Particle Foam Materials – Our World
KURTZ Particle Foam Machines
Our Vision

Our competitive lead in technology optimizes quality, costs and delivery service in our customers’ production process.

Our Mission

- We produce and deliver plants, machines, tools and components and render services for the particle foam processing industry.
- The requirements of our customers are the measure for our action.
- Our worldwide network guarantees local service to our partners on a long-term basis.
- We are a member of a strong, diversified group of companies and draw from this extensive synergy potentials.
- As a division of a family business, we place as much emphasis on an appropriate increase of our own capital and its interest, as we do on long-term development and the safeguarding of jobs. Therefore, we pay special attention that all business divisions achieve above-average longterm profitability.

It pays off:

Process Development by KURTZ

According to the Kurtz Group’s vision, Kurtz SERVICES optimizes the quality, costs and delivery time in your production process.

This means, we make our know-how available to you as our partner to achieve your production aims. As only the highest availability of plants and process mastering provide the most decisive advantage in a highly-competitive market.

It is not the investment costs that determine the profitability of a plant. Using our specific know-how, for example, we can analyse the influence of life cycle costs on the value of a plant.

Kurtz SERVICES is always focused on the complete plant. Use the opportunity and let our experts carry out a comprehensive valuation of your production facility. An analysis of relevant processes as well as the diagnosis of weak points considerably increases the efficiency and productivity of your plant. Our experts will be pleased to assist you in securing the best production conditions in your plant and in realising determined improvement potential.
The First Step to Success – High-Performance KURTZ Pre-Expanders

The pre-expander forms the basis for the processing of expandable polystyrene (EPS). KURTZ pre-expanders are the result of the logical implementation of physical processes in machine technology, intensive exchange of the experiences of users and recommendations of raw material manufacturers.

The systems can be adapted to suit all requirements with maximum economic efficiency and reliable quality.

KURTZ pre-expanders guarantee a high degree of automation, reliable controls and reproducibility as well as an evenly expanded product. Ease of operation involves distinct economic advantages.

The demands of processors for shortest cycles and interim storage periods and compliance with the legal requirements in specific countries have led to the development of materials which cool more quickly and are low in pentanes, with a pentane content of just 3 - 4 %. KURTZ recognized this trend very early on and developed the right machinery to satisfy these requirements.

KURTZ offers the processors of thermoplastic foams a full range of pre-expanders:

The product range comprises continuous and batch pre-expanders for block and shape moulding production, laboratory pre-expanders for research and development and HP pre-expanders for density adjustment of EPP.

The expansion vessel volume ranges from 0.15 m³ to 7 m³. With a bead density of 15 g/l a throughput volume of approx. 85 – 3,500 kg/h is achieved.

The new Tex 1000 batch pre-expander stands out by its low energy consumption at above-average throughputs and a precise process control. The beads are of a highly consistent quality and the density is distributed very evenly. The large discharge opening combined with the tilting mechanism of the pre-expander tank allows fast material discharge.

The new ventilation of the pre-expander tank accelerates the media flow during the cycle. This leads to considerably shorter cycle times and energy savings at the same time.

Pre-Expanding

EPS is pre-expanded as expandable beads are fed into the pre-expander. Hot water vapour as a medium first softens the polystyrene beads, and the blowing agent thus released in them is activated. Pre-expansion involves vaporization and thus the swelling of the beads.

During intermediate storage the propellant gas is diffused from the expanded styrene granules and air penetrates. This “packed air” is further processed in a shape moulding machine or block mould.

EPS may also be subject to a second expansion process to achieve lower particle densities. Expandable polypropylene (EPP) is expanded to low densities using so called HP pre-expanders.

**Pre-Expanding Process Flow**

Gas diffusion in the bead

- pentane vapour
- pentane diffusion
- excess pentane
- excess steam
- cell membrane 1.8 µm

**Tex 1000**
- low energy consumption with above-average throughputs

**Batch pre-expansion unit including raw material feeding station, weighing unit and fluid bed**
A comprehensive range of shape moulding machines provides the tailor-made solution for all applications. KURTZ offers the most economically efficient machinery for every requirement – from large-scale series production to the flexible manufacture of a wide variety of small-scale products.

