

Stalatube works together with

Stalatube remains innovative by keeping in close contact with its customers. This results in products and services that are truly tailor-made and completely in line with customer needs because the Finnish company always listens to its clients and delivers on its promises.

Stainless Steel World News and Stainless Steel World Americas recently spoke with Mr. Sami Packalén, Marketing Director at Stalatube, and Mr. David Stone, President of Stalatube's American operations, about the company's quality products and dependable worldwide delivery.

By Jolanda Heunen and Candace Allison

Stalatube is a company that has successfully established a well-known name by consistently producing quality products and delivering customised service, all based on its years of experience and good eye for innovative products. The company's philosophy is that by continuously getting to know their customers better, Stalatube can manufacture products that completely fit the needs of end-users, designers, and other clients, while also further developing their customer service. In this way, Stalatube manages to always be one step ahead, both in the manufacturing of products and in the level of service that they provide. By keeping an ear out for the market demands, the company is always prepared to deliver what the customer needs.

Duplex: More strength, less weight

Asked about noticeable changes in the market, Mr. Sami Packalén mentions that there is a rising demand for duplex and lean duplex products, "We have quite a lot of clients for lean duplex in the construction and building section, as well as in the oil and gas sector and the transportation industry. Duplex is used in the hollow sections that are responsible for adding more strength to bus frames. This is one example of the numerous possible applications of this product. By using this material, the weight of the frame can be reduced as far as possible," Mr. Packalén explains. "In this way the bus can for example carry more passengers or load much more baggage. Another important implication of a frame that has a lower weight is that the fuel consumption can be decreased extensively."

In addition, since lean duplex has a good corrosion resistance, no surface treatment is needed, and the longer maintenance intervals of lean duplex are another important factor that enables a reduction of costs.

In 2017 new safety regulations for bus body frames will take effect, requiring more strength from materials used. Stalatube's stainless steel solution, made from lean duplex (1.4062 / 1.4162), is already available for clients, so that they are able to meet this challenge in time.

Another important field for the application of lean duplex can be found in the generation of wind energy. Stalatube is involved in this market segment with their StalaWind-towers for Onshore wind energy. What does Stalatube see for the future of wind energy, or—more generally—for renewable energy? "We see a rising demand and for us it is obvious that this is a fast growing industry," Mr. Packalén states. "There are many renewable energy plants being built and lots of projects are going on in this field, all over the world. Because the wind energy towers are continuously being built to higher altitudes, where the quality of the wind is not only much stronger but also more constant than in the lower altitudes, the metal of choice for these wind power towers is lean duplex."

Stalatube's involvement in the development and building process of the wind power towers is twofold, as Mr. Packalén clarifies, "We can manufacture the tower and it is also possible for us to offer additional service and assistance."

New product: Stainless I-beams

For Stalatube innovation is essential and therefore the company keeps looking for possibilities to complement and reinvigorate their product line as well, for example with the stainless I-beams in austenitic, lean duplex and duplex grades. Mr. Packalén explains, "The stainless I-beam is a product that is completing our range of structural products. We want to be able to serve the oil and gas sector as well as the building and construction market, to name a few. However, we want to serve these clients not only one or two products, but aim at always being able to provide the whole package of structural products. In this way the customer can get all the needed structural products from just one supplier. This is really like a one-stop shop." The clients that Stalatube provides with products are very diverse. "Oil and gas, as well as building and construction are the most important market segments for this. Therefore we are targeting these markets



Mr. Sami Packalén, Marketing Director for Stalatube.



Stalatube's headquarters in Lahti, Finland.

specifically," Mr. Packalén says. "However, these applications can of course also be used in other market sectors."

