

## Pinch Valve Technology - The valve for 21st Century

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In the past where engineers have opted for Rotary Valves, Ball Valves or Butterfly valves they are now opting for the AKO Pinch Valve. With proven reliability in the industry for over 23 years many engineers, OEMS and manufacturers are now realising not only does the AKO Pinch Valve offer the best and most reliable solution for conveying difficult products, it can also compete and beat &quot;traditional&quot; valves on price. In the current ever-competitive UK market this is very important.

Pinch Valves are still relatively &quot;new&quot; technology in comparison with the &quot;traditional&quot; valves. This is mainly due to fact in the busy workplace engineers have not got a lot of time and therefore are still using &quot;traditional&quot; valves that are doing an &quot;acceptable&quot; job on certain applications. This is slowly changing with AKO UK&quot;s glowing reference list of a complete range of customers large and small including end users and original equipment manufacturers all now using the AKO Pinch Valve.

The beauty of the Pinch Valve is its&quot; simplicity. Minimal parts of which only the sleeve is wearable mean minimal and quick, low cost maintenance. It has no mechanical parts, a complete clear/true bore and does not need an actuator.

The AKO Pinch Valve is operated via a solenoid valve. There needs to be a 2.5 bar differential pressure between the line/product pressure and the pressure to close valve. When the pressure is applied the re-enforced sleeve will close, giving a 100% tight seal. Pinch Valve technology is as simple as that.

If it is that simple then where is the new technology that make the AKO Pinch Valve stand out from the rest of the competition?

Simple maintenance with the AKO Pinch Valve not only makes it stand ahead of the &quot;traditional&quot; valves, but also the pinch valve competition. Improvements with the shape when casting, along with simple and clear instructions complete with photos allow users of the AKO Pinch Valve to complete re-sleeves in between 5-15 minutes depending on the size the valve. Even down to the smallest detail to save time, bolt sizes on the flanges are all the same size meaning only one tool is needed to complete the job. Only replacing the sleeve and saving on all this time means a fraction of the maintenance cost compared with other valves on the market.

AKO&quot;s sleeve technology and continual testing have ensured the best possible life from their valves before they need replacing. The sleeves are made in layers and re-enforced to ensure they can handle the most abrasive products and keep springing back to the original open position giving the complete clear/true bore time after time.

The secrets of the sleeve surprisingly are also in the elliptical body shape of the AKO Pinch Valve. The body shape ensures the sleeve folds in the same place every time it closes, this results in a better mechanical memory ensuring longer life. This feature is unique to the AKO Pinch Valve meaning longer life than the pinch valve competition as well as very importantly having up to 40% less air consumption when in operation. Saving 40% on air consumption with a valve that is operating every 10 seconds on a 24 hour shift is a huge power saving to every manufacturer.

The clear and true bore of the AKO Pinch Valve, mean completely free flow without any blockages. Some pinch valves on the market are not a true bore and therefore wear to the flanges is often caused and in turn needs to be replaced. Also with the Pinch Valve there are no mechanical parts to get damaged as with other &quot;traditional&quot; valves, again saving on maintenance.

Heavy cumbersome valves are also a thing of the past for AKO. AKO Pinch Valve bodies as standard are now made from aluminium as opposed to cast iron. This is also the case with the ends, instead of the old cast iron flanges they use aluminium flanges with steel bushings. These improvements ensure the AKO Pinch Valve maintains its&quot; durability and resistance to abrasion, as well weighing 35% less than in the past.

The AKO Pinch Valve can be used in many applications due to the diversity of the AKO UK range. Sizes range from 10-250mm with a variety of end connections available which include, PN10/16, ANSI150, Screwed

BSP, Tri Clamp/Clover, IDF and RJT. End materials include, POM, Stainless Steel, PVC, and Aluminium (with and without Mild/Stainless Steel bushings). Bodies can be made of Aluminium, PVC or Stainless Steel.

The range of sleeves includes, Natural Rubber (High temperature if required), Natural Rubber Food Quality (FDA Approved), Neoprene, EPDM, Viton, Silicon, Nitrile, Hypalon and Butyl.

Abrasive powders, water, lime, flour, sugar, sand, foundry sand, steel shot, swarf, animal feed, grit, coal, sludges/slurries, raw sewage, ash, PFA, paper pulp, cement, flour, PVC granules, minerals, lime, air, gases, chlorine, sulphuric acid are just some of the applications that a pinch valve can handle with ease.

Despite all the physical advantages of the AKO Pinch Valve, in the past initial prices were fairly high compared with more 'traditional' valves, this was solely due to the mass production of for example butterfly valves. Now the AKO Pinch Valve has become more popular, increased production, more sales, the fact you don't need an actuator and larger stock holdings in the UK have enabled AKO UK to stay competitive on price in the forever more fierce market place.

AKO Pinch Valve sales in Germany, France and the rest of the world have increased greatly over the last 3 years. Slowly changing views and action by forward thinking engineers on 'traditional' valves only doing an 'acceptable' job has resulted in the market for the pinch valve also increasing in the UK.

All of the above advantages, full technical back up with 23 years experience and the fact AKO UK are dedicated to selling Pinch Valves with over £30k of stock will ensure the best possible service.

Overall, simplicity and the fact the Pinch Valve is the best valve for many applications will ensure the business continues to be a success.