

New horizons

Knitting Trade Journal talks to Andreas von Bismarck, Managing Partner at circular knitting machine builder, Terrot

Knitting Trade Journal: As we emerge from the global financial crisis, many knitting machine builders are cautiously optimistic over order books for 2011. Is this the case for Terrot?

Andreas von Bismarck: Against the overall trend among competitors, we have seen a growth of nearly 10% in 2009 and we saw a big demand for Terrot products in 2010 leading to a growth of approximately 75% compared to the previous year. We do expect this trend to continue and the current order book validates this assumption.

KTJ: What is your most requested machine at the moment and why? Which sectors eg. mattress ticking, double jersey etc, are providing the strongest demand for Terrot and there any particular gauges and or diameters that are in demand?

AvB: Just looking at number of machines, still the well-proven single-jersey model S296 in both versions -1 and -2 is our most requested machine at the moment. We are also seeing a certain trend towards double-jersey machines and our market shares regarding jacquard machines is also increasing drastically.

The specifications of the machines regarding diameter and gauges are often very different country-wise and application-wise, but we are seeing an overall trend towards bigger diameters and finer gauges. Therefore we spend a lot of effort into optimising our products in these segments and very soon we will launch the new C7-frame which allows diameters up to 54 ins.

KTJ: How important is flexibility for a company such as Terrot? i.e. is the company able to supply both niche

and specialist machines and more straightforward basic machines?

AvB: Flexibility is one of our most important strategic priorities. We are committed to our wide product portfolio and we evaluate this kind of flexibility as more important than a simplified view on growth by number of machines.

KTJ: Does Terrot receive specific demands from its customers, such as faster speeds, varying needle selection techniques on the cylinder and on the dial etc and if so, are you able to respond to these requests?

AvB: Focussed and solid development processes can only be executed when machine builder and customer work together. Therefore we are very happy, that as well as a lot of trust given through orders, many customers choose Terrot as their long-term strategic partner to develop competitive future solutions in circular knitting. We will see a lot of new innovations driven by Terrot in the near future.

KTJ: Which will be your most active markets by region in 2011? Are there any new emerging markets that Terrot is very confident about?

AvB: First of all, we have achieved a very good allocation worldwide through our sales in the last year. We do expect, of course, China to be the top market again, but Turkey, India, Brazil and Indonesia are expected to be the biggest markets in 2011.

As well as those regions, we keep a special eye on the smaller markets and new opportunities. Thanks to that, we were able to be the first supplier in the top segment for circular knitting builders delivering



machines into the new Iraq in 2010 while elsewhere, Uzbekistan is developing very fast.

KTJ: How do you see your products competing with emerging Chinese technology?

AvB: The basic knitting technology was developed many decades ago. The most important aspect from our perspective are the additional applications that you can now realize on our machines.

As Chinese competitors tend to focus more on standardized, mass volumes with a short-term strategic view, we see our strength more in creating and developing individual solutions and a long-term, constantly high quality products.

KTJ: What, in your view, are the real challenges facing high quality, European knitting machine builders in 2011 and beyond?

AvB: In the short-term catching up with market demand is the major focus. On the longer term, we will need to find more combined solutions in the textile production process to support the flexibility of our customers and markets. But be sure that we are already working on this. **KTJ**