

Wentworth to move tooling shop

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Wentworth Technologies Co. Ltd. is moving less-demanding mold-building operations from a recently acquired business in Germany to its tooling plants in Poland. Meantime, Wentworth hopes to beef up high-precision toolmaking work at the German plant. The Mississauga, Ontario, company plans to run the purchased tool shop combining strong local and North American management with German engineering and Poland's costs, said Ted Kuskowski, Wentworth vice president of business development. The Hohenwestedt, Germany, plant, formerly known as Lego Werkzeugbau GmbH, had been a subsidiary of privately held toy company Lego Co. of Billund, Denmark.

The German mold shop specializes in high-precision molding, Kuskowski said in a telephone interview. Renamed Amtec GmbH, the shop will continue mold building for Lego and will expand on its custom mold sales to include medical, telecommunications, electronics and computer industries.

Kuskowski said Amtec will add a second and perhaps a third shift at Hohenwestedt as the workload grows. As much as 30 percent of mold building will be transferred to Wentworth's mold shops in Bydgoszcz and Poniatowa, Poland, to save costs. Wentworth acquired the Bydgoszcz facility early this year and has owned the Poniatowa operation since 1997.

Kuskowski said the German shop employs about 110 in a 52,000-square-foot building. It had annual sales of about C\$18 million (US\$11.7 million).

Lego continues to run a mold-building plant in Steinhausen, Switzerland, a spokeswoman said. The company has been cutting costs, partly by contracting out work and shifting some injection molding work, to offset weakness in its core plastic building-block business.