

Blm group technology contributes to the increasing success of Daikin Europe, the largest air conditioner manufacturer on the continent.

Piping factory: a strategic role

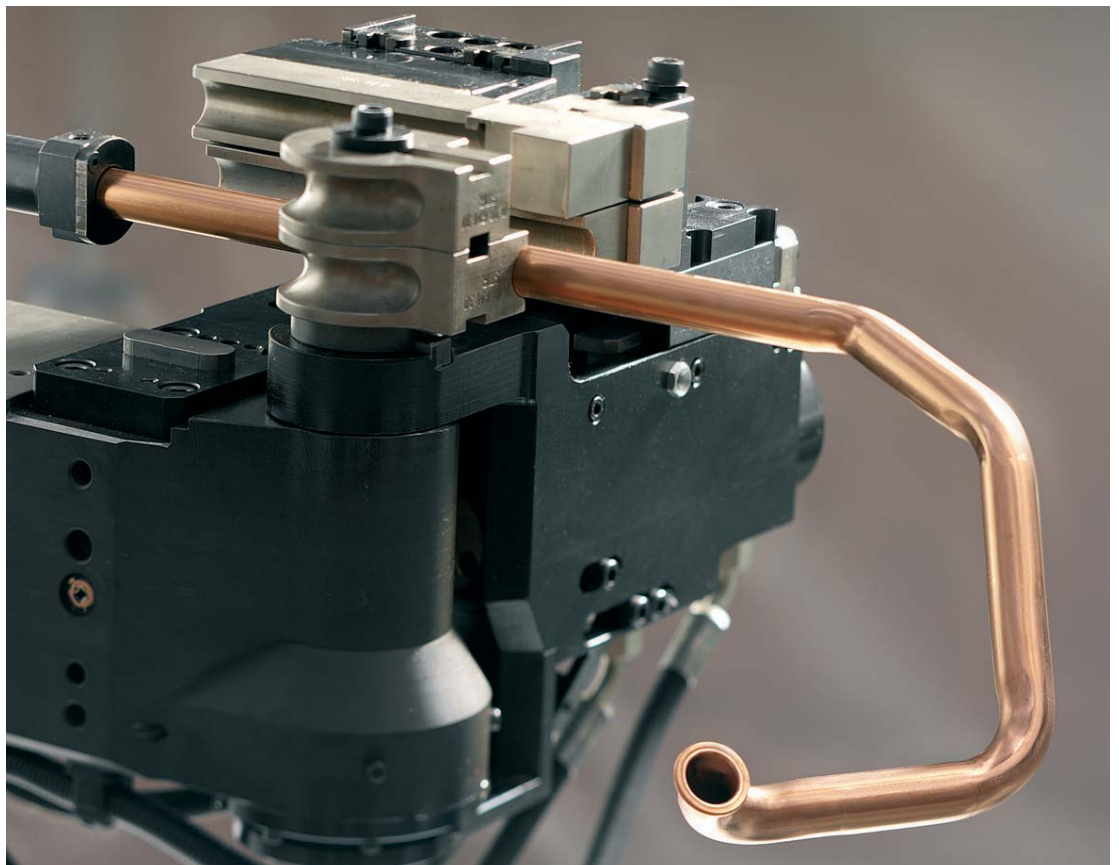
DAIKIN EUROPE NV produce over **600,000 split air conditioning units** at their European headquarters at Ostend in Belgium. The constantly rising trend for these units has caused DAIKIN to accelerate the growth of their production capacity by opening a new plant in Plizen in the Republic of Czechoslovakia that will have a capacity of around 300,000 units.