TEKLA 3D

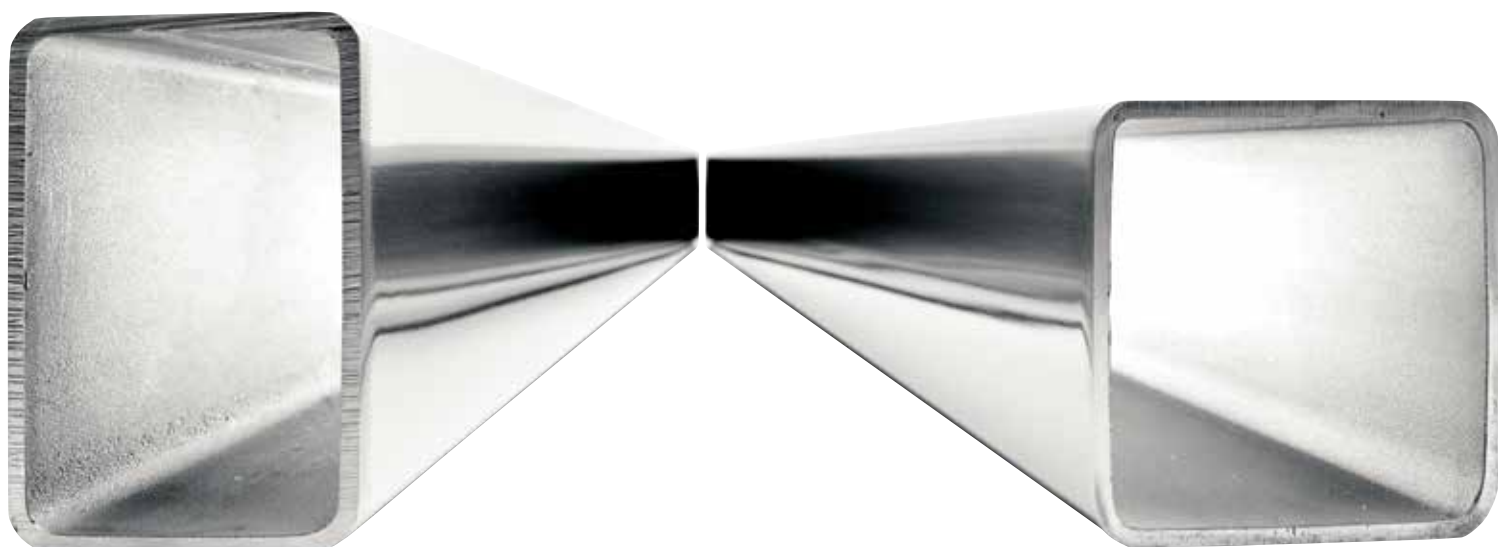
By keeping on track with the market demands, Stalatube is always prepared to provide the customer with extra services. One recent example of the way in which Stalatube implements the customers' needs into their business is the launch of the Tekla Structures 3D modelling software. Mr. Packalén shares, "When clients use this software, they can download the complete library of our products. Subsequently the software enables them to match their requirements with what is supplied by us and then they can try out what works best for them in a specific situation. This is an important advantage for the client, since it is actually a way in which the designers can safely try out what would be the best fit for their requirements. In other words, a 'Building Information Model' can be created, which is also called BIM."

This is a typical example of how Stalatube develops their service even further by keeping in close contact with its customers. Mr. Packalén confirms this, "The 3D software is definitely something



An example of a press brake being made.

that has come out of the conversations that we continuously have with our clients. We have been talking extensively to professionals in the construction business,



Just some of the products that Stalatube offers.

customers to create value



One of Stalatable's press brake tubes.

like designers, on how we could help them make the designing process with stainless steel more convenient. Amongst professionals, the option to be able to 'test' the products in 3D surroundings was typically something that was mentioned. They said that it would be great if such a program was available, and now it is." Stalatable did not only make an accessible listing of the products that they manufacture, the company also developed a detailed design guide, for which they worked together with the BSSA and EuroInox. "To be able to use stainless steel hollow sections or design the structural sections in construction you need a certain design guide, with specific design rules and standards," Mr. Packalén explains.

CE marking

Another way in which Stalatable meets the market's demands is by being able to provide products with the CE marking that has become mandatory as of July 1st, 2014 by means of the EU's Construction Product Regulation (CPR 205/2011). "We are the first manufacturer of stainless steel hollow sections to follow this regulation, and still the only manufacturer as well," Mr. Packalén proudly states. "The mandatory requirement is fully implemented in our product line already, which means that when the

customer requests that the product must be CE marked, then we are able to provide this." In Europe, only products with the CE marking are to be used in construction and this marking means that a product is produced and controlled in accordance with a harmonised European standard (hEN) or European Technical Approval (ETA). "The fact that we didn't have to perform any major changes in our internal processes is a very good example of how we always pursue a quality oriented strategy," Mr. Packalén says.

The documents that are involved in CE marking define properties that the products must have in order to be granted the right to use this marking, and also describe how the manufacturing of these products is supervised and tested. For manufacturers, the CE marking is very useful in declaring that their construction products meet the harmonised European standards, or that they have been granted ETA approval. The CE marking applies to a wide range of Stalatable's standard portfolio in stainless steel square and rectangular hollow sections, as well as flat bars.

