

## EUROFORGE guidelines on know-how protection

The European forging industry is the number one producer of forged components and systems world-wide. Its success is based on its **technological leadership**. The European forging industry keeps the top position in almost all product areas which are based on high-tech technologies. The industry knows, however, that this position can only be retained by maintaining a high rate of innovation and continuous development process. European forging companies are working continuously with the scientific world within the framework of research projects making much use of the outstanding academic support of the research institutions in Europe and are driving technological and process-orientated innovations with great power. Needless to say that these efforts are demanding great financial and human resources.

Customers' demand for more **transparency** in the supply chain is in conflict with the vital necessity of the forging companies to protect its know how.

The European forging industry supports the ideas as contemplated in the guidelines of **VDA on know-how protection** stressing that the information obtained from others (including product and innovation concepts, design documents, CAD data, drawings, models, product and process know-how) are to be treated strictly confidential, unless they are public. This information should also not be made available to third parties without mutual consensus and should only be used for those purposes for which the information is provided in the first place.

Customers are asked to respect that all kind of business partner communication such as audits, workshops et cetera, may be subject of reasonable **restrictions** in order to safeguard company's know how. This may include complete non-disclosure of most sensible know-how. Other information might be classified as "right of access for inspection" only (not to be handed out).

It might be advisable to agree on **Confidentiality agreements** for specific occasions. (check EUROFORGE's confidentiality guideline under [www.euroforge.org](http://www.euroforge.org))

**In-house-production** of the customer is demanding special awareness to know-how protection .

The CEO of the forging company will give a general information explaining the **company's know how philosophy** addressed to the purchasing, engineering and QM organization of the customer.

Adequate **visitors' information** are accepted by all interested parties visiting the company.

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