

Overview Report of Used Die Casting Machines

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The die casting industry is still an industry that modern society cannot exist without. There are billions of dollars spent every year on castings. For the most part, North American die casters are still known for producing high quality parts. However, we are seeing dangerous trends of companies sending jobs overseas, particularly to countries where labor is less expensive. Fortunately, overseas die casters in many cases still cannot produce top quality castings. The reasons are:

- They do not spend money on good equipment
- They are after volume more than after quality
- They have different standards and understanding of quality
- They are interested in large, low-end orders

Unfortunately for North American die casters, these overseas die casters are learning very quick and are trying to improve.

As we all know, in order to produce top quality parts with minimum scrap there are a few basic important factors:

- Professional management that understands the die casting process
- Well organized factory
- Good maintenance crew
- Quality tooling
- Die cast machines which are in good working order

In most cases, however, die casters are losing a lot of profit because of:

- Downturns due to breakdown of die cast equipment or poor maintenance
- Old tooling that turns out a lot of scrap

The workhorse of this industry is the die casting machine. There are a lot of used machines in operation in North America; estimates vary as to exactly how many. However, the general opinion is that while there are a couple hundred new machines sold each year, there are more than 10,000 used machines already existing on production floors all over the USA and Canada. As such, there are over 100 used machines that exchange hands each and every year.

We have conducted an independent overview and comparison of used machines, which are still working in die casting shops all over North America. This comparison is based on the opinions, experiences and suggestions of many die casters and rebuilders. Of course, there will always be differences in opinions and it is impossible to get one definitive opinion from all die casters. The comparison includes ratings of the following categories:

- **RELIABILITY** — How good is the machine? How often does it break down?
- **OPERATION & MAINTENANCE** — How easy is the machine to operate and maintain? How fast can a maintenance crew fix the machine? How difficult is it to train a new operator?
- **PARTS & SERVICE** — How fast can you get parts and service if the machine will brake down? Are the parts available locally or do they have to come from overseas? What quality of service will you receive? Is there any service at all?
- **REBUILDING** — Is there any economical or financial sense to rebuild this type of machine? Is it possible to rebuild the machine? If so, how easy is it?
- **RESALE VALUE** — Is it easy or difficult to re-sell the machine? Some machines are very well built but unfortunately the resale value is low due to many reasons such as lack of service or poor service, difficulty in getting replacement parts and so on.

Ratings in each of the categories range from 1 to 10 or "Very poor," "Poor," "Low," "Average," "Good," "High," "Very Good" and "Excellent," respectively.

Consumer reports and comparisons of used machines and equipment are successfully done every year in a vast array of industries. So, we feel it is appropriate to do something similar in the die casting industry. We hope this comparison report will help die casters to have a better understanding of the used die cast machinery market and what is available out there. ●

