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PLASTICS NEWS™

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October 9, 1995

Crain's International Newspaper for the Plastics Industry

\$1.95 per copy

SITE SELECTION

SPECIAL REPORT

Conn. molder PMT finds niche in Slovakia

By Bill Henson
PLASTICS NEWS STAFF

PMT's Slovakian plant

- Two presses
- Three employees
- \$300,000 in sales



Plastic Molding Technology Inc. affectionately is described by its president, Charles E. Sholtis, as a peanut-sized company. It also is multinational, offering a small but illuminating example of what is meant when people speak of a global economy.

The Seymour, Conn.-based manufacturer of custom parts for the automotive, electronic and medical industries has 76 employees, annual sales of \$6 million and a European subsidiary, Danube Mold & Die.

Danube, in Bratislava, Slovakia, is less than 30 miles from Vienna, Austria.

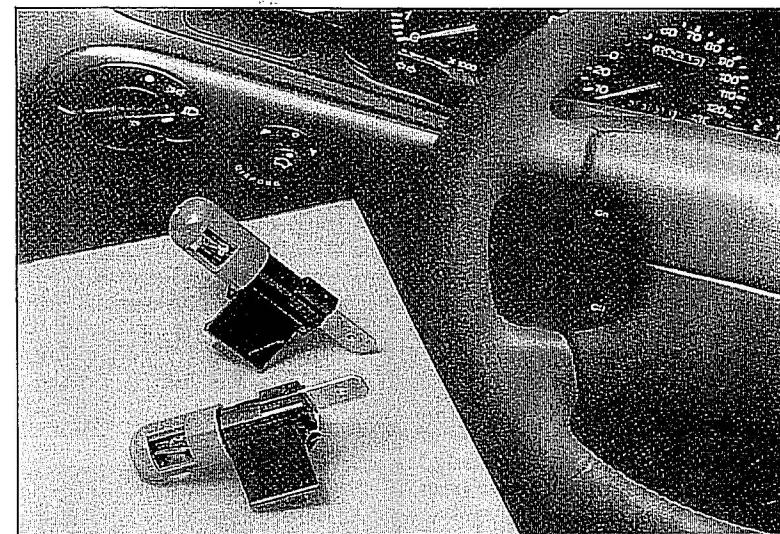
"It's like being in America 50

years ago," Sholtis said in a telephone interview.

He opened the 2,000-square-foot facility after a holiday visit four years ago to his ancestral homeland. During that visit, following the collapse of Communism in Eastern Europe, Sholtis said he saw a market economy in its infant stage.

"There were no custom molders," he said, but "a lot of trained people" who previously had worked in state-owned factories. Sholtis decided to set up a small custom mold-making operation. Today it is a full-service facility and handles small-volume orders for PMT, which imports custom molds and auto components from Danube. The Slovakian plant is equipped with 24- and 55-ton Battenfeld horizontal injection molding machines and Conair auxiliary equipment.

The company employs three, one of whom is an engineer. It has annual sales of \$300,000 vs. \$50,000 several years ago, ac-



Danube Mold & Die molds auto backlighting parts from polyethersulfone.

ording to Sholtis.

"There's a lot of opportunity in Slovakia," he said. "The Germans are there en masse. Volkswagen is there."

So are the Americans. In addition to PMT, Whirlpool Corp. has a factory in Slovakia where

it makes washing machines, according to Sholtis.

He said PMT's Danube expansion has enabled the firm to cut costs, boost sales and be more responsive to clients by processing tooling orders more quickly, saving customers money.

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ESTABLISHED 1973

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