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INTERNATIONAL

The trade magazine for tube and pipe products

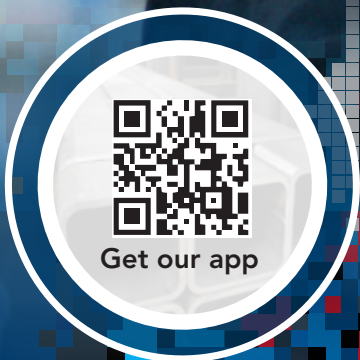
September 2020



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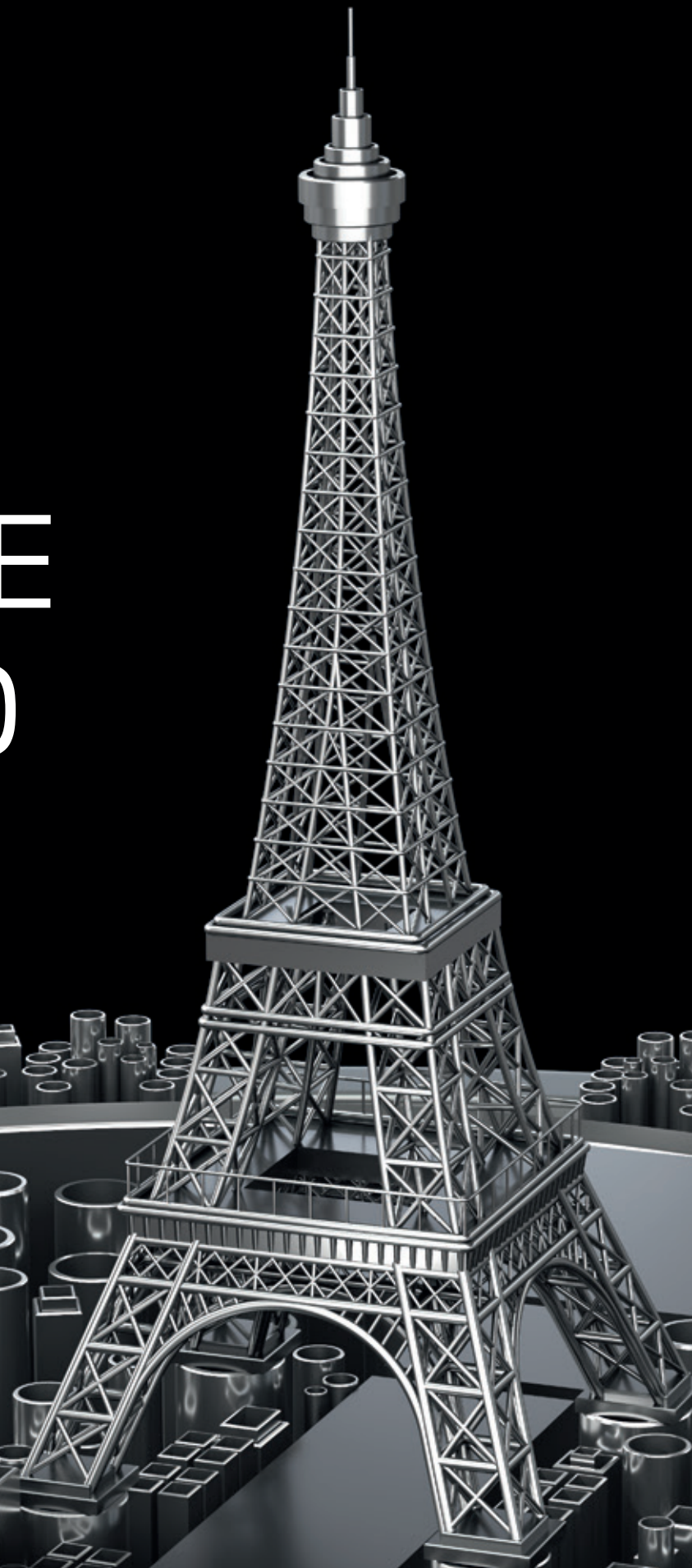
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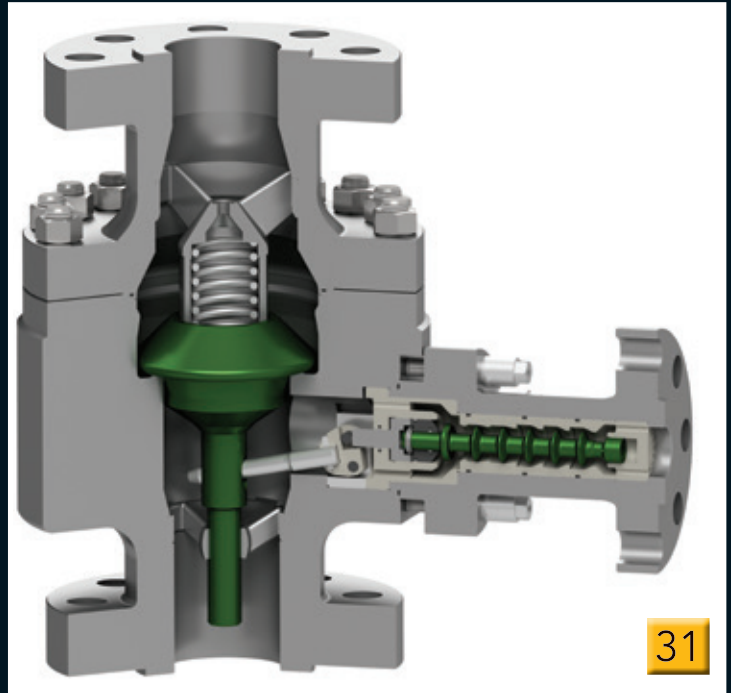
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 **FABTECH**



18-20 November 2020
Las Vegas, USA

North America's largest metal forming, fabricating, welding & finishing event

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 **Tube CHINA**



23-26 September 2020
Shanghai, China

International Tube & Pipe Industry trade fair

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Tube Products

INTERNATIONAL



The September issue

Welcome to the latest Tube Products INTERNATIONAL magazine.

This issue we have a fascinating interview with the Topfibra CEO Mauricio Facchinetti starting on page 34; a feature on OCTG, gas & pipeline products on page 38; and a case study from the highly creative Timeless Tubes (see page 45). The magazine is due to be distributed at FABTECH 2020 in the US (see page 32 for information) and at Tube China 2020 (page 42).

A recent study by auditing firm EY shows that almost half of bosses in 45 countries are speeding up plans to introduce automation following the recent pandemic, with the likes of Amazon and Ocado already using robots in customer fulfilment centres. This is also a trend we have been increasingly seeing in tube production, even before COVID-19, with a growing number of elements of the process now automated, especially where the work would be hazardous for a human team.

A challenge faced by manufacturers is a reduction in available staff on their shop floors largely due to social distancing, which comes with health and safety concerns, and the need for new ecosystems to achieve efficient production.

Having spoken to a number of companies in the industry during lockdown it is noticeable that those offering automated solutions have seen an increase in inquiries and companies are generally looking at their premises in a very different light. During a Zoom meeting with Martin McVicar of Combilift he said calls looking for quotes and space saving solutions had doubled during lockdown. "Demand for space has never been at such a high level, as COVID-19 is driving space constraints," he said.

In addition to automation, manufacturers are looking to boost their production space in order to comply with social distancing rules as economies around the world begin to re-open. It will be interesting to see how rapidly this situation changes the face of our industry.

In the forthcoming November issue we have features on steel & stainless steel tubes; valves, fittings & flanges; and tube welding technology.

The magazine is also due to be distributed at a number of trade shows. You can submit editorial to me at rory@intras.co.uk

Rory McBride
Editor in chief



Events calendar

2020



23-26 September
Tube China
(Shanghai, China)
International exhibition
www.tubechina.net



18-20 November
FABTECH
(Las Vegas, USA)
International exhibition
www.fabtechexpo.com



23-25 November
Tube India
(Mumbai, India)
International exhibition
www.tube-india.com



1-3 December
ValveWorld Expo
(Düsseldorf, Germany)
International exhibition
www.valveworldexpo.com



7-11 December
Tube Düsseldorf 2020
(Düsseldorf, Germany)
International exhibition
www.tube.de

2021



11-14 January
STEEL FAB
(Sharjah, UAE)
International exhibition
www.steelfabme.com



25-28 January
MACH
(Birmingham, UK)
International exhibition
www.machexhibition.com



9-12 March
EuroBLECH
(Hanover, Germany)
International exhibition
www.euroblech.com

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BEYOND TECHNOLOGY

Business & market news

Transformational year for the Van Leeuwen Pipe and Tube Group

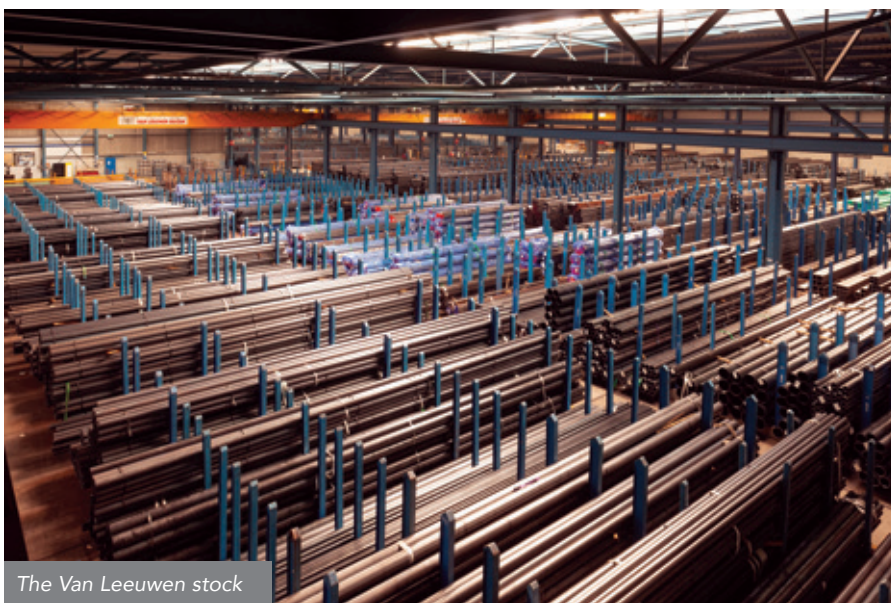
The Van Leeuwen Pipe and Tube Group has announced that 2019 was a transformational year. Financial results improved compared to 2018, despite lower economic activity in the industry segment and one-off acquisition costs. The acquisition of Benteler Distribution, which was closed at the end of November 2019, will also double the company's total sales volume.