KURTZ shape moulding machines are the international technological yardstick for the processing of expandable thermoplastic foams. They allow processors to keep their options open for all important aspects of the process in the future.

Our customers include well-known processors from the packaging, construction and automotive industries in all the major markets of the world.

Where generally special machines are expected, KURTZ meets the requirements with its diversified and thought-out standard elements.

High-tech production is not only based on material specification and the moulding’s design, but, above all, also requires a high level of development in the machine design. This includes the reliability of function, flexibility in use, energy efficiency, short cycle times, minimization of down times and, not least, the possibility of including efficient handling and material flow systems.

A major advantage of KURTZ is the wide-ranging know-how throughout the complete manufacturing process.

Our engineering departments can design complete factory layouts, which include both simple expansion machines and also the full range of associated supply systems and logistics and handling concepts.

There are two possibilities to obtain the perfect shape moulding machine for relevant applications and their technical requirements and batch sizes.

The machine manufacturer can either offer multiple machine types.
- or there is the KURTZ solution offering three machine lines as standard:

**N-LINE - The Basis**

KURTZ N-LINE shape moulding machines are a solid basic model for EPS shape moulding production. The N-Line series is available in sizes S, M and L covering moulding areas of up to 2.5 m². When designing the N-LINE shape moulding machines, the main focus was put on their functionality and a solid construction.

N-LINE shape moulding machines are predominantly designed for the market outside Europe where most of the raw material is being processed. The shape mouldings are generally not very complicated and are produced in large numbers.

CE-conformity by the machine manufacturer is not required in these countries.

**A-LINE**

Maximum freedom for EPS packagings

**TOP-LINE**

High-end technology for highest demands

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Particle foam materials offer a wide range of possibilities with a broad spectrum of applications. The pre-expanded beads can be further processed either into EPS blocks on so-called block moulds or into mouldings made of EPP, EPE or co-polymers on shape moulding machines.

As a supplier of complete systems, KURTZ is, of course, pleased to be able to offer both kinds of plants. The shape moulding machine gives the product its final shape. The pre-expanded and intermediately stored material is transported into the mould. Hot water vapour - as medium - plastifies the beads and forces them to expand. Then the individual beads get in direct contact and fuse together to form a moulding.
SHAPE MOULDING MACHINES

A-LINE - New Benchmarks

In EPS Processing

Shape moulding machines of the A-LINE series are designed for a maximum operating pressure of 1.5 bar. The machines can be equipped with every common handling option.

KURTZ A-LINE shape moulding machines are available in 4 sizes (S – XL) covering a moulding area of up to 3.2 m². They are characterised mainly by their central docking station. The fixed and movable machine side can be equipped with a number of different steam chambers.

Following mould types can be used with KURTZ A-LINE shape moulding machines:

- original KURTZ moulds
- moulds of competitors in original dimensions
- mono block moulds
- Eco-LTH and LTH moulds

In this way A-LINE shape moulding machines offer maximum freedom to the EPS processors. They can also be extended by options like SQM/EQM and D-Log.

SHAPE MOULDING MACHINES

TOP-LINE - for Highest Demands

In Processing EPS & EPP Particle Foam Materials

Machines of the TOP-LINE series can doubtlessly be named “kings of shape moulding machines”. They are the peak in shape moulding production and are used for applications where normal EPS processing reaches its limits as well as for EPP processing.

Fields of application

- EPP processing (operating pressure up to 5 bar)
- dual density function
- in-mould skinning
- skin moulding
- insert moulding

Main advantages

- KURTZ steaming systems with valve sets developed by KURTZ
- shortest cycle times
- lowest energy consumption
- additional energy savings by free steam chamber design
- longer maintenance intervals
- best accessibility
- SQM/EQM, D-Log and further peripheral equipment reproducibly prove energy efficiency

„HyPo drive“ servo hydraulics

As an option to standard hydraulics, servo hydraulics can be delivered, combining the advantages of both electrics and hydraulics. This means an increase of productivity of up to 20%.