The American market

Mr. David Stone spoke with us from the company's American headquarters

located in Bryn Mawr, Pennsylvania. He clarifies that even though all the manufacturing is completed at the company's headquarters in Finland, North American sales are conducted through distributors located across the United States and Canada. In fact, Stalatable has consistently and reliably delivered products throughout North America for over 21 years. The main commodities sold in this extensive market are welded stainless square and rectangular tubes.

Mr. Stone explains, "The acceptance of our tubes was immediate when we first entered the market over 20 years ago and the desire for them has only grown. We have stayed competitive while all along making a state of the art tubing product. We are quite proud of our reputation for manufacturing the highest quality tubes, in various grades, shapes, sizes, lengths, welds and finishes."

Superior service

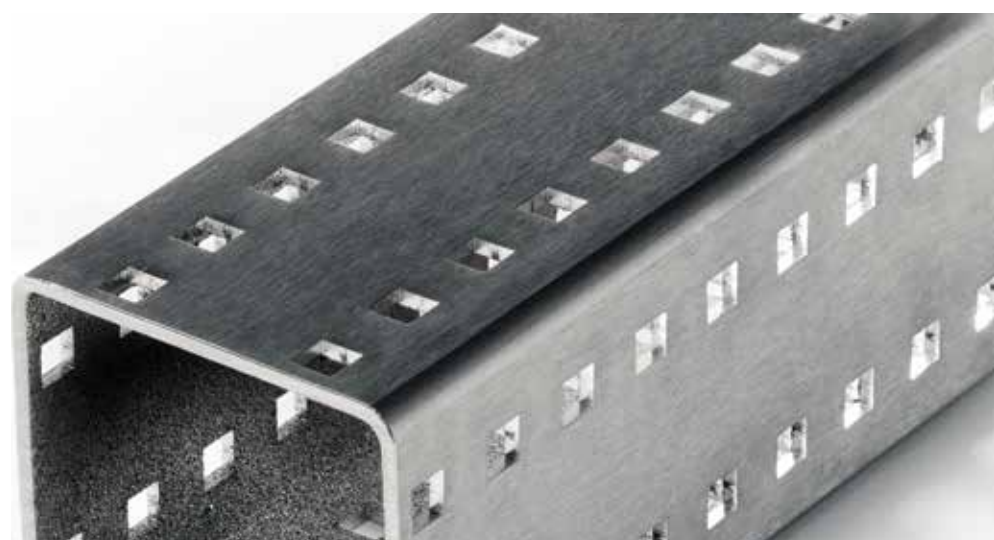
He also shares with us that Stalatable is known for its quick and prompt deliveries which is quite an impressive feat considering that manufacturing is done thousands of miles away on a different continent. "Our reputation for top quality goods, delivered promptly and priced competitively, is a package that is unmatched in the industry. This was not an easy task to achieve, but our team has mastered it," asserts Mr. Stone while also making sure to add, "And the best is yet to come!"

Solid base for continuous success

Stalatable's success is not only based on their reliable product line and high service level, but also the result of keeping a close eye on the internal structure of the company. Last year in April Stalatable also featured the In the Spotlight article and Mr. Packalén then mentioned the fact that Stalatable had just implemented a new internal structure within their organisation, with three strategic business areas. "This has worked out very well," says Mr. Packalén, when asked about this division of activities. "It has turned out as we expected and is the right strategy to keep following in the future. We have even already decided to add a fourth separate division to this practice, namely construction, as an extra business area."

With this solid base and structured organisation, Stalatable can completely devote its attention to their clients and the further innovation of products and services. "Of course we will continue offering the service that has always been an important part of Stalatable. For us it has never been just about the product, and never will be," maintains Mr. Packalén. "We will continue to offer services that are related to our products and are specifically designed for this purpose, tailor made services so to say. All of this is supplementary to for example our fit-for-purpose materials, the different stainless steels that we manufacture, the components, and the laser cutting that we can provide. We create value together with the customer."

All photos: Stalatable



Stalatable at a glance

Company Name:	Stalatable Oy
Established:	1972
Headquarters & production:	Lahti, Finland
Director:	Jukka Nummi
Employees:	130
Products:	Stainless steel hollow products, stainless steel flat steel and profiles, flat bar profiles, etc.
Sectors:	Construction, food & beverage, water & wastewater, offshore oil & gas, transport & automotive, mechanical engineering and nuclear
Export:	Over 90 percent
Website:	www.stalatable.com