Van Leeuwen's turnover increased 25 per cent to €787mn. The operating result improved almost 26 per cent to €17mn (2018: €13.5mn). The net result increased to €10.1mn (2018: €9.7mn). Excluding the contribution of the acquisition of Benteler Distribution, Van Leeuwen's turnover increased 19 per cent to €750mn. The operating result improved to € 18.3mn and the net result increased to €11.5mn.

Peter Rietberg, chairman of the management board, said: "For Van Leeuwen, 2019 was an exceptional year in which we celebrated our 95th anniversary and acquired Benteler Distribution. The integration of Benteler Distribution is in full swing. As a family business with a long history and a solid financial basis, Van Leeuwen has confidence in its future. Even in less favourable times, we can rely on the resilience and strong structure of our worldwide company and first and foremost on the creativity, dedication and the fighting spirit of our management and employees."

On 31 July 2019, the Van Leeuwen Pipe and Tube Group entered into an agreement to acquire Benteler Distribution, an international distribution company operating in the mechanical engineering, automotive, energy, construction and shipbuilding industries. The acquisition closed on receipt of all necessary approvals from relevant regulatory authorities on 29 November 2019. This strategic acquisition provides Van Leeuwen access to additional key markets in Europe.

Van Leeuwen Pipe and Tube Group
www.vanleeuwen.com



The Van Leeuwen stock

Corinth Pipeworks goes carbon neutral

Corinth Pipeworks has announced its support for the Paris Climate Agreement and the UN Sustainability Goals by implementing important initiatives for a low carbon future.

The company aims to become the first steel pipe manufacturer, for the energy sector, whose operations are carbon neutral in 2020.

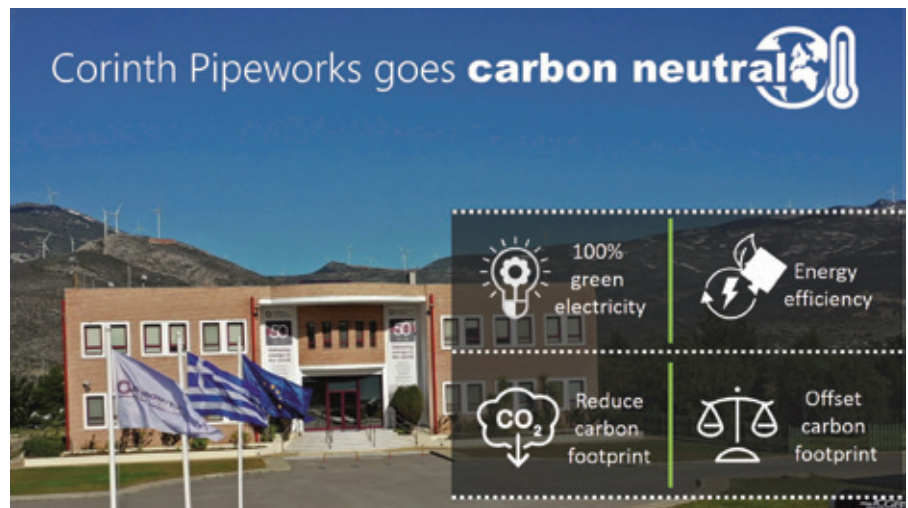
In order to achieve net zero carbon emissions, it has committed to meet its electricity supply needs from green electricity and signed an agreement with the Public Power Corporation (PPC), leading power generation and supply company in Greece, to ensure that 100 per cent of its electricity needs originate from renewable energy.

It has also implemented a series of projects to improve its energy efficiency

and initiatives to reduce the remaining portion of its energy consumption are in progress such as the upgrade of its operations to substitute fossil fuel consumption with green electricity. It intends to offset its final carbon footprint

with the use of UN approved programs for CO₂ emissions reductions such as foresting.

Corinth Pipeworks
www.cpw.gr



EcoMetals-trails to take place for the first time at Valve World Expo in Germany

EcoMetals-trails will take place for the first time at the world's largest trade fair for industrial valves, Valve World Expo Düsseldorf, Germany.

The EcoMetals campaign, which is based on the concept of being committed to

the environment, is being conducted for the first time as part of Valve World Expo. The EcoMetals-trail is a guided tour, which is available daily during the fair and will take visitors to exhibition stands of exhibitors who produce in a sustainable, resource-saving and

emission-reduced way. The daily tours start from the new Entrance South.

Interested exhibitors can register and get the chance to inform the participants of the EcoMetals-trails personally and in detail about innovations from their company at their exhibition stand for a nominal fee.

The expo will show the entire range of products and applications from the smallest micro-valve to industrial valves weighing several tons and will take place in halls 1, 3 and 4 of the Düsseldorf Fairgrounds from 1-3 December 2020.

In parallel, the Valve World Conference will be organised and held in the new exhibition hall one by KCI. The Valve World-Forum will follow in hall three with a free lecture programme on the first day of the fair.

Valve World Expo
www.valveworldexpo.com



EcoMetals at Valve World Expo

UK manufacturers continue the vital pipe supply chain for essential utilities

UK plastic pressure and non-pressure pipe manufacturers have played a key role in maintaining a robust supply chain for utilities during the recent pandemic.

The UK supply chain has adapted quickly from the initial lockdown shock to continue delivering a level of service and minimising risk to the utility sector.

Caroline Ayres, BPF Pipes Group director, commented: "Our members have been working hard to ensure the supply chain for utilities continues to remain safe and secure, so that products required for emergency work in every utility sector as well as routine construction and maintenance are always available."

Plastic pipe suppliers have also said that they are well-prepared and able to provide the robustness that utilities need in the current climate by maintaining their own internal supply chain via

forward planning and risk management through to instigating appropriate social distancing measures and safe working practices for those in the manufacturing, administration and distribution areas.

According to BPF Pipes, the continuity and safe supply are vital for the normal functioning of the UK utility network, and ongoing routine maintenance as well as emergency repairs help ensure an uninterrupted power and water supply source available around the clock. This applies to both the water and sewerage networks as well as to gas and electricity supplies.

Major scheduled utility infrastructure projects have continued, where worker safety can be ensured, and the recent lighter volumes of road traffic have helped with this. Pipe supplies are continuing to be provided, with operators adhering to strict social

distancing rules. Solutions such as pipe suppliers photographing their delivered items alongside a member of the contractor team so that no signatures are required have been implemented.

Factories where pipe materials and fittings are manufactured are maintaining a level of production to ensure that the supply chain for essential work and emergencies is not broken. The support roles they are playing are vital to keep utilities able to function as close to normal as possible.

Ms Ayres continued: "It is essential that the flexible approach adopted by UK pipe manufacturers continues to reflect the ever changing landscape of the current situation."

BPF Pipes Group
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Nero boosts stainless pipeline product sales team with appointment

Nero, a distributor of stainless pipeline products, has strengthened its sales team with the appointment of Tom Pennells.

Mr Pennells joins the sales department from Nero's warehousing team where he spent three years helping to manage the storage and distribution of more than 6,000 products, including screwed fittings, valves, compression fittings, flanges, pipe and tubes.

Speaking after his appointment, Mr Pennells said: "I joined Nero in 2017 to have a career change and I haven't looked back. Right from the beginning, I was encouraged to develop my knowledge and enhance my skills.

"When I was offered the chance to work in sales, I jumped at it. This is a great opportunity to build on everything

I've learnt about Nero's products and services to help generate new business and develop my customer relationships."

Mr Pennells will be responsible for building client relationships across the commercial and industrial sectors.

Darryl Spencer-Hicks, Nero's operations director, added: "Despite the challenges many businesses face because of the Covid-19 crisis, we're still seeking to grow Nero this year and have continued to employ all our staff.

"As part of this strategy, we needed a salesperson that could hit the ground running so Tom was the ideal candidate. He has proven to be a very dedicated and enthusiastic employee who has already built client

relationships and knows all about our products and processes.

"With additional sales training also now under his belt, we're looking forward to seeing him further his career with Nero."

Nero
www.nero.co.uk



Tom Pennells



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Asahi/America welcomes Peter Quinn as new business development manager

Thermoplastic fluid flow technology expert, Asahi/America, has announced the addition of Peter Quinn to its business development team.

Mr Quinn joined Asahi/America in May, 2020 as national business development manager for custom-fabricated products and brings more than 30 years of sales and distribution experience of pipe, valves and fittings with him.

He will work closely with the company's sales and engineering teams to promote Asahi/America's growing custom fabrication division.

Mr Quinn's background includes marketing and sales of HDPE specialty fabrications for the water filtration, wastewater and mining industries.



Peter Quinn

Additionally, he also holds a degree in business management/marketing from Siena College in the US.

Asahi/America
www.asahi.america.com

New dates for INDOWATER 2020 event

The 16th International Water, Wastewater & Recycling Technology Expo & Forum in Jakarta INDOWATER 2020 will be held again from 25 to 27 November 2020 at ICE (BSD City), Tangerang (West Jakarta) in conjunction with INDORENERGY and INDOWASTE.

The trade show is organised by PT Napindo Media Ashatama in association with Merebo GmbH Messe International based in Hamburg, Germany in charge of the Europe, American and Australia Pavilion.

