

# **MINTH ELECTRICITY TECHNOLOGY**

## ***EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW***

**Weizhi Ge**  
General Manager



# A WIN-WIN FORMULA

Founded in 1970, the Ruitz plant in Hauts-de-France now produces the new gearbox used on all E-TECH vehicles in the Renault range (Clio, Captur, Mégane Estate and Arkana). Ampère ElectriCity (30%) and China's Minth Group Ltd (70%) have decided to set up a **joint venture** called **Minth Electricity Technology** at this long-established site. It is a first in France and allows for the large-scale production of aluminum battery containers for electric vehicles. The directors of this joint venture were on hand to answer our questions.



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General Manager  
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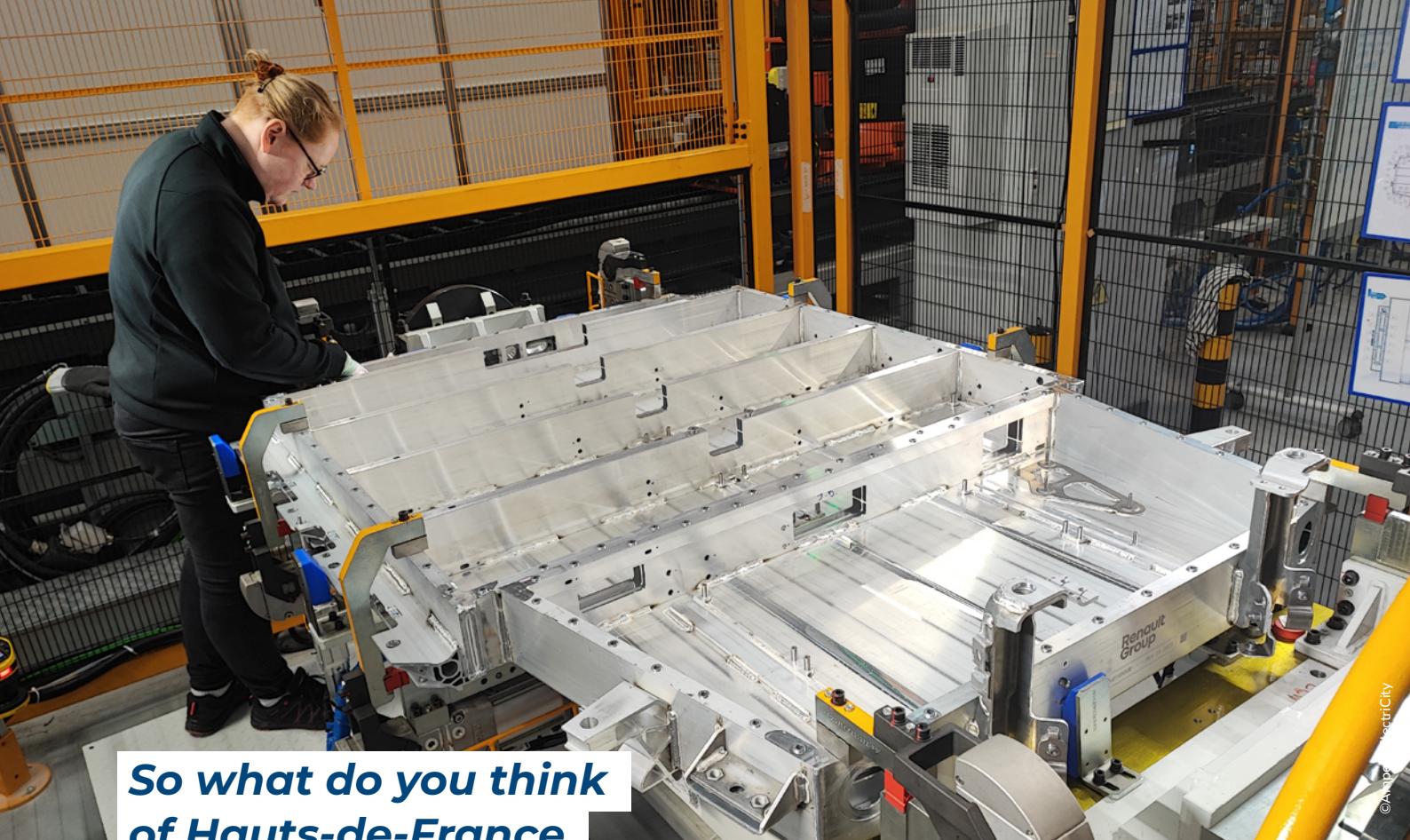


***How would you describe your business to someone who isn't familiar with it?***

That's a good question, and it's something that some people ask me here in France when we meet. I simply explain that we are both a supplier and a partner for Renault in its electric vehicle process. From a more technical point of view, I'd like to add that we manufacture the battery tray into which the vehicle's electric battery module is inserted. Our high quality tray is essential for the electric battery's optimum performance. But this quality is also crucial to the safety of the vehicle and its passengers. This is so important that

Renault has appointed an experienced "quality manager" to ensure that our production perfectly meets the set requirements. This is just one example of the win-win approach of our partnership between Ampère ElectriCity and Minth Group.





