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## MAPAL Sales representation in Finland: MAANTERÄ

Maanterä was founded in 1941 and is one of the largest trading companies for tools and tool systems in Finland. The representation has been working successfully with MAPAL for 30 years.

The company is centrally located near Helsinki-Vantaa Airport, which gives it a logistical advantage. Because the region around the capital and the south of the country is generally an active economic region – the centre of the paper industry, general machining, wood and metal processing as well as host to other sectors and industries. Among others, in the northern parts of the country, Maanterä serves a smaller number of customers which are geographically widely dispersed and are active in the mining sector. Five experienced customer advisors work in the field, each taking care of one sales area. This means that a personal contact person is available in all parts of the country. In the back office, the product managers provide support with their technical expertise, as does the internal sales team.

Timo Patersson is Precision Tools Product Manager and contact person for MAPAL products. He talks about the developments at Maanterä and the challenges of the Finish market.

### Mr Patersson, what's Maanterä's core business area?

We're primarily a partner to the general machining and pulp and paper industries. We work with several steel producers and manufacturers of finished metal parts. These producers have special requirements and they're happy to take advantage of our many years of experience. For example, one of our biggest customers is the Agco Group, which manufactures diesel engines and tractors. However, we also work with the steel manufacturer Ovako and with ASSA Abloy, whose locking and security systems have made the company internationally successful.

Tell us something about your cooperation with your customers.

We've had some exciting projects with MAPAL tools in recent years. One of the most interesting ones for me was a project with ASSA Abloy. Abloy was

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setting up a new production line to produce door locking systems. They decided to use an Italian machine tool manufacturer. Most of the machining was done with MAPAL tools.

### **Which tools are particularly in demand in Finland?**

MAPAL is particularly well known in Finland for its excellent fine boring tools. These tools have created a high level of trust in the brand. MAPAL's drill reamers are also popular products. One of the biggest customers for these tools is a manufacturer of agricultural machinery.

### **What's driving Maanterä now?**

We launched our web shop this year. For now, it's a basic version with a selection of common standard products and the related data. We want to give customers quick and easy access to our products. We'll see how this develops. We're planning to expand our web presence. More in the standard area, however. We still rely on personal contact for more demanding machining tasks. The best solution can always be found when you have direct conversation with the customer. Unfortunately, it's been difficult to hold face-to-face meetings since spring 2020. Now, we communicate almost exclusively via digital channels. Therefore, we're already looking forward to the post-pandemic period, when we'll be able to spend more time on site with our customers

Which developments are shaping the Finnish market for precision tools? We're noticing that the market is becoming more and more polarised. The price sensitivity is increasing. However, price doesn't play as much of a role for products that meet special technical demands. In these cases, it's just one of several factors which influence the customer's decision. As a company with high technical expertise, we see Maanterä's position as being primarily represented in solution-based markets. However, of course we also must hold our own in the competitive market for price-sensitive basic products if we want to be successful in the long term.

How do you assess the technological developments in precision tools?

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Huge strides have been made in the past few years. Machining processes have been significantly optimised and the tools have become more and more powerful. What's more: alternative manufacturing processes have replaced conventional ones in some areas. 3D printing is booming, and for tools with special design features it really is a great method for small series. Still, we don't believe that it will replace conventional manufacturing in the long run.

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## **What goals has Maanterä set for the future?**

We're striving for more growth and are successively expanding our products and services. Customers' needs are changing, and we need to keep up with these developments. That's why we attach so much importance to offering innovative products and being a reliable partner. Due to the high level of expertise that MAPAL has in machining technology, we're sure we'll manage to stay one step ahead of the competition in the future.

How would you describe the cooperation with MAPAL?

Our cooperation has proven its worth over the past 30 years. Tradition and innovation are the key to our success. Our customers trust us to provide them with professional support for their machining tasks. The experts at MAPAL have always provided us with good solutions that have impressed our customers. What connects MAPAL and Maanterä? Well, we're passionate about the quality of the products and we're staying close to the customers!

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