



Joint press release

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Bekaert launches new global website www.bekaert.com

Bekaert, market leader in advanced metal transformation and advanced materials and coatings, announces its new corporate global website. This new website presents a complex product portfolio available in 120 countries in a transparent and uniform way. It replaces more than 30 former websites worldwide, and will serve as the global gateway to the Bekaert world.

The new global corporate website focuses on uniform and consistent communication in order to strengthen the Bekaert brand and its online presence. Bekaert succeeds in managing thousands of web pages by means of a powerful content management system (CMS). Bekaert CMS users from all over the world can contribute to the site via Sitecore, without losing the advantage of centralized content validation.

This website project was managed by The Reference, member of the Emakina network, in close collaboration with Bekaert's Corporate Communications Team.

"It was a real challenge to translate the complexity of Bekaert's products and applications into an intuitive interface. You can't simply categorize or organize it into simple sections", says Ben Van Damme, Account Manager at The Reference. "That's why we structured Bekaert's rich product range by means of an industry selection tool, combined with an auto-complete search. This helps users to find what they are looking for more easily. In general, all content is reachable within a maximum of three clicks from the homepage".

Bekaert led in-depth preparations for this web project within the company before organizing a tender. The Reference responded best to Bekaert's well-defined ideas of a new global website that would serve as a gateway to the Bekaert world. The purpose of the site is to replace all former websites worldwide and to create a customer interaction system that truly reflects the Bekaert motto, *better together*.

"In the near future we will also add a faceted search", adds Ben Van Damme. "This will allow visitors to search for solutions based on materials or characteristics, rather than on product names. The site will be able to suggest what customers need, even if they don't know the Bekaert specifications". Extensive user testing based on mockups indicates that Bekaert has truly succeeded in addressing all target groups, across various levels of expertise.

“The Reference has shown thorough insight in translating our business objectives”, says Stephen Delvoye, eCommunications Manager at Bekaert. “Though a website is never finished, The Reference’s sound advice, together with their graphical and technical skills, have made this a project to be proud of. The extensions planned in the near future will further improve the added value of our new global website. With this website we aim to be as present online as we are in our markets”.

About Bekaert

Bekaert (www.bekaert.com) is a global technological leader in its two core competences: advanced metal transformation and advanced materials and coatings, and a market leader in drawn wire products and applications. Bekaert (Euronext Brussels: BEKB) is a global company with headquarters in Belgium, employing over 23 000 people worldwide. Serving customers in 120 countries, Bekaert pursues sustainable profitable growth in all its activities and generates annual combined sales of € 4 billion.

About The Reference

Founded in 1993, The Reference (www.reference.be) was the first Belgian Web Agency and a European pioneer. Today it is an established and leading full service interactive agency, part of the Emakina network, listed on Alternext. It focuses on building brand experiences that work. The Reference is located in Ghent, Belgium, from where it serves its clients internationally. A team of 60 highly qualified professionals explore and extend the borders of strategy, creativity and technology, mixing these heterogeneous skills in attractive, usable and powerful web projects.

Bekaert

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