More advantages:

- no constant number of revolutions which means considerably reduced noise level
- unlimited mould design
- constant speed over the whole way
- permanently even force during movements (crack filling, demoulding, ejection, …)
- reduced electrical energy requirement
Unconventionality Is Our Strength
KURTZ Technology also for Individual Solutions

KURTZ shape moulding machines are extremely flexible and ideal for individual configuration. However, there are certain applications which demand special solutions. KURTZ offers a wide range of special machines which are especially designed to meet the customers’ requirements.

When, for example, manufacturing sun visors or bicycle helmets, certain insert parts have to be placed into the mould by hand. In order to ensure that operatives can do this quickly, easily and safely, the technology known as shuttle technology has been developed. This makes it possible to 1.) insert, 2.) weld and 3.) laminate the parts in question in a single automated process. New developments in the area of headrests or side impact cushions in car manufacture open up further areas of application for EPP.

The trend here is also in the direction of foaming and laminating in a single cycle. For this purpose KURTZ offers a special machinery concept with a thermo-forming unit integrated into the shape moulding machine.

Manufacturers of ICF parts (Insulating Concrete Forms, elements used in housing construction) have particular requirements of these machines. Maximum throughput of shape mouldings with plastic or metal inserts are achieved on shuttle machines with, e.g. 3 cavities.

Instead of a shuttle, the rotation technology uses a rotating steam chamber with option for positioning inserts. This saves space and gives shorter cycle times.

The bed and roller version is used by KURTZ for mounting surfaces larger than 2.5 m and very heavy moulds. The moving steam chamber moves along a machine bed: guide rails are not used.

For demanding and complex mouldings with inserts, the Rotax technology was developed. Two identical and horizontally rotatable mould halves are mounted on the fixed side. The counter part is fixed on a conventional and horizontally movable press frame. While a moulding is foamed inside, the operator or a robot can remove finished mouldings from the outside and can equip the mould with inserts for the next cycle. Compared to traditional processes, this technology considerably reduces the cycle times in all fields of application.

The transfer technology uses several moulds for the manufacture of a shape moulding. The beads are fed into a hot mould and sintered together with the assistance of steam. After a brief period in which the pressure of the foam is reduced, they are “transferred” to the cold mould. Contact of the moulding with the relatively cold mould walls cools the foam further and stabilises it to such an extent that the moulding can be removed. This enables high productivity in combination with low energy consumption. The options for inserts and lamination open up further areas of application.

KURTZ also offers solutions for the manufacture of floor heating panels with sound insulation and two densities, also based on the transfer technology.
Lightweight, Inexpensive & Flexible:
The KURTZ EPS Pallet Coated With Foil on Both Sides

Today, EPS pallets with film coating are a sensible alternative to all conventional pallets made of timber, pressboard or by injection moulding. They combine a number of positive properties in only one product and particularly air freight can no longer be imagined without them.

Alongside the great savings in weight of up to 15 kg per pallet, simple cleaning with water, easy handling without the risk of injuries and the additional cushioning and insulation properties, the resistance to abrasion necessary for air transport is also guaranteed.

Specifically for the production of these pallets, KURTZ has developed a unique manufacturing process permitting production of the complete pallet in only one machine.

KURTZ EPS pallets are made in sandwich construction comprising an EPS core and a PS film coating on all sides. After the EPS core has been foamed and when the mould is still hot, the core is directly covered with film and fused with its entire surface by means of steam. In this way the EPS core and film form a solid connection. A trimming of protruding films is normally unnecessary. Compared to other EPS pallets, up to 2.5 kg of film per pallet can be saved with the same dynamic loading capacity.

It is also a fact that amongst all EPS pallets on the market, the KURTZ pallet stands out with currently lowest manufacturing costs. For the 1,200 x 1,000 mm pallet sizes ISO certifications for 500 kg and 1,000 kg dynamic load were obtained.

As a result of varied experience, KURTZ is in a position to develop tailor-made pallets according to most different customer requirements.

Production of Roller Shutter Casings
Customer-Specific High-Tech Solution

Lately, KURTZ was confronted with the topic of producing EPS roller shutter casings. Conventionally, they are produced with driven mono-block moulds. Afters studying all aspects of this project, KURTZ came to the conclusion that the production with a new KURTZ shape moulding machine specifically developed for this purpose was more profitable than common production methods.