The last INDOWATER Jakarta in 2019 attracted 438 exhibitors from 30 countries and 10,336 trade visitors.

INDOWATER
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Sandvik joins forces with Stamicarbon to initiate urea plant buy-back programme

Sandvik has committed itself to reaching 90 per cent circularity by 2030 and to help reach this target, the global engineering company has initiated a project to buy scrap from its customers to turn it into new premium products.

The project, which will be run together with Sandvik's strategic partner Stamicarbon, aims to recycle high alloy steel using a buy-back solution that decommissions old equipment in customers' urea plants and retrieves the recyclable material.

"At Sandvik, we have a commitment to using engineering and innovation to help us advance towards a more sustainable business model," explained Mats W Lundberg, sustainable business manager at Sandvik Materials Technology. "Sustainability provides an opportunity for new ways of thinking and working — but this does not mean everything needs to be new. By reconsidering how we

manage our existing resources, we can incentivise our customers to recycle their used equipment, while improving our own efficiency.

"Knowing that the scrap consists entirely of Sandvik's premium material will facilitate raw material handling in the steel mill, making the process simpler and more effective."

Based in the Netherlands, Stamicarbon first partnered with Sandvik over 30 years ago, to develop a material that could withstand the harsh environment of the fertiliser industry.

One of the first cases for the project involved buying back a heat exchanger from a urea plant in the Netherlands in late 2019. Following a positive outcome, the buy-back scheme will now be included as part of a package for all new fertiliser customers when replacing equipment parts at their plants.

Sandvik and Stamicarbon are also exploring ways to standardise the collection and recycling of high-quality metals for the future, hoping to inform other businesses on how to improve their asset management and circularity.

The buy-back programme offers a win-win situation for

Sandvik's fertiliser customers, who have the opportunity to recoup some of the investment they made when initially buying the equipment, while benefiting from an onsite decommissioning service.

The concept also aligns with Sandvik's own business goals, as the company aims to reach 90 per cent in production system circularity by 2030.

Stamicarbon also recognises the advantages of the circular economy. "We see this as a valuable addition to our full-lifecycle service, one that will certainly separate us from our competitors. By helping our clients take the hassle out of the disposal of old equipment, so wrapping this service into our proposals for replacement equipment benefits everyone involved," explained Joey Dobreé, product portfolio manager at Stamicarbon.

Offering a buy-back solution is set to provide Sandvik, Stamicarbon and their customers with a solution to improve their sustainability at the same time as allowing each business to make the most of its assets.

Sandvik

www.home.sandvik

Stamicarbon

www.stamicarbon.com



Stainless Steel World Japan 2021 announces new dates and location for the event

The international forum for the exchange of knowledge and experience in the manufacture and application of stainless steels, Stainless Steel World Japan 2021, will now take place in Tokyo, Japan on 16 to 17 February 2021.

The event will focus on the stainless markets and industries of Japan as well as other Asian countries with a bi-lingual conference and international exhibition to be held in Tokyo Metropolitan Industrial Trade Centre

– Hamamatsuchokan, Tokyo, Japan. The event aims to contribute to the development and expanding use of corrosion-resistant alloys as well as to a better understanding of the most recent trends in the fields of welding, fabrication, surface treatment and materials specification.

The technical conference, held in both English and Japanese, will offer an excellent opportunity for researchers, corrosion specialists, welding

engineers, designers, manufacturers, stockists, architects and other industry professionals to share their experiences and challenges related to the use of stainless steel.

The exhibition will bring together manufacturers and stockiest to showcase their products and services to an international audience.

Stainless Steel World

www.stainless-steel-world.net

Witzenmann reacts to difficult global situation

The Witzenmann Group, a manufacturer of metal hoses, compensators, metal bellows and vehicle parts, has reported its flexibility to the dynamic developments at its customers.

In the wake of the Corona crisis, some customers of the Witzenmann Group had to close their plants and the company was particularly affected in the area of vehicle parts and reacted with temporary interruptions in the affected production areas and flexible production organisation.

"In this situation, we keep a close eye on our cost structure and look at how things are going with our customers on a daily basis. In order to compensate for the strong fluctuations in our customers, we have made work interruptions in the production in parts of the company. Since April, we have also registered short time working, which is currently

increasingly used in the administrations," said Heiko Pott, CFO of the Witzenmann Group.

"Overall, Witzenmann is economically very solid and resilient and will survive the crisis well even with longer digesters."

The Witzenmann group recorded a noticeable decline in order intake in the automotive division, however, production remained unchanged for industrial customers with orders such as metal hoses, metal bellows and compensators. According to the company, the Industrial and Commercial Vehicles divisions are expected to be fully utilised by June, and the Aerospace division by the end of the year.

"Even in this crisis, it helps us that we



are positioned across a wide range of industries," said Dr Andreas Kämpfe, CEO of the Witzenmann Group, analysing the current situation.

"Basically, we are flexible. This enables us to "drive on sight" in the current situation. In this way, we can also restart the production in the automotive sector, which is dormant in a timely manner. We remain, during this crisis, the usual reliable partner," added Dr Kämpfe.

Witzenmann GmbH
www.witzenmann.com



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Tube Tech receives ISO accreditation treble

Tube Tech International Ltd has received three ISO accreditations following an ISO audit at its European headquarters in Rayleigh, Essex, UK.

The accreditations have been awarded for the provision of specialised industrial cleaning services and apply to the company's research and development into robotic cleaning technology solutions. The certificates primarily relate to general industrial, petrochemical, chemical and renewable energy industries with an emphasis on the minimisation of environmental and occupational health and safety risks.

Commenting at the close of the ISO audit, managing director at Tube Tech International, Jon Camp, said: "Receiving these accreditations is a fantastic achievement for everyone at Tube Tech. It represents our commitments to quality, environmental and occupational health and safety management, all of which have been part of the DNA at Tube Tech since the conception of the company."

The company has been awarded the ISO 9001:2015 accreditation for Quality



Management Systems, which is awarded to organisations that demonstrate the ability to consistently provide products and services that meet customer and regulatory requirements.

Tube Tech International Ltd has also received the ISO 14001:2015 accreditation for Environmental Management Systems, which specifies the requirements for an environmental management system that an organisation can use to enhance its environmental performance.

It is intended for use by an organisation seeking to manage its environmental responsibilities in a systematic manner that contributes to the environmental pillar of sustainability.

The final accreditation awarded to the company is ISO 45001:2018 for Occupational Health & Safety Management Systems.

This accreditation specifies requirements for an occupational health and safety (OH&S) management system, and gives guidance for its use, to enable organisations to provide safe and healthy workplaces by preventing work-related injury and ill health, as well as by proactively improving its OH&S performance.

Mr Camp added: "I would like to thank all of the staff at Tube Tech who consistently implement the values and processes which have now been officially recognised by attaining these ISO accreditations. They will help us to better serve our clients by providing them with confidence that they are working with a company that adheres to globally recognised standards."

ISO
www.iso.org

Tube Tech International
www.tubetech.com

UKF Stainless launches new website to provide a more user-friendly experience

Worcestershire-based UKF Stainless, a stockist and supplier of welded stainless-steel tube, stainless steel exhaust tube, stainless steel sheet, stainless steel bar and other stainless-steel products used in the automotive, decorative, dairy, water, marine, fabrication and petrochemical industries, has launched its new website.

UKF Stainless is inviting visitors to explore the new website which has been designed to provide "the ultimate user-friendly experience" with improved navigation and functionality throughout, allowing customers to access detailed product information and images. According to UKF Stainless, an increasing demand from both UK and international customers was the driving factor for the new website. Phil Morris, chairman of



UKF Stainless, explained: "More people are turning to the Internet to find local and national services.

"Those companies with enhanced brand awareness and excellent products will stand out from competitors. Our site

is well designed and communicates just how impressive our products and services really are."

The website has been created with the user experience in mind and has been designed using the latest technology, so it is compatible with today's browsers and mobile devices.

"A modern site gives you so many invaluable ways to connect with your customers," added Mr Morris. "There's really no excuse for organisations to be out of touch with the public in this day and age, and we're committed to forging meaningful connections with our customers however we can."

UKF Stainless
www.ukfstainless.co.uk

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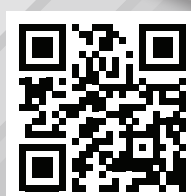
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Russian oil and gas trade fair NEFTEGAZ postponed until 2021

The industry platform for the Russian oil and gas industry, NEFTEGAZ in Moscow has been postponed from the end of June 2020 until next year due to the effects of COVID-19. The organisers AO EXPOCENTR, Messe Düsseldorf GmbH and its Russian subsidiary OOO Messe Düsseldorf Moscow have agreed on the new date of 26 to 29 April 2021.

"This is an unfortunate but correct decision," said Erhard Wienkamp,

managing director of the Operative Trade Fair Business of Messe Düsseldorf GmbH.

"With the new date, we are following the recommendations of the Russian Ministry of Health to stem the spread of the corona virus. The new date creates prospects for a revival of the economy and a successful 20th NEFTEGAZ 2021, and also offers our international exhibitors sufficient planning lead time

to position themselves as technology partners for the Russian gas and oil industry."

NEFTEGAZ presents innovations, products and services in machinery and equipment for the oil and gas industry each year and in 2019, 22,800 trade visitors attended the fair.

NEFTEGAZ
www.neftegaz-online.com

Data shows millions can be saved in decommissioning costs with Veristar AIM3D

A digital twinning and smart data asset management tool from Bureau Veritas, a specialist in testing, inspection and certification services, can save between nine and 15 per cent on total decommissioning project costs, research has shown.

Data from the company, which has been shared with the UK industry regulator the Oil and Gas Authority, shows the Veristar AIM3D system could save operators in excess of £2mn on project costs for assets with topsides of 10,000 tonnes, increasing to more than £8.5mn for assets with topsides up to 40,000 tonnes.

