



AW Europe, a new Factory of the Future in Wallonia

06 May 2019, 02:00

Alain Jacques

Jean-Claude Noben

Industrialisation and digitisation are not exclusive to major multinational firms. They are also within reach of small and medium-sized companies. AW Europe has just proved so, by obtaining one of the two Factory of the Future titles awarded for Wallonia in 2019.

Within the framework of the Made Different Digital Wallonia programme, Sirris and Agoria accompany and encourage Wallonia's manufacturing firms throughout their digital transformation. A number of factories are already engaged in the digital and technological transformation that promises to thrust them into a brand new dimension in terms of productivity and competitiveness.

AW Europe, a subsidiary of the Japanese group AISIN AW, is among them. So, what more can we learn about this Wallonian firm, created in 1997 and recently awarded the title of 'Factory of the Future', much to the pride of its 768 employees and to the satisfaction of both its clients and its Japanese parent company?

A sustainable, yet complex production process

AW Europe is active in a number of technological fields in the motor vehicle market:

- Reconditioning of automatic gear boxes that have been remanufactured; i.e. produced using faulty gear boxes. Whilst reuse of existing components considerably reduces the ecological impact of production, it increases its complexity.
- Development and manufacturing of navigation systems and electronic maps for GPS.

The first step consists in performing diagnostic tests on the existing box in order to identify the cause of the breakdown and the faulty parts involved. The box is then dismantled, faulty parts discarded and all elements cleaned. A new gear box is then assembled and sent to the test bench.

Worthy of world leaders in the field

For this essential motor vehicle component, car manufacturers impose the strictest of quality requirements. The factory is therefore equipped with a fleet of high-performance machines. New technologies contribute towards ensuring the most efficient production possible. Automation has brought reduced cycle times, whilst continuing to ensure an exemplary level of quality. Thanks to monitoring systems based on data collection, on artificial intelligence and deep learning, the factory is now capable of producing 4,000 units per day.

More connected means more responsive

In the automotive industry, parts and their associated requirements are constantly and frequently changing. Thanks not only to the new technologies in place, but also to internally-developed test applications, AW Europe is able to rapidly respond to any such evolution. A further source of attractiveness for this Wallonian company in the eyes of the leaders in the automotive field.

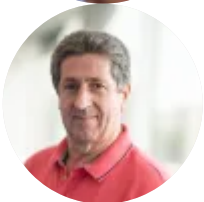
[Accept marketing-cookies to watch this video.](#) For FireFox users, disable the 'Enhanced tracking protection' of your browser to view this video.

AW Europe obtains one of the prestigious Factory of the Future Awards, awarded by Sirris & Agoria within the framework of the Made Different Digital Wallonia programme, coordinated by the Agence du Numérique. For further information on the 'Factory of the Future Award', awarded by Sirris & Agoria, within the framework of the Made Different Digital Wallonia coaching programme for Wallonia's industry, consult: <https://www.sirris.be/wallonia-now-home-4-factories-future>.

Authors



Alain Jacques



Jean-Claude Noben