Various models that differ in insulation thickness, height, roller shutter diameter and geometry can be realised with only a few moulds. The insulation thickness can be adjusted infinitely and fully automatically on the outside of the roller shutter casing. The total concept consisting of special machine and moulds is much more favourable than all other production methods and guarantees a short ROI.

We developed a vertical machine type K761 V, with steam chamber dimensions of 700 x 6100 mm. The lower steam chamber is in "shuttle" design which moves to an ergonomic position for the operator when inserting the parts. Armouring iron and aluminium bands are put into the mould before filling in order to receive a product that does not have to be reworked afterwards. Simultaneously to the insertion process, the finished product is put on a table docked on the shuttle.

The finished roller shutter casings can also be stacked and palletised automatically by means of subsequent KURTZ linear handling systems.
Technologies

Know-How to Do With The Foaming Process

As a competent partner in the supply of complete plants for the processing of particle foam materials, we have built up quite a lot of process knowledge in the course of 30 years. This is why our machines do not look like ordinary production tools, but optimisation of the processing is at the centre of attention. Many procedures have been developed by KURTZ in the course of the years and patents applied for or legal protection of utility patents provided.

An example of a milestone here is the LTH process patented by KURTZ. It has established itself as a particularly economical process for the production of large quantities of mouldings.

The LTH method leads the energy directly into the foam. The savings in consumption which can be achieved with this innovative modular process are up to 35 % in water, even up to 70 % in air and steam.

The so-called lost-foam method or casting with lost-foam models in sand free of binder is being used to an increasing degree all over the world. The particular know-how in this method is in the design of the moulds. They are equipped with a number of integrated steam chambers, with each individual steam chamber having a separate regulation for steam, air and water.

This technology is mainly used in the automotive industry, e.g. for the production of cylinder heads, brake disks, crankshaft housings, oil pump housings and intake manifolds.

The skin moulding system used by KURTZ is one of the leading refining processes for EPS and EPP mouldings. Shape mouldings can be foamed and coated with film in one working step inside the same machine.
Shape Moulding Applications

We Give Shape to Ideas

EPS mouldings are used as packaging for food and drinks or technical products. They protect and insulate. Seedling trays made of this versatile material offer advantages. In the building industry, sound insulation and floor heating panels but also decoration elements are used. Complete houses are built of so-called ICF elements or are insulated with EPS sheets - a positive contribution to climate protection. In the leisure-time industry, for example, bicycle helmets or fun-boards are made of the all-rounder EPS.

Similar kinds of particle foam materials of polyethylene (EPE), polypropylene (EPP) or co-polymers open extensive possibilities of application with regard to increased heat resistance, form resilience and insulation characteristics - for example in use in the automotive area as SIP’s for side impact protection or as bumper cores.

Technical mouldings can be used as reusable packaging for all shock-sensitive components, as construction parts in high-tech devices or as insulation material for boilers, for example.
The processing window in terms of weight gain, required steam quantity and stabilisation phase is becoming smaller and smaller.

The Monoflex is the solution for the flexible block production. Also in a vertical finish, but with a movable side wall, it provides variable block dimensions. Thanks to the generous design of the side wall drive, 100% recycling material can be used.

As a special solution the Vario block mould is available in horizontal version according to customer requirements.

Blocks produced on KURTZ block moulds excel thanks to a homogeneous distribution of weight, good block fusion and low residual moisture. In combination with short cycle times, KURTZ blocks are guarantors for the fact that the processors can secure an important competitive advantage on their markets thanks to the outstanding quality of their products and also their economical production.

By request, KURTZ can also plan and deliver the required peripheral equipment designed to meet the customer’s production capacity.
Cutting Lines for EPS-Sheet Cutting

Quick, Precise And Economic

In the field of sheet cutting, KURTZ provides all the cutting systems the world markets demand. KURTZ manages to give block processors decisive competitive advantages with innovative technologies.

In view of cutting speed and throughput, the Proline cutting line is beyond competition and is currently one of the fastest plants on the market. The well-proven automatic KURTZ wire adjustment is not only used for sheet cutting but also for trimming and cross cutting.