Dawn Robertson, global business development manager, said: "The importance of Veristar AIM3D in cutting maintenance costs, maintaining safety and performance and extending asset life is well established, but now we can quantify the benefits it brings to decommissioning.

"With decommissioning a hard cost on a balance sheet, the need for efficiencies and cost reduction is clear, as outlined in the Oil and Gas Authority's Decommissioning Strategy. Our results indicate Veristar AIM3D could save millions of pounds on overall project costs and enable operators to make smarter, more cost-effective choices."

Veristar AIM3D, which was developed in partnership with Dassault Systèmes,

combines a digital twin of any marine or offshore asset with smart data, allowing operators to make the right choices faster to improve efficiency, safety, integrity, performance, return on investment and carbon footprint reduction.

Providing a mirror image of an asset, the system improves work scope definition, proposal quality and execution efficiency while lowering costs. Increased visibility assists risk mitigation and safety with potential for reduced insurance premiums.

Bureau Veritas estimates savings from 9 per cent to more than 30 per cent can be made from a range of decommissioning

activities including topsides and jacket removal, subsea infrastructure, facilities de-energising, operator costs, onshore recycling and site remediation and monitoring to deliver direct savings on total project costs.

The company has identified 54 North Sea assets with topsides of 10,000 tonnes to 40,000 tonnes that would benefit from using Veristar AIM3D to gain direct savings in decommissioning. It has also identified 35 assets of fewer than 10,000 tonnes that would benefit in late life operations through to decommissioning phases.

Bureau Veritas
www.group.bureauveritas.com



New appointment to drive Xodus' subsea and pipelines business in UK



Global energy consultancy Xodus Group has appointed a new manager to head up the company's London subsea and pipelines division.

Nigel Underwood will oversee Xodus' international subsea and pipelines work, from concept through to detailed design and delivery.

Mr Underwood joins Xodus from Petrofac, where he was consultancy manager. He has worked across roles in senior management, engineering and materials development for over 25 years in the onshore and offshore engineering industry.

Mr Underwood, who previously worked as a consultant with Xodus in Perth, said: "It's great to be back with this fantastic integrated team. From my previous time at Xodus, I know how many great people are here and the company has gone from strength to strength in the time I've been away developing into a true energy consultancy.

"I'm obviously joining at a time where many businesses in the energy sector are facing tough decisions, however I know we have some of the greatest minds in the industry who have the ability to deliver the best advice, always putting our clients' needs first."

Rebecca Hewlett, Xodus' operations director for London and the Middle East, said: "Nigel has extensive experience across subsea and pipelines projects ranging from concept to decommissioning.

"There's been a trend of several former employees re-join us recently which reinforces the positive culture Xodus promotes and we're happy to have Nigel back."

Xodus Group
www.xodusgroup.com

www.read-tpi.com



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Messe
Düsseldorf

Tube, wire and cable exhibitions to return in December 2020 following postponement

Key players in the tube, wire and cable industries will meet at Düsseldorf Exhibition Centre from 7 to 11 December 2020 to present the latest machinery and equipment for wire and tube manufacturing, finishing and processing, finished products, products and services at the wire and Tube events.

wire 2020 will be presented in halls 10 to 17, exhibitors of Tube 2020 will show their innovations in the halls 5, 6, 7a and 7 as well as in 8a, 8b and 9.

With approximately 2,000 exhibitors from around 50 countries expected to attend most of the manufacturing companies will be promoting sustainable, environmentally friendly, energy-saving and innovative technology, products and practices. Messe Düsseldorf will be focusing on the EcoMetals Campaign

which means that for the duration of the trade fair there will now, for the first time, be guided tours, called EcoMetals-trails, which will guide visitors to the stands of exhibitors with sustainable, resource-saving and low-emission production.

The exhibitors at wire 2020 will present machinery and equipment for wire production, wire processing and finishing, process technology tools and auxiliaries, materials, glass fibre technologies, special wires and cables, measuring, control technology and inspection engineering, meshwelding machines, Fastener and Spring Technology.

For the first time finished products – ie technical springs and fasteners – will be presented, too, meaning that the entire value chain from machinery and

equipment for wire and cable production and their processing and finishing all the way down to the finished products will be on show.

Tube 2020 will show the complete process chain of the tube industry – from machinery and equipment for tube production, tube finishing and processing through raw materials, tubes and accessories, second-hand machinery, process technology tools, auxiliaries to measuring and control technology and inspection engineering.

Tube trade, tube bending and sawing, OCTG technology, pipelines, profiles, machines and Plastic Tubes complement the broad, comprehensive range.

Tube 2020
www.tube.de

AVT Reliability® offers free thermal imaging support to help keep workforces safe

Plant reliability specialist AVT Reliability® is using its expertise in thermal imaging usually employed to detect faults in factory equipment to help companies protect their workforce.

The company, headquartered in Cheshire, UK has devised an endorsed thermal imaging procedure to screen employees for one of the classic signs of COVID-19 infection – a raised temperature – as they arrive on site.

It is now offering to set up any company's thermal imaging equipment as a screening system at no cost, offer guidance and approach documents, or provide advice about suitable monitoring systems, for free.

PJ Cloete, Thermal Imaging Technical Authority at AVT Reliability, said: "We were happy to use our knowledge and experience of thermal imaging to adapt it to a more human application.



"Manufacturers are endeavouring to operate in extremely challenging circumstances due to the threat posed by the Covid-19 pandemic and we know that every effort is being made to protect employees from the risk of infection. We wanted to offer whatever support we can, and thermal imaging screening is one way to do this."

Several companies have already taken up the offer and are screening staff

as they arrive at work. Operatives are photographed face-on using a thermal imaging camera. The resulting image identifies areas of raised temperature via colour-coded imagery. Anybody displaying a temperature of 34°C or above is given a second, more in-depth screening focusing on their inner ear. If they are found to have a temperature above 38°C considered by NHS standards to indicate a fever they will be directed to seek medical advice, while those with a normal temperature can continue in to work.

This type of screening will likely form part of normal business approaches for the food and beverage, pharmaceutical and other industries where employees and visitors are required to complete a healthcare declaration before entering sites.

AVT Reliability
www.avtreliability.com

Products & developments

Performance leap for gas non-return valves

Witt Gas has presented a completely new generation of gas non-return valves. The German manufacturer has named its new series 'Ultra' as it aims to set a new standard with improved performance.

The compact high-performance valve now enables plant engineers to build smaller and more efficient systems. And cost advantages can be achieved in pipeline construction thanks to smaller nominal diameters.

Witt's new development offers: small size, low weight, high flow rate, low-pressure drop and quiet operation.

"We believe we offer users the best valve currently available," said Witt sales manager Andrew Smart. "This enables customers to build state-of-the-art equipment and strengthen their position in the market."

The Witt engineers have completely redesigned the non-return valve with an improved valve system with fully optimised gas flows, which allows more flow for the same size.

According to the company, the Ultra valve is now smaller and lighter than others and much quieter. In addition to lower noise emissions, this also means

less stress on the valve and therefore longer service life and the pressure drop is minimal due to the very low opening pressure of approximately 4 mbar.

The valve is flashback-arresting when burning methane up to 2 bar in air, in accordance with DIN EN ISO 5175-1 and -2. This means that the non-return valve can be used without a separate flashback arrestor. One fitting instead of two is therefore sufficient, and the pressure drop is lower. The benefits are lower costs and a more compact design. Thermal processing applications of this kind are described in ISO 13577-2 and DIN EN 746-2.

The valves are cleaned for use with oxygen in accordance with EIGA guidelines. The elastomers used have been declared by BAM (German Federal Institute for Materials Research and Testing) as suitable for use in plant components for oxygen (BG RCI data sheet M 034-1).

Mr Smart added: "The Ultra series is more than evolution. Compact designs are demanded by the market, and the Ultra is our answer."

Witt Gas
www.wittgas.com



The new Witt gas non-return valve

TDW ProStopp™ DS isolation tool for pressured carbon steel pipes

Global pipeline solutions provider TD Williamson (TDW) has introduced the ProStopp™ DS isolation tool, which the company believes is the first double block and bleed technology for the gas distribution market.

Currently available for 6" to 12" pressurised carbon steel pipelines, the ProStopp DS isolation tool achieves a double block and bleed isolation utilising two plugging heads with a bleed port in between. This allows product to bleed through the housing so there is less hardware on the line.

"Gas distribution is critical to everyday life and shutdown is never an option," Ryan Ragsdale, senior product manager, hot tapping and plugging technology, said. "The ProStopp DS solution is a

reliable way to ensure a safe work zone during pipeline repair and modification, without interrupting service to downstream customers."

The new technology, which will help operators keep their promise to safely deliver energy across the globe, features a hydraulically activated energised seal that conforms flawlessly to multiple internal pipe diameters. The variable design increases the likelihood of first-time sealing success and eliminates leaks in even tough crevices and weld seams.

According to Mr Ragsdale, the ProStopp DS isolation tool draws on the company's decades of isolation expertise and offers operators a number of cost- and time-saving advantages.

"Because the energised seal accommodates multiple inner diameters, it takes the guesswork out of tool configuration while drastically reducing inventory needs," Mr Ragsdale said.

"The built-in chip sweep helps ensure a leak-proof seal while also reducing operation requirements. And because the tool is ground-operated, the technician makes fewer trips up and down the ladder, completing jobs faster and with less risk."

The ProStopp isolation tool is designed from schedule 10-60 pipe and is rated to 19 bar (285 psi) and is compatible with TDW valves and fittings.

TD Williamson
www.tdwilliamson.com

HFT launches pipe purging monitor that ensures accuracy

Pipe purging expert, Huntingdon Fusion Techniques, has launched its PurgEye® 200 Weld Purge Monitor®, which it believes will ensure zero colour, non-oxidised welds every time, with accurate readings down to 10 ppm.

