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STEP-G has a long track record as a one-stop-shop supplier

ST Extruded Products Group (STEP-G for short) has been offering our customers in the automotive and rail vehicle sectors the increasingly sought-after “one-stop-shop” approach for many years which has proven itself through numerous projects based on both conventional and alternative drive systems.

Aluminium is the material of choice in many industries due to its numerous positive properties. The billets for our customised aluminium profiles are subject to various requirements – chief among them are weight savings, a key decision-making criterion in today’s market. Compared to other materials, the decision in favour of aluminium means we can make a positive contribution to reducing our carbon footprint and thus ensuring long-term environmental protection.

For suppliers and manufacturers in the automotive and rail vehicle sectors, time and cost savings are an important aspect of making their own production processes even more competitive. As a “one-stop-shop” supplier, STEP-G has become a key partner to these industries – this concept is also increasingly in demand in other sectors and is gradually being rolled out across the board.

What does the “one-stop shop” concept mean? Essentially, it means that component production remains a closed loop along the entire value chain. Especially in the automotive and rail vehicle sectors, this integrated approach is becoming increasingly important. For our customers, a key decision-making and award criterion is the faster processing that this allows; namely, due to the reduced number of interfaces and points of contact throughout the process. Instead of dealing with a host of different subcontractors, the customer can address all key questions to a single, competent and experienced STEP-G employee during the project. To make this possible, many years ago we established in-house STEP-G competence centres for automotive and rail vehicles, which centrally coordinate all individual process steps for our customers and are responsible for ensuring a smooth process flow.

Even the initial contact with our customers is handled by our technical experts at the respective competence centres. Following successful testing and agreement on the final design of the required component, the necessary milestones and purchase orders are determined during the project planning phase. These are needed as the basis for production of the components. Depending on the customer's requirements, the materials can either be produced at our own casting at the STEP-G location in Hettstedt or procured via external sources. Production then takes place at one of STEP-G's international production plants. At the customer's request, the extruded aluminium profiles are subjected to CNC machining or surface finishing. Our finishing options range from simple milling work to comprehensive processing involving several sub-steps, such as welding. The resulting assemblies are then prepared at STEP-G for integration into the customer's series production process before being dispatched from the STEP-G logistics distribution centre – in some cases, using special logistics concepts tailored to the customer's requirements. For example, as a key element of our one-stop-shop approach, the profiles may be packaged in customer racks for immediate use at the customer's plant, thus increasing production efficiency. The components are delivered using a variety of logistics systems, sometimes directly to the customer's production line.

The decisive success factor for our one-stop-shop approach is the close interlocking of our processes with those of our customers, as well as the complete focus of the teams at the STEP-G competence centres on the respective customer projects. Within this framework, STEP-G has repeatedly proven itself to be a highly efficient one-stop-shop supplier in the automotive and rail vehicle sectors. And not just for e-mobility projects, which are increasingly popular, but also for long-term customer projects based on conventional components for vehicles powered by combustion engines. First and foremost, the quality of our customised aluminium solutions continues to be STEP-G's top priority – from the aluminium profiles themselves to complete components and smooth project processing.

The company at a glance

ST Extruded Products Group, or STEP-G, is one of the world's leading producers of extruded aluminium profiles. With production sites in Germany, Belgium and China, STEP-G is a multinational company. The three German press plants in Bitterfeld, Bonn and Vogt are highly specialised and offer a comprehensive range of extruded profiles and bars. The automotive industry and its direct suppliers rely on the company's innovative quality. Other customers are in the aerospace, rail, and mechanical and electrical engineering industries as well as the construction sector. Completing the portfolio are various forms of processing through to component manufacturing. The foundry in Hettstedt with a comprehensive range of standard and special alloys provides reliable technology and consistent availability from one source.

From foundation to the present day

In 1915, the first German factory was opened in Bitterfeld. It was followed in 1921 by the German plant in Bonn, in 1946 by the plant in Duffel, Belgium, and in 1952 by another German plant in Vogt. In 2000, the Chinese plant in Tianjin was commissioned. In 2006, Aleris International Inc. acquired the plants of Corus Aluminium. On 1 March 2015, the Aleris aluminium extrusion operations transferred to the Japanese company Sankyo Tateyama, Inc., a manufacturer of extruded and cast products. In 2019, the foundry in Hettstedt was incorporated into the STEP-G group.

More information is available at www.step-g.com and www.bug.de.