schletter GmbH



Bild 3

Aluminium profiles from Schletter as used for mounting solar systems.



Bild 4