Luke Keane, technical sales manager for HFT®, said: "The PurgEye 200 IP65 rated is our most advanced, portable, hand held, 10 ppm weld purge monitor, perfect for achieving high quality titanium, zirconium, high specification stainless steel and nickel alloy joints every time."



The PurgEye 200 now features PurgeNet™, a networking device that allows accessories to be connected.

These include an automatic welding machine interface so that the oxygen level in the vicinity of the weld can be continuously monitored and the welding machine can be switched on or off according to pre-set oxygen levels, external audible and visual warning devices and a dew point monitor.

The PurgEye 200 has an OLED (organic light emitting diode) display, which will give bright, clear and sharp readings for viewing at distances and wide angles. These OLED displays mainly use symbols, rather than text-based descriptions, making the menus internationally comprehensible.

This instrument is able to operate from rechargeable batteries or mains power. Along with loud, pre-settable



audio alarms for rising or falling oxygen levels, the PurgEye 200 comes complete with a faster response long life sensor and integral electro-mechanical pump to extract samples from a weld purge zone, in the event that there is insufficient flow rate or positive pressure to activate the sensor correctly.

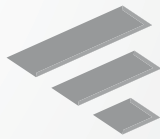
PurgeLog Software is provided to record Weld Purging results and provides quality control documents for each weld.

Huntingdon Fusion Techniques
www.huntingdonfusion.com

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DNV GL introduces new digital tool to manage pipeline corrosion under insulation

A new methodology designed to address the major safety threat and multi-billion-dollar cost posed by corrosion under insulation (CUI) has been published by DNV GL, the technical advisor to the oil & gas industry.

CUI, a type of corrosion that arises when water becomes trapped between insulation and the piping and vessels it is designed to protect, has contributed to more than 20 per cent of all major oil and gas accidents in the EU alone over the past 35 years.

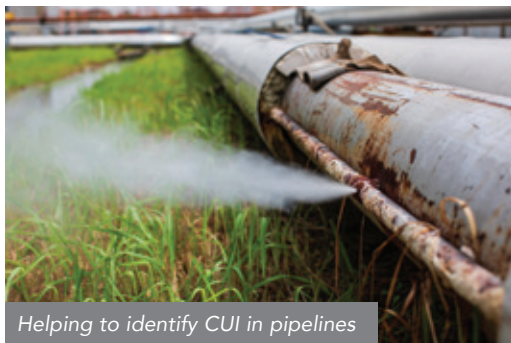
DNV GL's industry-first methodology helps integrity engineers and plant managers to identify the areas of a plant with the greatest current and future risk of CUI and take action to prevent failures.

Koheila Molazemi, technology and innovation director, DNV GL – oil and gas, said: "Corrosion under insulation is recognised as the single most expensive corrosion issue in the oil and gas and petrochemical industries. Our recommended practice has been developed as a guide to the most effective and efficient way to assess, mitigate and systematically manage the risk.

"With its hidden and pervasive threat to life, property and the environment, and the cost of accidents and mitigation being staggeringly high – the combination of the new recommended practice and the CUI manager digital tool enables the industry to control CUI risk significantly more cost efficiently."

Recommended Practice (RP) DNVGLRPG109 was developed in collaboration with several regulatory bodies, international oil and gas operators and major players in the supply chain to deliver a practical and cost-effective methodology for managing the threat of CUI and is setting a new standard for managing CUI risk.

CUI can take the form of localised external corrosion in carbon and low-alloy steels, external stress corrosion cracking (ESCC) or pitting in austenitic and duplex stainless steel.



Helping to identify CUI in pipelines

Despite the risks that CUI exposes, the oil and gas industry has never adopted a standard approach for identifying and managing the threat.

Operators currently employ a variety of methods to identify the presence of CUI on their assets. These range from using diverse inspection methods that

can lead to undetected defects, to the expensive process of systematically removing and renewing all insulation and coating with limited upfront assessment of the risk of CUI presence.

DNV GL's RP provides a systematic approach to assessing, mitigating and updating CUI risk.

"The new recommended practice is a great example of DNV GL's approach to exploring and identifying problems with our partners, to ultimately establish industry benchmarks for safely and effectively manage these issues."

DNV GL
www.dnvgl.co.uk

Custom flap wheels for deburring and finishing tube interiors

Superior Abrasives LLC, a manufacturer of abrasive tools for surface finishing applications, now offers custom flap wheels to suit specific application requirements.

Customers desiring a specific material, grit pattern, flexibility of flap wheels, mounting options, and more can obtain precisely what they need.

This customisation allows manufacturers to match abrasives to their application requirements to more efficiently process the work piece.

A fully stocked Application Engineering Lab and assistance to determine best methods and tools are available and custom flap wheels from Superior Abrasives

are designed for contoured finishing and grinding, deburring and finishing of tube interiors, shaping or refining contours on cast or machined parts, weld seam blending or finishing.

Superior Abrasives LLC
www.superiorabrasives.com



Custom flap wheels for tube finishing

Interview: Michele Amenduni of Amenduni Tubi Acciaio SpA on the importance of quality

Amenduni Tubi Acciaio SpA produces steel pipe and tube products. The Company offers structural, water and gas, and welded steel pipes. Amenduni Tubi Acciaio serves customers in Italy and all over the world.

We met Michele Amenduni AD of the group, who agreed to talk about the company's future challenges and the historic partnership with the brand ASED, experts in the design and realisation of solutions and services for finishing and handling tubes.



What would you say is the added value of your products and consequently your strength in such a competitive and fluctuating market?

The steel market is very volatile and is characterised by braking when the price stabilises and then recovery. There are also protectionist mechanisms that benefit steel producers and penalise steel-processing companies and the downstream part of the industry. The secret to keep positive results is quality. Only a strong attention to the product can consolidate the relationship with the customer allowing to operate also in challenging market conditions. Only the great quality of our products allows

us to continue working costantly. It is also necessary to take advantage of all the opportunities for visibility and comparison with the best realities in the sector such as the Tube and Wire 2020: this event has always represented a good opportunity to do business, show new products and meet clients.

What are the main challenges you will face in keeping your leadership of the market?

Concentrating on high quality often translates into a propensity to invest. We have initiated a substantial investment plan in favour of the finishing lines of AlessioTubi SpA in Turin. The results have been achieved earlier than expected and with these investments it is hoped that we can make a further qualitative leap. AlessioTubi focuses on a range of high-end products and important thicknesses. That is the only way to compete, otherwise we will only fight on price. Working with passion and professionalism always leads to results, but it also takes luck and attention to the foreign competition.

Why did you rely on ASED for your investments?

We have known the team at ASED for several years and know that they work exactly like us: respecting quality and experience. Only with players like these is it possible to play a good game.

ASED is a key partner in this field: their professional ethics drives us to think of new solutions for packaging machines, grooving machines and other standard and custom plants, considering all the costs of purchasing and managing them, for an organic and sustainable development of the business. ASED also supports its customers with tube mill installation services, technical advises and existing plant revamping.

Beyond respect and a strong sense of mutual trust, what feeds a winning business partnership?

A strategic partner nowadays must share with us common goals, adapt to our speed and act as a consultant in order to find the winning solution at the cheapest price. In essence, a strategic partnership can accelerate the growth of our business. The continuous improvement of products and services is ASED's main aim. To develop better technical solutions and to increase customer satisfaction. Their approach must perfectly match our business model and then business can flourish.

ASED will be at stand 5H20 at Tube 2020 in Germany.

Amenduni Tubi Acciaio SpA
www.amendunitubi.it

ASED
www.asedtubes.com

CIRCOR announces bottom blowdown valve

CIRCOR International Inc, a manufacturer and marketer of differentiated technology products and sub-systems, has announced the launch of the RTK® bottom blowdown valve, which it says is ideal for optimising equipment efficiency and simplifying blowdown operations.

The bottom blowdown valve features a unique angle design that offers quick and problem-free clearing particulate and dissolved solids from the bottoms of steam and hot water boilers.

Additional controls promote trouble-free operation over a longer lifetime. The RTK blowdown valve's seat design enhances valve life with hardened trim and an anti-flashing seat that protects the valve body from cavitation and flashing effects.

The angle design manages and reduces pressure in a single stage configuration for PN 63 / DN 20 to PN 160 / DN 50 applications. This means there is no need for frequent replacement or valve rebuilding during routine maintenance.

Two styles of quick-open angle blowdown valves are available for high-pressure conditions – pneumatic-powered or manual actuation. Both reduce needless water or steam loss with a quick-open feature to fully expel waste materials. Available end connections include a flanged version and a butt weld. RTK blowdown valves offer additional controls, including special hardened valve trim material.

CIRCOR International Inc
www.circor.com

ESAB unveils Rogue compact TIG inverters for tubes

ESAB Welding and Cutting Products has launched Rogue, its new series of portable and affordable MMA/Lift TIG inverters with professional arc performance and controls such as adjustable hot start and adjustable arc force.

These units measure 343 x 153 x 264mm and feature ESAB's next-level control technology to produce a smooth welding arc with all types of MMA electrodes. The Lift TIG (DC TIG) function provides positive arc starts without the use of high frequency. All Rogue models deliver a stable TIG arc down to 10 amps, giving welders the control they need to work on thin metal or delicate components.

"Rogue will cause the industry to re-think its perception of power, performance and price," said Bartosz Kutarba, global product manager – light industry equipment, ESAB. He added: "Welders

with Rogue's capabilities often cost twice as much." Users include mechanical contractors and those in general fabrication, maintenance and repair, rental, process pipe, food/beverage, farming and home workshops.

Rogue features digital meters visible up from 25m away, and an optional remote controller allows users to adjust current settings without needing to go back to the machine. A robust fiberglass-moulded housing is built to withstand impact, and the weather resistant, IP23S rating makes Rogue suitable for use in tough applications.