## ***So what do you think of Hauts-de-France and its people?***

I've been living in Hauts-de-France for two years now, and I have a particularly positive feeling about it. The first thing that stood out for me was the warmth of the people and how easy they were to talk to, which I really appreciated, since it's important for expatriates like me to not feel isolated. I also try to speak French whenever I can. Locally, Béthune is what I call a "smart city". We can find everything we need on a daily basis. Personally, I love to swim and I really enjoy the aquatic center here. But to be honest, I don't have a lot of free time because most of my energy is devoted to work.

## ***What do you think of the employees who work for you?***

I was impressed by the efficiency of the company's staff. Professionally, the Chinese are known for working fast, very fast. Here, we were able to move ahead quickly, since our project was up and running in less than a year. We have accomplished here what no one thought was possible. Until now, we've had two teams with just over a hundred people in all. A third team has just joined us to further scale up production



***Minth is a leading group with a strong presence in China. Why was France a priority in your international development strategy?***

“We are present in North America and Europe: Germany, Serbia, the Czech Republic, Poland and now France. This choice of location, which is as close as possible to our customers, is primarily motivated by our desire to reduce our CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.

***In this era of decarbonization, it is no longer conceivable to transport our rather large parts by sea from China, or even by truck from Serbia. Renault was open to the idea of creating this joint venture. We're delighted to be working with a leading manufacturer who is boosting the electric vehicle market in France, and who can benefit from our expertise and technological know-how.***



## ***What are the advantages for your group in working at the Renault site?***


Our aim is to make this alliance a success by demonstrating Minth's excellence and know-how, particularly with regard to our quality standards. The idea is also to prove that our group has a truly international culture, as reflected in the nine different nationalities that make up our teams. Our ability to work anywhere in the world with a team spirit and to take into account the culture of each country where we operate, is a real added value for Minth.

## ***Why was a joint venture chosen for France when you could have opted for another solution, such as a fully-owned company?***

This decision was made by William Chin, our Strategy Director. I can't speak for him, but I know that the Renault group's reputation as one of France's most iconic automotive brands played a major role. Chinese companies are sometimes afraid to invest in France. Because of its culture and quality of life, France has a different relationship to work than we do, which can deter some investors. A joint venture therefore seems to be a safer, easier and quicker way of setting up a project. The Border Carbon Adjustment Mechanism (BCAM), which is due to come into force in Europe in 2026, also needs to be taken into account, since foreign companies like ours, that are already established in Europe, will not be affected by this "carbon tax".



***How do you manage to offset the fact that labor costs in France are much higher than in China?***



Our proximity to Renault's factories not only has environmental benefits, as I've explained, but is also a major source of savings in terms of logistics costs. In addition, we have developed a highly intelligent design for our production chain that delivers real added value, with advanced robotization that can replace the repetitive or time-consuming tasks that were once carried out by manual labor. Last but not least, our Chinese team worked very hard to get up and running quickly, and this allowed us to reduce the project preparation phase. All of this allows us to be competitive, a sine qua non for our presence.

***Did local and regional authorities help you with your project?***

Although Renault's presence by our side was reassuring, I have to admit that the help and support of the public authorities was decisive. Initially, I didn't know where to turn to get the information and authorizations I needed for many aspects of our project.

***Our foreign development process normally relies on support from private consultants.***

***But for this project in Hauts-de-France, we didn't need it.***

***The support we received from Nord France Invest and CABBALR helped us to get through all the stages smoothly. The local and regional economic development stakeholders have an efficient process for helping international companies set up shop, and they are well received and guided.***



# NEED HELP WITH YOUR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT?

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**NORD FRANCE INVEST**  
ECONOMIC PROMOTION AGENCY  
FOR HAUTS-DE-FRANCE

Espace International,  
299 boulevard de Leeds  
59777 LILLE - France



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