

/ INTERVIEW // SEPTEMBER 2023

## **"The VHybrid is the ultimate in flexibility"**

**Biberach an der Riss, 18th September 2023 – The VHybrid 260 sharpening machine from VOLLMER offers a complete solution for grinding and eroding. In this interview, Alexander Schmid explains why it is the epitome of flexibility and precision. Alexander Schmid is product manager for rotary and PCD tools and the person to contact at VOLLMER when it comes to the VHybrid combined grinding and erosion machine.**

(The press release and accompanying images can be found at the following link:  
<https://www.vollmer-group.com/en-uk/company/press/press-releases.html>)

*Question: Hello, Mr Schmid, the name says it all with the VHybrid 260 grinding and erosion machine, but what exactly does "hybrid" mean?*

Alexander Schmid: The word "hybrid" is derived from Greek and describes something crossed or mixed. In term of technology, the VHybrid 260 combines the best of both worlds – "grinding" and "eroding". Our erosion machines sharpen tools with PCD (polycrystalline diamond) using non-contact spark erosion. The concept of the VHybrid is based on that of our VGrind tool grinding machine, which enables multi-level machining using two vertically configured spindles. With the VHybrid, the upper spindle is used purely as a grinding spindle, while the lower spindle can both erode and grind.

*Question: What tool manufacturers are interested in a combined grinding and erosion machine?*

Alexander Schmid: All tool manufacturers who aim for a high degree of variability in tool manufacture. Our VHybrid is the ultimate in flexibility, allowing companies to adapt their tool manufacture to current demand at any time. Regardless of whether carbide or diamond tools are required, the VHybrid offers a complete solution for both sharpening processes in a single machine. In addition, the global market for tools shows that the use of complex tools such as full-head PCD tools is steadily increasing. A combined machining process, consisting of erosion and grinding in a

single set-up, is essential in order to produce these tools precisely and cost-efficiently.

*Question: Isn't a machine with two technologies more complicated to operate?*

Alexander Schmid: As far as the operation of the VHybrid is concerned, we at VOLLMER rely on our proven concept, which is based on intuitive operation with familiar software solutions. Since all machines are operated in the same way, customers can get to grips with sharpening using the VHybrid in next to no time. In addition, it is important for tool manufacturers to be able to use the VHybrid reliably in unmanned operation.

*Question: You have incorporated simple operation and flexible use into the VHybrid; what technology is behind these advantages?*

Alexander Schmid: At the core of the VHybrid is our Vpulse EDM erosion generator, which we developed in our Research development. We are constantly working on making the generator more efficient. It currently achieves a surface quality of 0.05  $\mu$ RA, which is equal to one thousandth of a hair's breadth. Nevertheless, we have customers who are less concerned with surface quality and want maximum machining speed instead. With the VPulse EDM erosion generator, a user can choose between maximum efficiency or the highest surface quality. With this option, a tool manufacturer can always adapt the sharpening process to their needs. What's more, software-based V@ boost performance packages can improve the performance of the VHybrid by up to 35 percent. Customers can activate the software package by the hour or purchase it permanently.

*Question: Which industries or markets do you want to reach with the VHybrid 260?*

Alexander Schmid: From a market perspective, the global manufacturing industry worldwide now mainly requires PCD tools with diameters of less than 150 millimetres. Our VHybrid 260 is able to produce these types of tools, which then go on to be used throughout the woodworking and metalworking industries. At EMO 2023, we will demonstrate for the first time how tool manufacturers can produce even the smallest microtools with diameters of 0.45 millimetres and below with the highest precision, performance and surface quality thanks to the optimised generator. PCD microtools with diameters of 0.45 millimetres and below are in particular demand for

the production of microchips. Sectors such as the electronics industry or medical technology, which require ever smaller electronic components for increasingly compact implants and wearables, are benefiting from this in particular.

*Question: Where is this path leading when you think of the future challenges for you as a product manager at VOLLMER?*

Alexander Schmid: For me and the entire VOLLMER team, the priority is improving our machines day by day. In addition to the technical aspects for more efficient production, higher precision and better quality, the topics of automation and digitalisation are at the top of our agenda. For example, we have developed an IoT (Internet of Things) gateway to connect machines to the Internet and enable our customers to obtain and analyse data from the machine. Our V@dison initiative is based on four pillars to make sharpening processes even more flexible and efficient than before. This involves evaluating central information more quickly in order to identify faults in advance and optimise processes. At VOLLMER, we are certain that the integration and use of smart technologies will play a key role in boosting our growth in global tool manufacturing.

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Press picture



**Caption:** Alexander Schmid is VOLLMER's product manager for rotary and PCD tools and the person to contact when it comes to the VHybrid 260 combined grinding and erosion machine.

### **About the VOLLMER Group**

With its comprehensive range of machinery, the VOLLMER Group – which has sites in Germany, Austria, Great Britain, France, Italy, Poland, Spain, Sweden, the USA, Brazil, Japan, China, South Korea, India, Russia and Thailand/Taiwan – enjoys global success as a tool machining specialist in the areas of both production and service. The technological leader's range of products includes the most advanced grinding, eroding, laser and machining tools for rotary tools and circular saws in the woodworking and metalworking industries, as well as for metal-cutting band saws. VOLLMER relies heavily on the traditions and strengths of the company – close cooperation channels, quick decisions and the fast responses of a family-run business. The VOLLMER Group currently employs approximately 800 workers worldwide, with around 580 of these at the main headquarters in Biberach alone, including more than 75 trainees. The company invests around eight to ten per cent of its turnover in the research and development of new technologies and products. As a provider of technology and services, the VOLLMER Group is a reliable partner to its customers.

Further information and relevant images are available at:

<https://www.vollmer-group.com/en-uk/company/press/press-releases.html>

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