The initial launch includes four Rogue ES models: Rogue ES 150i (150A maximum output), Rogue ES 180i (180A maximum output), Rogue ES 180i Pro (180A maximum output) and Rogue ES 200i Pro (200A maximum output). Rogue ES 150i, 180i Pro and ES 200i Pro have



a duty cycle of 25 per cent at nameplate output, while the ES 180i has an output of 170A at 20 per cent duty cycle.

All Rogue models offer adjustable hot start and arc force control. Hot start increases current beyond the set value for a few milliseconds to help establish the arc. It especially helps with low-hydrogen electrodes, which can be notoriously difficult-to-start. Arc force control increases amperage when the voltage drops below a pre-set threshold. As a result, operators can hold a shorter arc length without the electrode sticking,

ESAB
www.esab.co.uk

Wenzhou Bizba Tube Manufacturer Company Limited is a Wenzhou, Zhejiang (China), based, highly famous company that does not compromise on quality while producing Steel Tube, Cannula Needle, Straight Steel Tube, Steel Center Pin and Center Pin.

Our dedicated efforts in quality production work can be well-seen in the type of products that we bring forth.

We have advanced production machinery and techniques for producing great quality products in standard and custom specifications. We lay our complete focus over manufacturing bulk quantity products.

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Evidence tells us to think in centuries, not decades, for effective lifetime of plastic pipe

By Derek Muckle, BPF Pipes Group

There is a popular myth that plastic pipes have a lifetime of 50 years, but they actually have reliable working lifetimes that are much longer than this. Even if they do start to fail, it is not a sudden loss of the asset, but rather a gradual wear process that can be managed. What does that mean in practice? Quite simply plastic pipes are capable of operation measured in hundreds of years, not tens of years.

So, it is useful to understand why people talk about 50 years. It is usually in connection with two phrases, depending on their level of knowledge: 'lifetime' or 'design point'. The latter is correct, the former is the misinterpretation. To keep it simple, it is a 50-year design point, and the design point is used as a classification index for different strength materials. It has nothing to do with lifetime.

One of the great things about plastic pipes is that they do not suffer from corrosion related defects. That is obvious to many but the issue with corrosion is not that it occurs but that its occurrence is very hard to predict. Many variables affecting what will happen need measuring on a job-by-job basis, which makes predicting failure in corroding pipes very difficult. And predicting failure is important when you are managing critical long-term investments.

The failure modes of a plastic pipe system, particularly a welded system

such as that achieved using polyethylene (PE) materials for example, are predictable. And they are predictable from knowledge of the polymer used, the transported fluid in the application, and the pressure regime used for a pipe network. With that knowledge, a well-constructed pipeline can have predictable performance measured in hundreds of years.

A science example can clearly illustrate the pipe classification system. Polyethylene pipes (in our example) have three time-dependent failure modes. These are variously referred to as ductile rupture, stress crack rupture, or oxidation breakdown.

For ductile rupture, independent of time, a very high internal pressure can exceed the strength of the pipe causing it to stretch and fail in a ductile way. With stress cracks, at lower pressures but much longer timescales, the reliable lifetime limit could be brittle crack grown through the material. With oxidation, largely independent of pressure, at very long timescales, the likely reliable lifetime limit will be as a result of polymer oxidation.

Each of these failure modes occurs at a point in time, which can be predicted and is a function of the stress applied to the material by the internal pressure in the pipeline and the operating temperature. With a clever bit of science from a learned chap called Arrhenius we can construct an envelope of performance describing when these failure modes can occur in time.

That science, as an aside, has been validated with more than 50 years of continuous testing and with real installations also more than 50 years old.

This brings us to the 50-year design point. We have to pick a point in time to classify polyethylene pipes. In the UK, in common with much of the world, we chose 50 years. Some countries use different times. What we do is work out the predicted strength at 50 years for a pipe working at 20°C. And the

first thing we do is round the strength down to a convenient value. So, if the true strength is 10.8MPa, we round it down to 10.0MPa and call that a PE100 pipe. That is a safety factor built in straightaway.

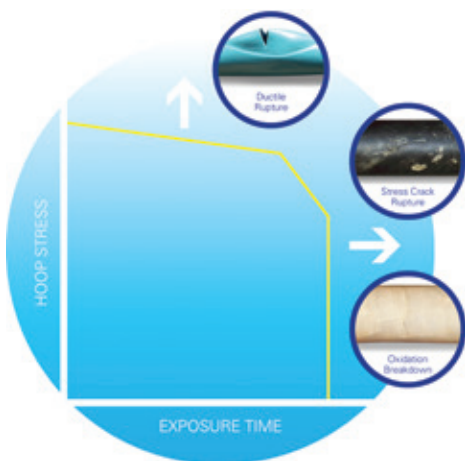
Then we apply an industry safety factor. In the UK, the minimum safety factor for gas pipes is 2.9, for water pipes it is 1.25; all of which mean our operating conditions are a long way from the known point of ductile rupture of a pipeline. So, in our envelope of performance, the 50-year classification system means we are operating within the envelope a long way from the predicted failure points. This means it is knowledge of the probable stress crack and oxidation onset failure modes that prescribe the transition to a wear-out mode for pipeline owners.

The bathtub reliability engineering model is one way to talk about the design lifetime of a polyethylene, or other plastic pipe system. From the predicted failure modes, it is possible to see where the transition from the reliable lifetime morphs into the wear-out mode. As any pipeline engineer will advise, this is usually a different management phase, not necessarily the point of replacement. So, plastic pipelines continue to operate into the wear-out mode.

In the experience of the UK, it is likely drinking water pipes will exhibit the late life failure modes soonest. This is because chlorine ultimately initiates an oxidation degradation mechanism. Research by water utilities and manufacturers shows that for earlier generation materials the transition to wear-out mode will likely start at around 235 years. For other applications like natural gas or hydrogen, oxidation onset should take considerably longer.

All this means real lifetimes for plastic pipes can be achieved that are measured in hundreds of years, not tens of years.

BPF Pipes Group
www.bpfpipesgroup.com



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Bacharach introduces MGS-402 dual-channel gas detection controller for toxic applications

Bacharach has announced the MGS-402 gas detection controller for refrigerant, toxic and combustible gas detection applications. The system is designed for safety compliance in mechanical rooms, cold storage facilities, walk-in freezers, and cold room applications to -40° F/C.

The MGS-402 is part of the MGS-400 series gas detectors that connect through Modbus to up to two remote MGS-410 gas detectors at up to 1000ft (305m). The MGS-402 is powered by 110-240V AC and provides three 10A output relays (fault, low alarm, high alarm) to initiate auxiliary ventilation or restrict refrigerant flow, two



analogue outputs for interface to a BMS or fire/safety panel packaged

in an IP66 enclosure. Upstream Modbus connectivity enables remote configuration and communication with building management systems.

The MGS-402 has a built-in audible alarm and high-visibility visual alarm that eliminates the need for an external horn/strobe in close proximity. The remote silence input enables silencing the alarm from outside the monitored environment. Configuration of the MGS-402 is simple and intuitive, reducing installation time.

Bacharach
www.mybacharach.com

New technical document addresses suitability of CPVC piping systems



Plastics Pipe Institute Inc (PPI), has published a new guide related to the use of CPVC piping systems in commercial buildings.

Available on the PPI's website, TN-62 'Suitability and Fitness of CPVC Piping Systems for Commercial Building Applications' describes material advantages and capabilities that should be considered when designing CPVC systems for commercial plumbing and mechanical systems. PPI is the major trade association representing all segments of the plastic pipe industry.

"PPI TN-62 describes how CPVC pipe and fitting systems are suitable for use in commercial applications such as hot- and cold-water distribution, fire protection (13D, 13R and some light hazard NFPA 13 uses, when listed to

UL 1821), chilled water and hydronic heating and cooling systems," explained Lance MacNevin, P. Eng, director of engineering for PPI's building and construction division.

Chlorinated polyvinyl chloride (CPVC) is a high-temperature plastic pressure piping material that was introduced for potable plumbing applications more than sixty years ago. CPVC tubing and pipe are sold in straight lengths and used with moulded fittings. Advantages of CPVC piping systems include safety of potable water; resistance to corrosion, tuberculation, and deposits; chlorine and chloramine resistance; and toughness to survive jobsite installations. Another inherent advantage is that no flame is used for joining, since pipes and fittings are joined using solvent cement or

mechanical joints, such as grooved fittings. This can help to prevent accidental fires during construction.

"Many people are not aware of the significant differences between PVC and CPVC piping materials. CPVC is polyvinyl chloride that has been chlorinated via a free radical chlorination reaction, initiated by ultraviolet light during the manufacturing process. The chlorine added to PVC gives CPVC higher temperature performance and improved fire and corrosion resistance. CPVC pressure pipe is a distinct material from PVC pressure pipe with additional capabilities and is accepted in all model plumbing and mechanical codes for the plumbing and mechanical applications noted earlier."

Topics discussed in the new PPI document include: CPVC material definition and properties, use in high-temperature applications, resistance to potable water disinfectants, use in mixed-material systems that contain copper materials and CPVC and design issues when using CPVC.

Plastics Pipe Institute Inc
www.plasticpipe.org

Rex-Cut announces new line of zirconia Mounted Points

Rex-Cut Abrasives has announced Velocity Mounted Points, a new solution for fast stock removal on small or hard to reach work areas.

Velocity Mounted Points are constructed with a zirconia alumina and aluminium oxide grain blend in a resin bond.

These rugged points are suitable for grinding stainless steel and other heat sensitive materials.

The premium grain and hard bond blend give Velocity Mounted Points long life and excellent performance on ferrous and non-ferrous metals.

"Our new points remove on average 48 per cent more stainless steel than similar products in the market," stated Bob Costa, president of Rex-Cut Abrasives. "Providing products that minimise time spent grinding welds is our goal."

