

CUSTOMER CASE



Hard bending the easy way

The engine compartment in a modern car is not spacious. Less space requires compact components and sophisticated solutions, especially when it comes to tube bending. At Autotube they know how that can be done.



Throughout its history, the company has created products with two or three wheels, but nowadays Autotube's

products can be found in four-wheeled vehicles. Valentin Heurlin, who founded Hevas in Varberg in 1956, had plans to produce bicycles and mopeds, including one with three wheels. The company's current incarnation dates back to 1997, when Hevas in Varberg and Björkmans in Ulricehamn merged to become Dayco Sweden, which later was renamed as Autotube.

Both companies had specialised in tube bending, and after the merge the new company rose to a prominent position within its niche. Today, Autotube has two facilities in Sweden for tube bending. One of them, located in Varberg, deals mainly with the private car industry, while the other, in Ulricehamn, mainly supplies its tubes to the truck industry. These tubes are used to transport coolants, emissions, air and hot water. In cars they are also used to transport fuel.

- We sell our products to Volvo and Ford, and soon to Jaguar as well, says production manager Pär Wahlin. When it comes to trucks, our main clients are of course Volvo and Scania.
- We feel that our strength and key to success is our customer support.

The tubes are usually introduced late in the design process and have to be adjusted to fit with other components. This often results in complex solutions with many bends. The customer has no simulation tool to help them see what bends can be used, so that means Autotube need to assist them with their expertise.

- Their products also tend to change a lot, which means that a creative teamwork between us and the client is a strength, says Pär.

Design engineers from the client companies often come to be educated at Autotube. There they learn how a modern bending machine operates and what the tools look like. Thus, Autotube's own design engineers play an important role, and the responsibility for the complete



construction work is increasingly being handed over to Autotube.

- The engine compartments and other spaces where tubes are installed are becoming smaller and smaller. Sometimes it is near impossible to bend. The straight parts of the tubes are becoming

shorter, the radiuses tighter, and the number of bends higher.

These factors led the company to buying a Herber 150 RL, which has now been operating for six months. RL stands for Right-Left, and the machine's strength is that in can quickly switch between its two heads that bend right and left respectively.

- It works well in our new cell, says production technician Jussi Kivisora, and it switches very quickly between its two tool heads.