

Service geared to India's emerging needs

Ceracon Engineers represents a wide spectrum of the international glassmaking industry's suppliers in India and elsewhere. Jay Sarin talked recently to *Glass Worldwide*.



HNG Managing Director, Sanjay Somany (centre), during a recent visit to Glashuttentechnik Grob GmbH, Germany along with Jay Sarin of Ceracon (far right), Joachim Gesslein (first left) and Ulrich Imhof (second left) from Grob and Mr D L Mudi of HNG (second right).

Representing many of the world's leading suppliers of materials and equipment to the hollow and flat glass manufacturing industries, Ceracon Engineers Pvt Ltd has become an established part of the Indian glassmaking scene since its creation in 1993. Under the guidance of Jagdish (Jay) Sarin, President, Ceracon has also widened the extent of its geographical influence to service the glass industry's needs in the Gulf region, West Asia and Africa. Separately, a valuable support network is provided to glassmakers looking to outsource parts of their marketing operation.

LONG-TERM ASSOCIATION

Jay Sarin has been associated with the glass industry for over 38 years, having qualified as a ceramic engineer at Banaras Hindu University. Before creating Ceracon Engineers in New Delhi 17 years ago, he worked for a supplier of refractories. Marketing came naturally to Jay and he enjoyed doing what he did best. While visiting various glass plants as

a young man, he felt he could provide greater value in terms of costs and knowhow to customers (glass plants) and equipment manufacturers, as a consequence of which he began to market refractories in his own right. Subsequently, the company has grown in leaps and bounds. Starting with an agency to represent USA-based AGR International Inc, today Ceracon Engineers markets the products and services of 29 leading companies from around the world to the container, flat, pharmaceutical

and cosmetics sectors. In the space of 15 years, Ceracon has grown from being a one-man band into a company with a workforce of 10 people. In addition to Jay Sarin, key members of staff include Arun Bahl (Vice President), Divya Mahajan (Director and Chief of Staff), Harender Singh (Accounts Manager) and Belam Singh (Office Manager).

According to Jay Sarin, within the lifetime of his company, the Indian glass industry has come of age, with consumers looking for improved quality and cost-effectiveness. "Glassmakers have responded well to these changing market conditions and are constantly upgrading machinery, increasing speeds to reduce costs etc." The Ceracon President believes the future lies in NNPB, higher speeds, larger furnaces, automation of packaging, increased quality, the widespread use of automated inspection technologies etc.

The flexibility to adapt to change has been the hallmark of Ceracon's success. "We recognise that survival depends on a swift response to change and Ceracon has been proactive and quick to track changes in user requirements, keeping abreast of and responding to the future plans of customers."

DIVERSE ACTIVITIES

Ceracon's list of principals reads like a directory of products and services to the glass industry, comprising the following well-known organisations:

- AGR International Inc, USA – Inspection/testing equipment.
- Bernard & Bonfond, France – Transformers for electric melting and boosting.
- E W Bowman Inc, USA – Annealing and decorating lehrs.
- Dura Temp Corp, USA – Hot end insulation materials.
- FIC (UK) Ltd, UK – Electric melting and boost systems.
- Fives Stein Ltd, UK – Feeder mechanisms and



Many of Ceracon's principals supported GLASSPEX India 2009 in New Delhi.

forehearth assemblies.

- Flammatec, Czech Republic – Gas burners and trains.
- Glass Chem Consult, Germany – Hot end coating systems and chemicals
- Glashuttentechnik Grob GmbH, Germany – Furnace design and construction.
- Glass Service Inc, Czech Republic – Consultancy services, furnace modelling and furnace audits etc.
- Graphoidal Developments Ltd, UK – Shear spray and cold end coating systems.
- Hager Sondermaschinenbau GmbH, Germany – Float glass ware handling systems.
- Heye International GmbH, Germany – Turnkey projects, technical assistance, IS machines and production machinery.
- Interglass SA de CV, Mexico – Lubricants and swabbing compounds.
- IRIS Inspection Machines, France – Inspection machines.
- IS Maintenance Ltd, UK – IS machines, feeders and associated equipment.
- Lattimer Ltd, UK – Variables for IS machines.
- Quantum Engineered Products Inc, USA – Container forming equipment.
- Pennine Industrial Equipment Ltd, UK – Silent Chains.
- Polypack Inc, USA – Shrinkwrapping systems.
- Putsch GmbH & Co KG, Germany – Shear blades.
- Robson & Moss Ltd, UK – Cooler tubes for plunger cooling.
- A & L Rondot SAS, France –



Sheppee International, Pennine Industrial Equipment and Lattimer are among Ceracon's UK-based principals.

- Scoops, hot end insulation etc.
 - Sheppee International Ltd, UK – Ware handling equipment for container glass.
 - STG Group, Germany – Furnace process control systems and oxygen sensors.
 - Strutz International Inc, USA – Bottle printing machines.
 - Tempsens Instruments (I) Pvt Ltd, India – Thermocouples, pyrometers etc.
 - D Widmann GmbH, Germany – High pressure cleaning systems.
 - Zecchetti srl, Italy – Automated packaging systems.
- If this portfolio was not already sufficiently diverse, Ceracon is keen to extend it further to embrace, for example, suppliers of batch charging equipment, moulds, decorative colours, float glass manufacturing technology and automotive glass production machinery. According

to Jay Sarin, the single window approach to product information provided by his company affords some important benefits to glassmakers, including savings in manpower, time and effort, together with a prompt response and resolution to disputes. Similarly, by being represented by Ceracon, principals enjoy the benefits of increased sales, close contact with customers, market intelligence, prompt service, savings in marketing and travel costs, timely realisation of payments, information on the reliability and financial stability of customers, as well as the development of leads for business development.

THE CUSTOMER IS KING

“Riding the wave of an emerging economy, India’s glassmakers are becoming increasingly professional and quality-conscious,” Jay Sarin suggests. “Indian customers are highly price-sensitive and demand value for money” he continues. “To reduce costs, the industry often resorts to local resources or modifications, expecting suppliers to react immediately at all times.” Ultimately, Indian customers believe in the concept that ‘the customer is king’ and expect to be treated as such. “They do not hesitate to drop a supplier who defaults or cheats” suggests the Ceracon President.

Jay Sarin is confident that his team of glass industry specialists are well placed to provide even more valuable service to the local glass industry. One of the most active members of the All India Glass Manufacturers’ Federation, Jay anticipates increased demand for float glass due to an expansion in infrastructure construction, an increase in container requirements as a result of growth in the liquor and food/ beverage industries to match changing lifestyles, significant opportunities for solar panels due to increased environmental concerns and growing demand for glass in the local automotive sector.

All-in-all, potentially, a busy time lies ahead for Indian glassmakers, international suppliers of production technology and their local representatives. Ceracon Engineers can be expected to play an influential role in the industry’s evolution. ■



USA-based Dura Temp is another of Ceracon's principals.

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