

ABB becomes first company in world to sell 100,000 robots

Activities range from car production lines to chocolate making

Zurich, Switzerland, March 13, 2002 – ABB, the global power and automation technology said today that it had sold its 100,000th robot, becoming the first company in the world to the milestone.

ABB's robots are used in a wide range of applications – from car production plants, and pharmaceutical and consumer electronics industries, through to chocolate making.

“This is a big milestone for us as a company and sends a strong signal to our competitors, Jouko Karvinen, executive vice president and head of ABB's Automation Technology Pro division. “We are the world's first company to sell this many robots, which means our customers from car-makers to medication sorters – have tremendous confidence in our technology. It means we have the largest installed base of robots globally.”

ABB produced its first robot in 1974. At that time, the company's robots were mainly used for machine tending and material handling. Nearly 30 years later, that market accounts for some 30 percent of robots sold worldwide. According to the International Federation of Robotics, particularly in the automotive industry, is today's largest robot application.

“In the mid-1980s we rounded out our portfolio of robots, adding special painting robots, geared to the automotive industry. We worked to innovate with software specific applications,” said Karvinen.

ABB's robotics team, working in locations like Sweden, Norway, the United States, Germany, Japan, has in recent years broadened its range of robots. Among many other applications, robots pick chocolates for companies like Lindt and Nestle, and sort pills for pharmaceuticals like Novartis and Bayer. American-based consumer goods companies like Harley-Davidson use ABB robots for building and painting motorcycles and the U.S. postal service uses ABB robots to sort mail and packages.



ABB said its robots are ahead of the industry curve when it comes to software packages for increasing efficiency and productivity. Last year, for example, the company released a high precision robot control system for laser cutting, which is ten times more precise than any other robot on the market. The system, popular with carmakers that need watch-making precision door frames and intricate parts, offered manufacturers cutting precision down to 0.1 mm the standard, medium-sized robot.

For more information and downloadable images, visit www.abb.com/robotics.

ABB (www.abb.com) is a global leader in power and automation technologies that enable transport and industry customers to improve performance while lowering environmental impact. All 155,000 employees in more than 100 countries.

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