Manufacturer	General Description	Reliability	Operation & Maintenance	Parts & Service	Rebuilding	Resale Value
Agrati	<i>European machine. Not very active in the U.S. Only a few machines sold. No service and parts. Hard to rebuild. Not easy to re-sell.</i>	5	5	2	4	3
Alpha	<i>Old machines, one generation before Cast Master. Hard to get parts and service. Not recommended for rebuilding. Most of these machines not for resale.</i>	4	4	2	2	1
Ardi	<i>Good build European machine. Not active in the U.S.</i>	6	5	1	3	3
B&T	<i>Heavy duty, very well built machine. Very reliable. Still relatively easy to get parts and service especially from some rebuilders. It can be rebuilt over and over again. North American components. Simple in operation. Easy to maintain. Good resale value.</i>	8	8	6	8	7
Birch	<i>Continuation of Kux machines. Service and parts out of Birch, MI. Very simple in operation. Easy on maintenance. These machines should replace Kux machines but, unfortunately, are still not too active on sales and marketing. Good potential.</i>	6	7	6	6	6
Buhler	<i>Well built, high quality European machine. Very reliable. Unfortunately U.S. parts and service departments need improvement. Delivery time is too long on parts from Europe. Expensive service. Not all components in stock in the U.S. or Canada. Good for rebuilding. Newer models over engineered and not easy to operate. Difficult to maintain. Overly complicated machine for some die casters. Good resale value.</i>	8	5	4	7	7
Cast Master	<i>Medium quality machine. Service and parts from HPM. Relatively easy to maintain and to operate. Good resale value. Many in production across the U.S. and Canada.</i>	7	7	6	6	6
Cleveland	<i>Well built machine. Very reliable. Not easy to get parts or service. Some die casters just love Cleveland machines. Simple to maintain and to operate. Not recommended for rebuilding. Very low resale value.</i>	7	7	3	3	2
DCPress	<i>Well built high quality U.S.-made machine. Very reliable. Good for parts and service out of Paw Paw, MI. Very friendly customer service. All components made in the U.S. Good for rebuilding. Easy to maintain and to operate. Management has very long history of rebuilding and remanufacturing experience but machine relatively new on the market. Machine designed for 20-year service ability. Should have good resale value. Good potential.</i>	8	8	8	8	8
DTI	<i>Good quality, small hot chamber machines made in th U.S. Service and parts out of DTI in Rhode Island. Many customers like them. Not bad on resale.</i>	7	6	6	6	6
Fort Stanwick	<i>Simple U.S.-made machine. Hard to get service or parts. Not recommended for rebuilding. Almost impossible to re-sell.</i>	4	3	0	2	1
Frech	<i>Well built high quality European machine. Very reliable. Unfortunately U.S. parts and service departments need improvement. Delivery time is too long on parts from Europe. Very expensive service. Not all components in stock in th U.S. Good for rebuilding. Not easy to operate. Difficult to maintain. Expensive machine. Overly complicated for some die casters. Good resale value.</i>	9	5	4	6	8
Harvil	<i>Well built U.S. machine. Very active on West Coast. Not that difficult to get parts and service. Relatively simple machine. Not difficult to maintain and to operate. It is possible to rebuild. Not high resale value.</i>	6	6	5	6	4

Manufacturer	General Description	Reliability	Operation & Maintenance	Parts & Service	Rebuilding	Resale Value
Hishinuma	<i>Very well built hot chamber machines out of Japan. Reliable machine. Mostly machines installed in the U.S. at Japanese-based die cast companies. Still somewhat difficult to get service and parts in the U.S. However, they are working to improve that. Should be no problem to rebuild. Easy to operate and maintain. Average resale value. Very good potential.</i>	7	6	3	6	5
Idra	<i>Well built medium quality European machine out of Italy. Not easy to get parts and service. Reliable machine. Relatively easy to maintain and to operate. Recommended for rebuilding. Good resale value.</i>	7	6	5	7	6
Italpresse	<i>Well built medium quality European machine out of Italy. Difficult to get parts and service. Key components out of Italy. Reliable machine. Relatively simple to maintain and to operate. Recommended for rebuilding. Average resale value.</i>	7	6	3	6	5
HPM	<i>Well built medium class U.S. machine. Service and parts out of Mount Gilead, OH. Service and parts departments need improvement. Relatively simple to operate. Easy to maintain. North American components. Many machines in production across U.S. and Canada. A lot of die casters like these machines and stand by them. Recommended for rebuilding. Good resale value.</i>	8	8	7	7	8
Kux	<i>Well built medium class U.S. machine. Service and parts from Birch, MI. Very simple to operate. Easy to maintain. North American components. Many machines still in production across the U.S. and Canada. A lot of die casters like these machines because they are not complicated in design. Recommended for rebuilding. Good resale value.</i>	7	7	5	7	6
Lester	<i>Very well built heavy duty U.S. machine. Not easy to get parts and service. Mostly service from ACV Lester out of Wisconsin. Very reliable machine. Many still in operation in the U.S. Some die casters just love these machines. Easy on maintenance and operation. Hard working cast frame machine. Not possible to permanently fix Lester cast frame if broken. Most die casters do not buy Lesters any more. Low resale value. Very often older machines are just scrapped. Most die casters buy regular conventional machine instead of cast frame one like this one</i>	9	7	5	3	2
Miller-Taylor	<i>Simple U.S. made machine. Hard to get service or parts. Not recommended for rebuilding. Almost impossible to re-sell.</i>	4	3	0	2	1
National	<i>High quality small hot chamber machines made in th U.S. Reliable machine. Service and parts out of Rhode Island. Many customers like them very much. Not difficult to operate and easy maintenance. Good for resale.</i>	8	7	6	6	6
Prince	<i>Heavy duty, very well build machine. Very reliable. Considered by some die casters as the "Cadillac" of the die cast industry. Easy to get parts and service out of Holland, MI and especially from many rebuilders. It can be rebuilt over and over again. Top quality North American components. Easy to operate. Easy maintenance. Excellent resale value.</i>	10	10	10	10	10
Producer	<i>Lower-end hot chamber machine out of Taiwan. Fast machine. Aggressive in sales. A number of machines in production in Canada and the U.S. Somewhat difficult to get service and parts on time. Some die casters like the machine, others do not want to try them. Relatively simple to maintain and to operate. Need some improvement and changes to meet North American standards and expectations. Not recommended for rebuilding. Not too good for resale.</i>	6	6	4	3	3
Reed Prentice	<i>Simple U.S.-made machine. Hard to get service or parts. Not recommended for rebuilding. Almost impossible to re-sell.</i>	4	3	0	2	1
Polak	<i>Made by Vihorlat out of Slovakia, Europe. Simple machine easy to maintain and to operate. Few in North America. Not active in the U.S. No parts and service. Not recommended for rebuilding. Very low resale value.</i>	3	4	0	3	2