Besides high cutting speeds, the long stroke technology who was developed and patented by KURTZ provides for an outstanding surface quality in view of smoothness and reduces the picture-frame effect considerably. In this way the thickness tolerances of the cut sheets can be kept at a very low level.

Completely automatic waste disposal systems for the disposal of the trimmings produced in the cutting process not only increase the quality of the products but also ensure that the production systems present themselves in a flawless condition.

The plant control with graphic user interface enable simple and clear operation even of complex plants. If requested, an integration in a higher-level PPS system is possible as well as teleservice by means of an adapter.
Handling Systems

Fully Automatic Factory

Handling systems are used to rationalise work processes in the production of mouldings in such a way that production and removal of the mouldings from the machine is done semi or completely automatically as far as possible.

The profitability of the use of handling systems is primarily dependent on the location or the wage level in the region in question. Reduction of personnel costs is in the foreground.

The mouldings’ design, e.g. contour, surface quality, weight, integration of inserts or room height, has a great influence on the possibility of use of handling devices. Stackability and stacking capacity of the mouldings, venting of the stacks and the stack heights must be taken into account in the run-up.

In block processing companies, very personnel-intensive manual work is frequently done. KURTZ machine concepts with intelligent handling systems help the processors to recognise and set free rationalisation potentials in their company.

KURTZ provides processors with a wide range of highly specialised handling components for a state-of-the-art material flow concept tailor-made to match the requirements.

KURTZ prepares ideal handling concepts and solutions in close cooperation with the customer. These concepts meet the customers’ structural conditions and requirements, no matter if it is a fully-automatic block or shape moulding plant.

KURTZ handling and automation concepts guarantee a short ROI for the customer.
Processing of EPS, EPE and EPP provides attractive possibilities of diversification even for “material outsiders”. KURTZ Engineering realises complete production solutions for professionals and starters for maximum productivity, flexibility and profitability at any location in the world they desire.

KURTZ Engineering includes project analysis, consultancy, planning, cost calculation, system construction, installation and commissioning, training of personnel, application technique support and service on site.

KURTZ complete solutions provide all the professional benefits which make processing of thermoplastic foams competitive: minimisation of investment costs, technology saving energy and personnel, tailor-made and universal processing of raw materials, and flexibility due to mould receivers independent of the system. Just-in-time production, profitability even in small series, forward-looking recycling etc. Tell us the products you would like to manufacture and we will draw up the professional complete solution for you.

Quality assurance is indispensable for the documentation of constant product quality. It demands a regular check of the steam, water, air and vacuum media and of the production materials being used.

This includes an incoming check of the raw materials and an optimal monitoring of the production data during production. The real-time recording of the process parameters during the production process documents the quality of the products. By connecting the individual control units to a host computer, these measures are considerably facilitated, automated and freed from input errors.

Recycling material can be fed to the production circulation via the internal operational circulation through crushing, dedusting and feeding devices, resulting in savings of raw material.

Raw materials that can no longer be used can be processed further either mechanically or thermally.
The appropriate filling of the mould is an important step when producing mouldings of particle foams. The quality of the moulding is substantially determined by the filling process. Density distribution and an even filling are of particular importance. The efficiency of the filling systems used has a significant influence on the resulting energy consumption. Total air consumption and the cooling of the mould walls are decisive in this connection. For a long time KURTZ has been providing cost-saving solutions to achieve the optimum filling process.

B-Jet, the filling injector with turnable upper part offers easy maintenance and reduces the times for the mould change. Furthermore it is pressure-tight and vacuum sealed.

When pressure filling with certified pressure tanks, counter pressure filling to reduce the volume of the beads or low-pressure filling – the maximum admissible loading of material in the airflow is always the focal point.

The steaming of the filling injectors’ closing piston avoids fusion failures at the moulding. Large-dimensioned injectors allow maximum material throughput, also with big-size beads.

The filling injector B-Jet “TraceLess” fills the cavity indirectly and thus protects filigree mould surfaces, mould decors or coatings from wearing. This reduces the costs for mould maintenance considerably and extends the mould’s lifetime. Another advantage of the B-Jet “TraceLess” filling injector is that there is no “plug” at the moulding anymore and the plunger hardly leaves any traces.

