

Supporting screen printing customers in China

Last May, Kammann (Shanghai) Machinery Trading Co Ltd opened larger premises in the Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone to support its screen printing technology sales efforts throughout the Asia Pacific region. Area Manager, Nils Steinau discussed the project with *Glass Worldwide*.

A wholly-owned subsidiary of Germany's KBA-Kammann GmbH, Kammann (Shanghai) Machinery Trading Co Ltd has represented the Kammann series of screen printing machines in China since its creation in 2012. Three years later, the goal of establishing a regional competence centre to support these efforts has been realised. An advanced 300m² showroom opened in May 2014, including an adjoining sales office and service desk.

Located within the Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone, this modern facility houses sales and service support, spare parts, customer training and a regional sales team, as well as the capability to test print consumables. Currently the showroom features a state-of-the-art K15 CNC printing machine with an integrated hot stamping module, conical printing stations, a print check system, different pre-treatment functions and a host of superior features.



An experienced service technician is responsible for mentoring the young Shanghai team.



Demo machine operators Wenzheng and Lei.



Print technician Lei.

According to Nils Steinau, Area Manager, this facility is kept busy printing on a daily basis for clients in China and throughout the Asia Pacific region. "We have just finished a batch for Korea and have prepared the machine for a live demonstration to an Australian customer."

Faced with such high demand for its samples, the company immediately started to build up a local supply chain to gain fast access to its 'non-negotiable' items. This includes screen frames, films, machined metal jigs and hard plastic parts for its robotic handling units, all of which are being made locally.

When staffing the Shanghai operation, Kammann focused on young candidates who could comprehend the company's modern engineering and process capabilities. Just one recruit had previous experience of screen printing, while others are mechanical engineers with a CNC machinery background, an accountant and two sales professionals. "No expense was spared to provide them with the best possible in-house training" says Nils Steinau. "A colleague from Germany mentors our technical staff and provides refresher classes when needed. I couldn't be more proud of our team's achievements so far."

POSITIVE ACQUISITION

Talking to Mr Steinau, no negative feedback has been received from customers, following Kammann Maschinenbau's acquisition by KBA in 2013. Quite the opposite, in fact: "KBA is not only a household name in the Chinese printing industry but also a recognised service leader and we very much appreciate being part of this strong group. We meet regularly with our KBA counterparts from China and South East Asia and draw inspiration from their professional market approach and in



The Kammann (Shanghai) showroom, featuring the K15 CNC machine.



The Kammann facility in Shanghai Pilot Free Trade Zone.

particular, from their wide service network."

One important goal of the coming year is to build Kammann sales and service capacity in at least one of KBA's regional branch offices, starting possibly in southern China. This increasingly close working relationship is also apparent with respect to exhibition participation, with KBA and Kammann China jointly exhibiting at the Chinaplas exhibition in Guangzhou this year. "A major portion of our sales in Asia last year was to the plastic packaging market" Nils Steinau explains "and Kammann is a specialist in efficient printing and curing equipment for UV inks... we possess a lot of knowhow when it comes to the decoration of plastic containers." Furthermore, because many of Kammann's regional sales representatives are in one way or another engaged with the plastic industry, participation at Chinaplas provides a great opportunity to meet potential buyers.

TOWARDS OPERATIONAL EXCELLENCE

Faced with rising labour costs and slower growth prospects, Chinese customers are striving increasingly for operational excellence. This is definitely the case for local glass container producers, who are keen to improve their supply chain complexity. "While it can be relatively easy for them to purchase advanced hardware, Kammann is also focused on 'soft tools' such as after-sales service, live printing support in co-operation with technology partners and skill enhancement through training" says Nils Steinau. "With our new set-up, we have started to live the ideas that we had when developing the concept. Furthermore, we can rely on colleagues at KBA-Kammann, Germany and their industry experience." All parts of the business have a strong commitment to China and the region.

The overriding goal for Kammann (Shanghai) Machinery Trading is to be recognised as a local partner, boosting the productivity of customers to unparalleled heights and creating optimum value in their value chain. ■

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