



Nicolás Correa and Catoire-Semi celebrate twenty years of partnership

The milling machines from the Spanish company Nicolás Correa are a key part of the production tools for Catoire-Semi. Its robustness, precision and the quality of after-sales service made a difference for this SME located in Indre that works for the automotive and aeronautical sectors.

The Alliance between Catoire-Semi and Nicolás Correa is already a long story. The family SME from Martizay (Indre) acquired the first Correa milling machine twenty years ago. Since then, it has been searching for the maximum efficiency of its machines, and for this reason it kept two brands instead of four. One of them is for the manufacture of parts smaller than 800 x

800 mm which there are three machines, and nine Correa models for larger parts. The fidelity for this Spanish manufacturer is due to two main reasons: the technical quality of its machines and the after-sales service quality.

“Correa milling machines are very robust”, explains François Jallet, production manager of Catoire for more than 30 years, of which 10 were working in the same building. “These machines offer a great rigidity and precision, which are very important requirements for us due to our hard roughing works with materials like Inconel and titanium, used in the aeronautical sector.” The bridge type is one of the most demanded because it offers a 1375 Newtons meter’s torque with an automatic UAD head working with an accuracy of 1/100e mm, feeds of 30m/min and accelerations of 2m/s² in blocks of up to 30 tons.

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A unique contact person in the After-Sales Service

A good quality of the machines is not enough. “The quality of the After-Sales Service is essential”, insists François Jallet. “The machines are increasingly complex, which sometimes causes small breakdowns regardless of the brand. Thanks to our dealer HBMO –Hervé Bessy and his colleagues in the After-Sales Service- Machine-tool Service, I am always in direct contact with the same person, Gérard Pottier, who has a long machine-tool experience and knows us well. In case of emergency, I know he will answer in a few hours in work-time. Other brands have different working methods. Often, the problems can be solved by phone, and Gérard makes a tele-diagnosis and takes the control of the CN remotely. If it is necessary to replace



Hervé Bessy, Correa salesman, Laure Catoire, president of Catoire-Semi and its production manager François (from left to right).

a part, Machine-tool Service is very effective". "We have a stock in our headquarters in Alençon", explains Hervé Bessy, Correa's agent. "For example, François Jallet called us on a Saturday, and on Monday morning, at 9 am, a technician was already at Catoire-Semi".

UAD, a unique milling head

The election for the tools is made by the user, since he is in the best position to define his needs, but also Correa can offer some help. Catoire technicians in charge of the tools have already been in Spain to learn how to use optimally all the chosen tools. These tools are for the Correa UAD milling head, a unique model which is patented, able to reach 6000 rpm without limitations and offering a precision and rigidity with an unmatched clamping force: 0.02° each 360° in all positions. The set tool-head is extremely robust for damping of hard materials. Before delivery, each spindle is tested during 60 hours.

The last machine arrived to Catoire, the FOX, is a milling machine with 4250 mm wide and 6000 mm on X axis. It is equipped with 2 milling heads with automatic change: a UAD head and an E5E head of 5 continuous axes and 20000 rpm. In

a context of tough competition, the machines rotate in 3x8 for better damping. This FOX includes all technologies developed by Correa, and represents an innovative concept of bridge type milling machine which combines traditional roughing capacity with the speed and precision of high performance machining.

Its vertical axis is completely symmetrical on the design, which improves the machine geometry making it more stable to temperature changes. It includes a unique system that controls the temperature generated in the vertical axis and the guideways are cooled with cold water, providing excellent damping. The column with a cross section of 1100 mm x 1100 mm is filled with concrete also for an optimal damping.

Catoire-Semi, a family history

Catoire-Semi has 85 workers and reaches two thirds of the quota thanks to the aeronautic sector and a third thanks to the automotive. In both of them manufactures forging dies and foundry moulds as well as pre-machined forges for aeronautics.

Founded in 1958 in Sartrouville (Yvelines) by Georges Catoire supported by his wife, in 1970 the business was moved to Martizay (Indre) because the initial workshop was becoming too small. Dominique, the cou-

ple's daughter, took the direction of the enterprise in 2003, and it was in 2013 when she was replaced by her own daughter Laure. For Catoire-Semi, human factors and environmental policies are essential, and both the "silver" grade obtained in the Ecovadis evaluation and a low staff turnover, demonstrate their compromise. The company also collaborates with sandwich course, and has 8 trainees, some



Catoire-Semi workshop's view, a family SME located in Martizay (Indre).

of them who are living in one of the five studio apartments in front of the production facilities.

"Some of them are brilliant. 80% of the trainees start working directly in our enterprise", explains Laure Catoire. "We have embraced some young people who had bad results in the school and came to us". When asked about the company's future, Laure Catoire answers without hesitation: "We have to give humans their truly added value. It is necessary to redesign our jobs to make it more exciting. Raising the income should be a consequence, and not an objective". A turnover that should also take its effort and use it for the international area.