Ejection function and micro-injectors complete the programme range. Filling injectors from our competitors can also successfully be replaced by the more capable KURTZ design.

With more than 100 different designs KURTZ is in a position to provide the most suitable filling injector for every application.

IMPOSSIBLE? No! - The KURTZ B-Jet “TraceLess” can fill around the corner without leaving any traces.

In the production of particle foam products, processing plants are always subject to fluctuations in process energies. Monitoring physical values and supply media as well as recording measured data are great advantages for the processor. When the individual operation windows required for each processing plant are fixed, a safe operation as well as correct and constant process parameters can be proved.

At the same time, D-Log helps to cut wastes in production by displaying operation anomalies. Steam, air and water can be monitored regarding pressure and temperature. Vacuum and material transport should also be checked for pressure. The results of this monitoring can be used to simply determine measures to improve the plant availability. Besides a visual display, D-Log can be used to switch off a plant in case the measured data are outside the defined range of tolerance.

The dramatic rise in the oil price led to a cost explosion in the particle foam industry.

The KURTZ SQM monitoring method can measure the steam consumption and evaluate the energy costs per cycle or check optimisation measures for single shape moulding machines with minimal effort. The KURTZ SQM does not require a common flow metre (vortex shedding device) with necessary settling sections. Some pressure and path sensors connected to the media block of the KURTZ shape moulding machine and an analyser unit are enough. The measured values are displayed on a laptop or machine terminal.

The extension, the KURTZ EQM measuring method, can additionally record air and electricity consumption. It contributes to a further optimisation of the processes and thus to a considerable reduction of energy consumption in particle foam processing.

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Service

World-Wide, 24 Hours, Unique!

The area of service and after-sales is a strategic factor with KURTZ. Our long-term objective in after-sales is ensuring the production properties of KURTZ machines for a long service life. Alongside repairs, assembly and maintenance, we are also at your side with tailor-made training programmes for your personnel as well as individual consultancy on system engineering for maintenance, conservation of value and stock-keeping right down to assessment of the production systems.

As even very short machine down-times can mean high losses of turnover in our customers’ high-performance production systems, we do not only offer reliable and competent service, but also quick availability: 24 hours a day right round the world!

Quality and service have been an integral part for the KURTZ particle foam machine sector for quite a long time now. And the basis for the services offered has been and will be the world-wide quality of our product and service range that aims to guarantee confidence and business success of your customers as the users of our products and to secure them in the long term.

Remote maintenance

Maintenance & repairs

Spare Parts

Broad Availability

The KURTZ spare parts service enables correct selection of the spare part needed from the catalogue without having detailed knowledge. The selection of articles contains the most frequent spare parts.

For parts comprising further sub-groups, a group hierarchy has been introduced. This classification of various spare parts makes it possible to localise the individual part of a larger construction group being looked for in the catalogue.

As further facilitation of finding spare parts, pictures, sketches and information on features of the articles have been included in the catalogue.

The spare part catalogue is available online at: www.kurtz.de

During use, the navigation bar is a great help, as links to the corresponding pages of the catalogue have been deposited here behind the titles.
The Kurtz Group

The Kurtz Group is comprised of several companies from different business sectors. The strategic management is positioned in Kurtz Holding GmbH & Co. Beteiligungs KG., while the operational responsibility lies with the individual segments.

Our integrated management system directs all the processes and assures that the demanding quality requirements of our customers are satisfied. We regard the protection and preservation of nature as a great responsibility. We continually investigate possibilities for making our own contribution to environmental protection.

A matrix organisation with the business segments PLASTICS, METALS, ELECTRONICS and SERVICES ensures the greatest possible degree of flexibility and customer proximity.

Business Segments And Products

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Fine Traditions And A Bright Future

Founded as iron hammer works in 1779 in Hasloch in Spessart, the Kurtz Group has developed into an internationally operating conglomerate. Today, we are technological or world market leaders in many fields.

The corporate group is in the ownership of the sixth generation of the family.

The management can fall back on an advisory board consisting of excellent industry personalities.