

# Quick Response Manufacturing in metal subcontracting

In the metal processing industry, QRM – Quick Response Manufacturing is a key word. QRM means the ability to deliver items within short times. Of course, QRM means a challenge to every supplier and contractor as it requires total efficiency, precision and perfect planning. Provan bvba from Genk in Belgium has made exactly this its USP. General Director Ben Proesmans is sure that this strategy will enable the company to realise further growth in the coming years.



General Director Ben Proesmans

“In fact, we believe that our QRM is our biggest USP,” he confirms. “Many companies are able to deliver good quality and service, but we also pay attention to saving time and storage space for our clients. For example, if the production time for a product series is one week, the deliv-

ery date should be as close to that as possible. Of course, this requires efficient and smooth internal logistics. Yet for our clients, this is a great competitive advantage. They do not have to order far ahead, and it is easier for them to anticipate market developments. They have less stock,

a lower risk, need less storage space, have less waste material, and it is easier to adjust the products.”

Provan focuses on four major business fields. These are metal piping profiles, handling metals sheets, cutting with laser and bending into shape, and welding and assembly. With its QRM approach, the company focuses on lower volumes. “Our quantities range mostly between five and 200 pieces,” says the general director.

Provan services a broad clientele. The reference list includes names from the medical industry, from the construction sector, manufacturers of painting machines, shop interior manufacturers, heating and trailer producers, and others. At present, Belgium is the company’s key account. In addition to this, Provan works for customers from the Netherlands and France. “Against the background of our QRM strategy, Germany is a very interesting

market, too,” says Mr. Proesmans, who founded the business in 1998 together with his business partner Luc Vanhees, who is responsible for product and quality management. “For sure, large volumes will be made in China in the future. But in many industries, there is a strong trend towards individualisation, for example in the automotive industry, with coloured parts, different colours for the roof and the back of the mirrors, and other features. Our clients have to meet these new requirements. This means the production of lower volumes and a wider range of variations. Here, we can score with our QRM policy. Our goal is to sell the whole QRM concept and not just the supplied materials. At the end of the day, this means that we compete on service and quality, and not on the price, as many others do.” ■

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