



Tool and Die Industry in Slovenia

Contact: Dr. Brane Semolic, TCS Manager
E-mail: brane.semoli@siol.net

Slovenia has a relatively strong tool and die industry. This industry has traditionally been a significant industrial sector, well-reputed for its technology orientation and quality level. Like other Slovene industrial sectors, the tool and die sector has been confronted with serious obstacles during the last decade since political and economic changes took place. Most of the tool making companies we can categorize as small or medium size enterprises. The structure of the Slovene tool and die industry is similar to that in small Western European countries. Most of the products of this industry are sold to the EU countries. A special segment of this industry represents companies which produce tools and dies for the EU automotive industry.

For Slovenia, the economic and political transition caused the size of the domestic market to be dramatically reduced and, at the same time, the demand from the remaining part of the market to be reduced for a period. As a small country Slovenia also faced the need for a big ratio of foreign trade. How to increase the competitiveness of tool and die industry was the main question at the very beginning of last decade. The initiative came from the managers of the leading companies and RD organizations. The result of this initiative was the national strategic conference of this industry in year 1993. Major industry stakeholders were invited to this conference. One of the conference results was the identification of the industry critical success factors, as follow:

- foreign markets orientation,
- adequate government industrial and trade policy,
- an effort to increase productivity,
- common technological development,
- education and training,
- systems integration and,
- specialization.

The result of these strategic orientations was the start of several projects on the national level. One of this development projects is project of TCS. The start-up and development of Toolmakers Cluster of Slovenia is financially sponsored by the Slovenian Ministry of Economic Affairs.

Toolmakers Cluster of Slovenia (TCS)

Area of Activity:

Toolmakers Industry

Name of the policy or program involved in the development of the cluster

The Slovenian Cluster Pilot Projects Program, established by the Ministry of Economic Affairs. The main goal of this program was to identify and test potential for the clusters development in Slovenia.

TCS Objectives

The basic TCS objectives are:

- to increase the production volume,
- to increase competitiveness on the foreign markets,
- accelerate a technology transfer between “company to company” and “R&D institute to company”,
- to accelerate the development and implementation of a new technologies.

TCS Vision and Development Strategies

The TCS vision is to establish the regional network of high qualified toolmakers companies and supporting organizations as development partners to the EU most advanced industries.

TCS development strategies are:

- horizontal and vertical integration of the companies and organizations involved into the toolmaking business,
- strategy of a concentric diversification – where the tool and die technologies are the TCS key competences,



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- strategy of internal development on the field of TCS strategic key competences and
- the strategy of joint ventures and internationalisation.

TCS markets: automotive industry, household industry, IT & electrical industry, aerospace

TCS Areas of Co-operation

The areas of TCS's collaboration and co-operation are:

- Marketing,
- Customer Relation Management (CRM),
- Supply Chain Management (SCM),
- Joint research and technology development (RTD) and
- TCS's organizational and IT infrastructure.

TCS Results

The project of TCS pilot application development started in year 2000. Results:

- Joint development program,
- Establishment of the **TCS Entrepreneur and Development Centre** as non-profit organization,
- The development of B2B INTERNET portal (www.toolscluster.net)
- TCS Newsletter (4 issues per year),
- TCS joint identity development and presentation on DVD,
- "TCS production capacity pool" available on the TCS INTERNET portal (members only),
- Established TCS "Project Office"
- Established TCS "Project School",
- Start-up of the new company as joint venture of TCS members,
- Etc.

Dr.Brane Semolic

TCS Manager
E-mail:brane.semoli@siol.net

Wednesday, 16 April 2003



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