Velocity Mounted Points are the latest addition to Rex-Cut's line of Mounted points and can be used for more aggressive applications such as weld



Velocity Mounted Points for fast stock removal

grinding, rapid stock removal, heavy deburring, and tool sharpening. Velocity Mounted Points are available in 11 different shapes and two different grits.

Rex-Cut Abrasives
www.rexcut.com

Val-Matic zinc-rich coating system

Installing valves with Val-Matic's Zinc-Rich Coating System ensures corrosion resistance for the entire pipeline system.

Val-Matic's coating features a protective, reinforced zinc-rich primer base coat and a high-performance, chemically cured epoxy topcoat, which provides exceptional abrasion and corrosion resistance. Zinc has a lower electrode potential on the galvanic

series and therefore acts as a sacrificial galvanic anode to help protect iron in corrosive environments. The result is a reliable coating system with exceptional abrasion and corrosion resistance ideally suited for buried valves, especially those in contact with zinc-coated iron pipe.

Val-Matic
www.valmatic.com



Amada Miyachi Europe announces MM-L300A laser weld monitor

Amada Miyachi Europe has announced the availability of the new MM-L300A laser weld monitor. The compact MM-L300A is designed to detect welding defects and errors such as gaps between parts, missing parts, weld depth over-penetration, incorrect focus point and cover gas absence. It also provides operators with feedback on the resultant laser weld quality. The compact, lightweight unit supports laser welding technologies for spot or seam welds.

This high-accuracy monitor is ideal for both process development and quality control for laser welding applications. The MM-L300A indicates weld quality

by detecting and recording a thermal signal from the area of laser interaction and converting this into a graphical waveform. Part of the intelligence of this third-generation process monitor is that not only absolute max/min limits can be set but also value envelopes can be drawn around the waveform. Once the limits are determined, the unit compares a new weld waveform in real time to identify a good or bad weld. Providing high temporal resolution – down to 1 microsecond – the MM-L300A, with the SU-N300A dedicated thermal sensor, enables precision monitoring of both continuous wave and pulsed laser processes.

The MM-L300A features easy-to-use software for simple sensor configuration, waveform envelope limit set-up, and real-time or saved waveform analysis on Windows® PCs. Additionally, machine-selectable setup schedules enable the unit to monitor different welding conditions. The compact, 3kg (7lb) unit reduces set-up space when integrated into a production line or used in a laboratory environment. The sensor can be mounted either on the optical axis of the laser beam trajectory or in an off-axis position.

Amada Miyachi Europe
www.amadamiyachi.eu

Krohne announces new OPTISONIC 6300 V2 ultrasonic flowmeter design

Krohne Inc has announced the availability of its new OPTISONIC 6300 V2 ultrasonic flowmeter with a stationary, clamp-on design, which the manufacturer believes is ideal for a wide range of systems.



The OPTISONIC 6300 V2 ultrasonic flowmeter

The OPTISONIC 6300 V2 allows users to measure flow anywhere necessary, all while processes continue.

According to Krohne, the OPTISONIC 6300 V2 brings a new viscosity range of up to 200 cSt, which means there is no need for re-greasing due to solid coupling material.

It also features a next generation signal converter for enhanced application range as well as Namur NE107 diagnostics and integrated thermal energy calculation.

The OPTISONIC 6300 V2 is suitable for diameters ranging from 1/2" to 160". It has a process temperature range

of -40 to 392°F. The new flowmeter from Krohne delivers accurate sensor alignment using rail mounted transducers, and minimises uncertainty through an installation wizard and optimisation routine.

This flowmeter is constructed as a submersible stainless steel sensor rail (IP 68/NEMA 6P). For the complete diameter range, the OPTISONIC 6300 V2 offers flexible configurations: single and dual ultrasonic sensors; wall and field signal converter housing; and V-, W-, Z- and X-mode measurement modes.

Krohne Inc
www.krohne.com

TechnipFMC awarded significant integrated EPCI contract by Woodside Energy Limited

TechnipFMC has been awarded a significant integrated Engineering, Procurement, Construction and Installation (iEPCI™) contract by Woodside Energy Limited for the development of the Lambert Deep and Phase 3 of the Greater Western Flank fields, located offshore North-western Australia.

The oil and gas company will design, manufacture, deliver and install subsea equipment including subsea production

system, flexible flowlines and umbilicals for connection to the Angel platform.

Arnaud Pieton, president Subsea at TechnipFMC, commented: "We are delighted to have been awarded another iEPCI™ project through our frame agreement with Woodside.

"This is Woodside's second consecutive award adopting our Subsea 2.0 platform, confirming our common ambition to transform subsea economics through

integration, standardisation and configurability."

This is the second contract under the recent iEPCI™ Frame Agreement between TechnipFMC and Woodside. The Angel platform is located about 120km north-west of Karratha and is connected to the North Rankin Complex (NRC) via a 50km subsea pipeline.

TechnipFMC
www.technipfmc.com

Val-Matic American-BFV® Butterfly Valves

Val-Matic's American-BFV® Butterfly Valve is strong, reliable and proven dependable since 1971 with thousands of field installations in municipal, industrial and power applications throughout the world. These highly engineered valves feature a standard epoxy interior, continuous uninterrupted seating and Tri-Loc™ seat retention system, which allows for field adjustment/replacement without the need for special tools or epoxies.

It is also possible to obtain Val-Matic's Double Offset High Performance Butterfly Valve, with a pressure rating up to 300 psi, which is constructed of ductile iron with a 17-4 stainless steel shaft for strength and reliability. Double offset design reduces seat strain and is ideal for applications where the valve is normally left open.

Val-Matic
www.valmatic.com



The Val-Matic Butterfly Valve

New Schroeder Valves solution available on the market

Schroeder Valves, a global specialist in pump protection, has announced that it is now offering a new type of valve for pressures from 140 to 250 bar – the Schroeder Intermediate Pressure Valve (SIP).

This series is designed for systems with frequent operation in the minimum flow range and will be used with boiler feed water circuits in gas and steam combined cycle power plants (CCPP) for the protection of centrifugal pumps.

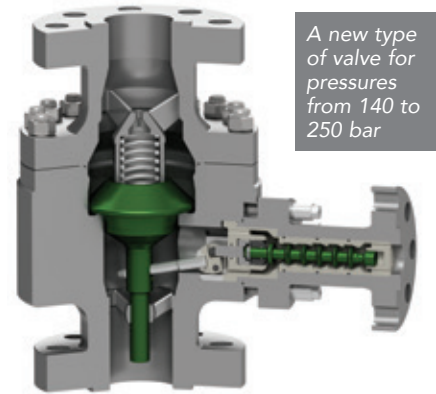
According to Schroeder Valves, in the past decade, the operating mode of power plants has changed considerably.

Historically, process operation was almost exclusively carried out close to the nominal load point of the plants; an area in which the bypass of the minimum flow valve is closed. Today, cases are increasing rapidly with significantly

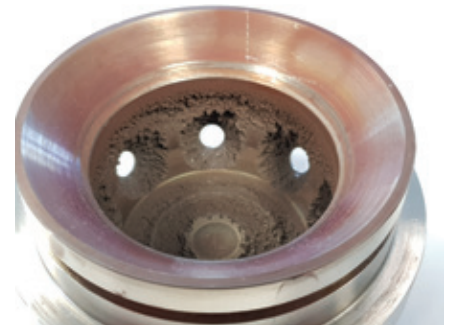
varying load conditions – down to the single-digit percentage range of the nominal load – which then have to be compensated. This applies particularly to combined cycle power plants and is also due to the increasing use of renewable energies.

Previously, it was difficult to prevent cavitation during regular operation and increasingly difficult when operating just below the minimum flow rate in the critical range. Now, the SIP will be able to operate in this range, even in the area of the switch point hysteresis.

The SIP is available in standard nominal diameters from DN80 (3") to DN250 (10"), and in nominal pressures from PN250 (ASME1500) to PN400 (ASME2500) as per EN 1092 normative. Larger diameters and higher pressures are possible. The SIP is also available in the customer's choice of materials,



A new type of valve for pressures from 140 to 250 bar



ranging from carbon steels to super duplex.

Schroeder Valves
www.schroeder-valves.com

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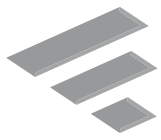
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The last event in Las Vegas covered more than 550,000m² and welcomed more than 28,000 attendees and 1,300 exhibiting companies.

Don't miss the special events scheduled for FABTECH 2020. While at the show you can make plans to stop by the keynote presentations, expert panel discussions, Welding Competition and more.

Inspirational poker entrepreneur and best-selling author Molly Bloom – who is best known for her memoir, *Molly's Game*, which was adapted into an award-winning film – has been announced as the keynote speaker at 8.30am on Thursday, 19 November. In this exciting and informative talk, Ms Bloom shows how she created an experience like no other for her players and how you can apply the same principles for creating an exclusive experience for your customers.



www.fabtechexpo.com

Interview – Eng Mauricio Facchinetti CEO, Topfibra

“Our focus is on targeted, steady growth, through the constant development of intelligent processes, systems and products for the benefit of the water distribution industry and the reputation of GRP pipelines, and to ensure that whoever decides to invest in our solutions will be able to achieve the predefined objectives for his business and for the end user.”

So why did a civil engineer from Buenos Aires decide to take on the biggest steel and concrete pipe producers in the world using glass fibre reinforced pipes (GRP) as one of the primary tools?

My on-site, hands-on experiences in these major projects clearly highlighted the critical situation in the wastewater and water distribution networks in many countries, particularly inherent to the state of existing pipelines and the often-incorrect use of traditional materials to design and manufacture new pipelines for the said applications. To me, it was clear

that GRP pipelines could take on a major role in reducing the evident maintenance and installation costs for such networks, allowing water, our most precious resource, to reach mankind worldwide.

How do you see Topfibra’s roll in the expansion of these proposed targeted pipeline solutions?