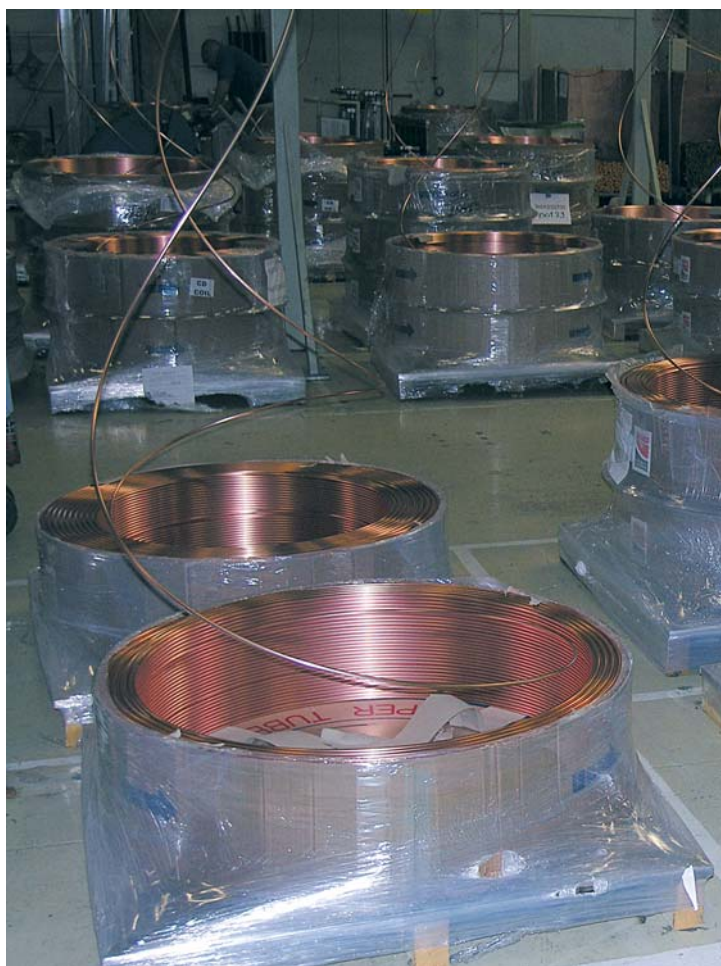
The growing success of DAIKIN (a 30% sales increase in 2005) comes from the technology and reliability of its Belgian products that are well known in European markets. These products **are directed squarely at the consumer market** and have proved a very satisfactory strategic choice for the

company. With this focus, DAIKIN are able to progress trends in the market and respond to them with the necessary flexibility. Speed of response to these factors and the high quality standards needed are satisfied by a production system, which is sophisticated and well designed, and **with equipment that works on the same wavelength as these objectives.**

The Piping Factory

BLM SpA in Cantù (CO) has supplied various bending and endforming machinery for tubular component manufacture in the Ostend factory. The tube department, "the piping factory", is situated in the middle of a 150,000 sqm production





area and has come to be recognised as one of the most important elements within the production process. The tubes manipulated are components for compressors, condensers and evaporators and need considerable knowledge of these working processes to achieve the necessary quality required. The complexities and criteria for the process of deforming the tube – bending, endforming – and welding/brazing makes the **final quality of the product strongly dependent on work and control techniques** developed and acquired over time and constantly communicated to the personnel employed.

BLM SpA, in order to satisfy this requirement, have supplied **bending and endforming centres from their PLANET range** which feed directly from the coil with a noticeable reduction in material scrap, then automatically end forming, bending and cutting off the part required without any manual intervention, concentrating all the working processes **in a single centre**.

Other equipment supplied by BLM includes the DYNAMO machines that are **dedicated to single - bending of copper tubes** with larger dimensions. In this instance, the tubes are pre-cut

to size, loaded, bent and unloaded completely automatically and assisted by a dedicated operator feeding the assembly lines. The pieces are passed quickly to the assembly lines and for brazing. This treatment of complex tubular systems where **quality and reliability in the deforming process are essential** makes it easier to manufacture and eliminates problems in the brazing operations.

A perfect marriage

Large variations in the demand for air conditioners have been caused by the weather patterns over the last few years. This has prompted Daikin to opt for a production system that could enable the **doubling of production within fifteen days**. The 1200 personnel work on two shifts, 60% on a permanent production line and 40% on a temporary basis. Another area of flexibility is in the hours worked, which can vary from a minimum of 34 hours to a maximum of 43 hours a week. The BLM tube working systems create a perfect marriage with this philosophy and allow a **total-ly automatic process, with either two or three shift operation and with total reliability**. BLM also provides constant technological support in the development of future projects.

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