Manufacturer	General Description	Reliability	Operation & Maintenance	Parts & Service	Rebuilding	Resale Value
Superior	<i>Simple U.S. made machine. Hard to get service or parts. Not recommended for rebuilding. Almost impossible to re-sell.</i>	4	3	0	2	1
Toshiba	<i>Medium to low end machine out of Japan. Simple to operate. Hard to get good service and parts. Some die casters like these machines. U.S. division of Toshiba needs a lot of improvements on customer service. Difficult to rebuild. Medium to low resale value.</i>	5	5	4	3	4
Triulzi	<i>Italian machine. Simple and relatively easy to maintain and to operate. Few machines in North America. Not in business anymore. No parts and service. Some die casters like them. Not recommended for rebuilding. Very low resale value.</i>	4	4	0	2	1
UBE	<i>Medium class machine out of Japan. Service out of Ann Arbor, MI. Not too difficult to operate. Somewhat hard to get good service and parts. Many machines installed in the U.S. at Japanese-based die cast companies. U.S. division of UBE needs a lot of improvements in customer service. Difficult to rebuild. Medium or low resale value.</i>	5	5	4	3	4
Upre	<i>Lower-end European machine. No parts and service. Not active in the U.S.</i>	4	5	1	3	2
Wedge Lock	<i>Heavy built simple U.S.-made machine. Hard to get service or parts. Interesting wedge lock system. No parts and service. Not recommended for rebuilding. Almost impossible to resell.</i>	4	3	0	2	1
Weingarten	<i>Very well build high quality European machine out of Germany. Difficult to get parts and service. Important components out of Europe. Reliable machine. Relatively easy to maintain and to operate. Recommended for rebuilding. Unfortunately low resale value, considering the quality.</i>	8	7	3	7	4
Wotan	<i>Well built European machine. No longer in business. No parts and service. It can be rebuild. Only few in the U.S. Very low resale value.</i>	5	5	0	4	2
Zitai	<i>Lower end machine from Taiwan. Aggressive in sales. Steadily growing number of machines in production in Canada and the U.S. Somewhat difficult to get service and parts. Some die casters like the machine others do not want to try it. Relatively simple to maintain and to operate. Needs a lot of improvements and changes to meet North American standards and expectations. Not recommended for rebuilding. Not too good for resale.</i>	6	4	3	3	4