

Media release

Oerlikon Balzers taps new growth potential with cutting-edge applications

Reaching a mass market with 12 million coated piston pins

Balzers, Liechtenstein – May 23, 2013 – Thanks to its innovative coating technologies, Oerlikon Balzers is developing an increasing number of applications and tapping further growth potential. Coated piston pins, once a market niche, have evolved into an application for the mass market: In 2012, Oerlikon Balzers coated more than 12 million piston pins – the market potential is around 300 million pins a year. “Because our coatings represent a range of new solutions that reduce environmental impact while boosting performance, we can produce above-average growth in industries currently experiencing a difficult market environment,” said the Segment’s CEO, Dr. Hans Brändle.

The ultrathin, diamond-hard coatings provided by Oerlikon Balzers help produce more efficient engines and, as a result, lower CO2 emissions. They do this by increasing the durability of components. This, in turn, creates the opportunity to downsize, which reduces weight. In addition, the coatings measurably reduce friction. Engines optimized with thin-film coatings can reduce fuel consumption by 10 % or more when this technology is integrated into the development of new models as is increasingly the case today.

For years now, Oerlikon Balzers has been coating key components for more than 10 million state-of-the-art diesel injection systems per year. Now, the coating of piston pins has reached the mass market. “With this application alone, we expect to produce annual growth of more than 20 %,” said Bernd Fischer, Head of Components at Oerlikon Balzers. Oerlikon Balzers considers the coating of key components for direct gasoline injection as the next major application for thin-film technology in engines.

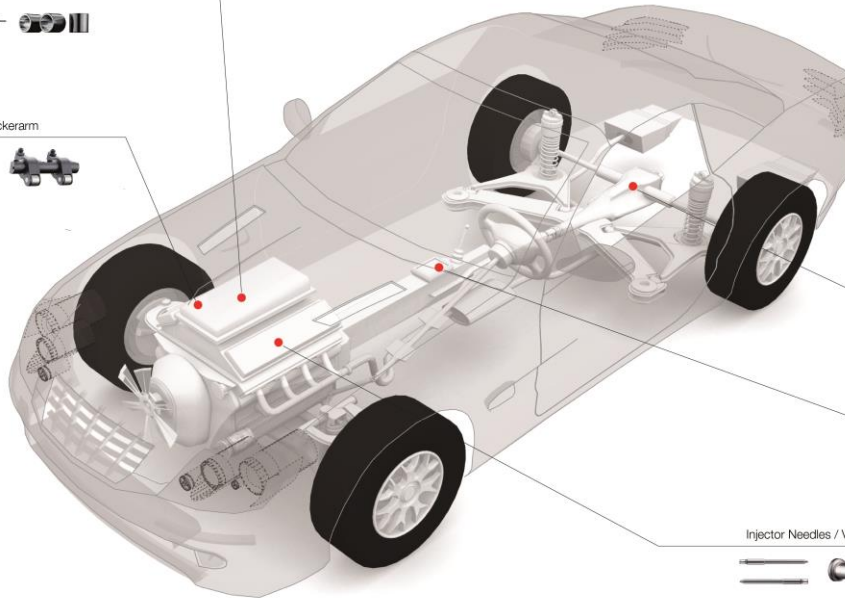
Drawing primarily from its platform of cutting and forming tools, Oerlikon Balzers recently began to develop coatings for precision components that provide designers and design engineers completely new ways to boost their products’ performance. This strategy has paid off, and the share of sales generated from the coating of precision components has climbed to 25 %. A wide range of additional applications for precision components, including functional and decorative coatings for premium watches and cell phones, have also joined the major applications for piston pins and diesel injection systems in the automotive industry.

Oerlikon Balzers is now directing its attention to the aerospace industry, the next key market where thin-film technologies are growing increasingly important. The company has already introduced its first applications for control components, turbine bearings and landing gears.

Con-rod / Piston Ring / Piston Pin / Crankshaft / Bushings



Tappets / Valves / Rockerarm



Bevel Gear



Gear Wheels



Injector Needles / Valve Piston / Unit Injector



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About Oerlikon Balzers

Oerlikon Balzers is one of the world's leading suppliers of surface technologies that significantly improve the performance and durability of precision components as well as tools for the metal and plastics processing industries. These coatings, marketed under the BALINIT® brand name, are extremely thin and exceptionally hard. They significantly reduce friction and wear. Oerlikon Balzers also develops processes, manufactures and sells systems and production facilities, and offers contract coating services through a dynamically growing network of currently 90 coating centers in Europe, the Americas and Asia. Moreover, under the technology brand ePD, the company develops integrated services and solutions for the metallization of plastic parts with chrome effects. Oerlikon Balzers is a Business Unit of the Switzerland-based Oerlikon Group (SIX: OERL).

About Oerlikon

Oerlikon (SIX: OERL) is a leading high-tech industrial group specializing in machine and plant engineering. The Company is a provider of innovative industrial solutions and cutting-edge technologies for textile manufacturing, drive technology, vacuum systems, coating and advanced nanotechnology. A Swiss company with a tradition going back over 100 years, Oerlikon is a global player with nearly 12 700 employees at over 160 locations in 34 countries and reported sales of CHF 2.9 billion in 2012. In 2012 the Company invested CHF 106 million in R&D, with over 1 000 specialists working on future products and services. In most areas, the operative businesses rank either first or second in their respective global markets.