The answer is easy to express but not as easy to implement – by simply educating and creating awareness of the need for safeguarding this precious resource, by removing preconceived ideas like “...but we have always done it this way...”, right through to proposing targeted, alternative and of course better solutions for the design, production, installation and commissioning of the extensive pipeline networks needed.

In a market where steel and concrete solutions are very consolidated, do you feel it is likely that investors choose glass reinforced pipelines solutions instead of the former?



We are proud to say that we have contributed to the fact that glass reinforced pipelines have progressively gained an increasing market share for those pipelines which are ideally suited to wastewater and potable water applications, because of the inherent advantages of this composite solution.

In Turkey, for example, where only steel pipes had been used for irrigation applications, extensive use is now made of GRP pipelines for most pressure classes, due to the incredible advantages it offer over traditional materials.

Please note – I am not saying that GRP must be seen as a complete substitute for steel, concrete or HDPE, but as a complementary pipeline solution for the extensive distribution needs.

What would you say is the perceived general reputation of installed GRP pipelines in the eyes of end users and pipeline engineers?

If a bridge is designed and/or installed badly, that bridge is destined to fail or have a very limited lifespan – the same concept applies to GRP pipelines. The failure of GRP pipelines is a very rare occurrence, but of course when a line fails, the immediate prejudicial thought is that it would have been better to use steel or concrete, and not a glass pipe. Of course, few people know that the GRP pipes are stronger than steel on strength/weight ratio.

The enormous amount of work carried out over the last five to ten years in the educating professionals, pipe manufacturers, EPC contractors, installer and end users on the incredible advantages of GRP, through dedicated courses, case studies and consultancies, have positively contributed to reducing the inertia of changing the way things had “always been done in the past.” Topfibra and I have been actively part of this continuous initiative.

How are you contributing to positively develop this perception and subsequently attracting the necessary attention towards your company as a supplier of pipe manufacturing technology and related services?

Of course, it is not sufficient to only promote the use of GRP pipelines for future infrastructure projects. You have to be able to tangibly contribute to changing how things were done in the past. The GRP market went through a massive boom between the years 2007 and 2011, and many plants were set up worldwide.

Equipment suppliers concentrated on offering solutions with the highest (often fake) productivity levels, speed of production was more important than the quality of the end product for the pipe manufacturers, and profit levels were comfortably high in the booming market.

During and after the world crisis from 2012 onwards, price wars became rife, entrepreneurs were no longer able to make the profit margins they had enjoyed previously, many closed down completely and many put their plants on standby, waiting for better times.

I realised that there was an urgent need to step in and offer to the existing manufacturing companies, entrepreneurs and future investors innovative solutions which were never offered before in the past. What was evidently needed by them was not only equipment to produce GRP pipe, but a complete solution designed to ensure profit making, incorporating the effective implementation of the complete chain to move a certain fluid from point A to B in the most efficient way, using the least amount of energy, reducing the risk of problems over the entire lifespan of the pipeline.



In filament winding, the technology used to produce GRP pipes, where the raw material costs are high, you first need to be “effective” and only then can you work on the efficiency. The secret lies not only on what to do, but how and when to do it. This means you need to have an analytical method to do all the multidisciplinary steps in the correct sequence, to increase your profit, delivering high quality products and services.

For these reasons, the Effective Filament Winding® method was created by Topfibra, the first ever method designed to ensure profit making in the filament winding industry. Immediately after we developed the Effective Filament Winding® production lines.

Tell us about some of the recent projects and innovations you have been working on at Topfibra. What is unique about your Effective Filament Winding® methodology and dedicated machines?

We have combined traditional continuous filament winding (CFW) technology with versatility and smart data feedback, like never imagined before. Traditional CFW production lines rely on locked pipe recipes, stagnant approaches, lack of optimisation and absence of process parameters controls, making costs unpredictable – often leading to severe financial losses. Combining our dynamic sensors and smart feedback algorithms integrated into our Effective Filament Winding® (EFW) Lines, together with our data-driven, EFW® Methodology, our customers are able to accurately track, anticipate and control all risk factors.

Recent projects include the design, production, installation and commissioning of a 4,000mm diameter continuous filament winding line in Turkey, and we are currently manufacturing a series of new Effective Filament Winding® production lines destined for central and southern Asia.

What advice would you offer to a potential investor who wants to enter the GRP pipe production market as a GRP pipe entrepreneur to limit his risks to a bare minimum?

I always sincerely suggest that they follow some simple rules: be effective and only then you can be efficient; fight against the statement: "We've always done it this way"; develop a detailed understanding of the GRP production process before investing; clearly define the results you need to achieve with your business; correct all the activities that don't allow you to achieve these results; re-start the process optimisation loop once more.

An investor must seek the close co-operation of a reliable, long-term supply partner, to guide him through the whole investment analysis before confronting the capital investment, in order to ensure profit making in this dynamic and extremely competitive market.

What are the future plans for your company? Do you see an abundance of potential for growth, in rapidly developing countries of the world, and can you give us some examples?

Our focus is on targeted, steady growth, through the constant development of increasingly intelligent processes, systems and products, for the benefit of the water distribution industry and the reputation of GRP pipelines, and to ensure that whoever decides to invest in our solutions will be able to achieve the predefined objectives for his business and for end user.

The scarcity of our most precious resource – water – and the fact that there are still millions of people in many underdeveloped countries and regions that live without access to potable water, for example India, Brazil, the greater part of Africa, as well as the increasing need for irrigation in



Eng Mauricio Facchinetti CEO, Topfibra

I graduated as a Civil Engineer at the University of Buenos Aires back in 1996, entering soon afterwards into the world of major construction projects, where I made my way up, over a period of 12 years to site and technical director.

I worked on projects such as the Stay Cable Bridge over the Parana River in Argentina, the Milan Metro in Italy and the Bridge of the Adige River near Verona in Italy, until one day I decided to dedicate all my energy to the unique world of glass fibre reinforced pipes (GRP).

After some years completely involved in the composites industry, I founded Topfibra, together with my partner Eng Fabio Fracasso.

arid areas like the Middle East, will inevitably allow current and future players to greatly contribute to developing dedicated infrastructure pipelines for the benefit of all.

If you had not undertaken to pursue a career path in engineering, services and in the GRP pipe industry, what alternative career path would you have loved to follow instead?

I spent about four years of my life teaching mathematics and science at High School and physics at University level. I believe that I am a born teacher – I love teaching, it gives me great pleasure to pass knowledge onto others, to know that I am, in my small way, contributing to the education and enrichment of the lives of others. I am continuing to do so, even through my business, and this continuous to give me great pleasure.

Topfibra – Slovenia
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www.topfibra.eu

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OCTG, gas & pipeline products

To try to imagine the oil and gas sector without the tube and pipe industry would be an exercise in futility. In addition to oilfield goods including tube, casing, drill pipe, drill collars and line pipe, oilfield work calls for tubing couplings, tubing hangers, tubing pumps, tubing heads, and a variety of other essentials without which oil and gas exploration and recovery would grind to a halt.

The scope of that activity and its outside equipment should not obscure the contribution of those meticulously engineered smaller components.

Take the example of a tubing head: a vital element of the wellhead assembly that supports the tubing string, seals off pressure between the casing and the outside of the tubing.



Sparrows Group appoints new senior vice-president to oversee Americas region

Sparrows Group has promoted Adam Wood to its most senior role in the Americas as it looks to continue its diversification into the onshore industrial market in the region.

Mr Wood has been employed by Sparrows for twelve years, holding several management positions including vice-president of service, general manager, Louisiana operations and senior business manager.

He succeeds Steve Bertone who retires after five years with the business.

Mr Wood said: "Having worked for Sparrows for a number of years, I have a sound knowledge of our operations across the Americas.

"The business has a clear growth strategy for the region as we continue

to expand into new markets, and I look forward to progressing this."

Based at Sparrows premises in Louisiana, USA Mr Wood will be responsible for advancing the company's diversification in the onshore industrial and renewables sectors while continuing to support its growth in the oil and gas market.

During his time at Sparrows, Mr Wood has led the Slidell service centre's development, managing client maintenance programmes and technical requirements.

He is also responsible for ensuring Sparrows' strict quality and safety standards are continually delivered across all projects in the region.

Stewart Mitchell, chief executive officer of Sparrows, said: "Adam has

been integral to our company over the past twelve years, more recently leading our diversification efforts into the US industrial market. His knowledge of our operations, strong relationships with customers and extensive experience in the markets we operate in has been invaluable as we navigate through the challenging environment faced today.

"Diversification has never been more important for our business and we have a robust strategy in place across the markets we operate in to deliver long-term growth in the region. We look forward to Adam successfully driving our Americas division and continuing to uphold the strong reputation we have successfully built."

Sparrows Group
www.sparrowsgroup.com

COVID-19 sparks 900 per cent rise in demand for remote inspection of rigs

Bureau Veritas, a specialist in testing, inspection and certification services, has reported a 900 per cent rise in demand for the remote inspection of offshore assets and equipment since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic.

According to Bureau Veritas, requests for its remote inspection, certification, examination and verification services has escalated from a 'want' to a 'need' this year as businesses seek to keep employees safe from the coronavirus. A number of remote inspection solutions are already in progress for operators and oilfield service companies and there have been in excess of 20 additional requests since the start of this year.

Paul Shrieve, vice-president offshore and services, explained: "Customers have been considering using remote inspection as an alternative way to meet the requirements of the Offshore Safety Directive (OSD) for some time. However,

since the start of this year demand has greatly increased. It is no longer a want but a need."

Inspections and verification are vital for offshore companies to comply with legislation and ensure the efficiency and performance of their assets and equipment. Through the use of mobile cameras and the existing personnel, Bureau Veritas employees can carry out these essential services remotely onshore, limiting close contact and reducing the need for travel.

Bureau Veritas has, along with respective clients, risk profiled activities and identified that inspections can be performed remotely, which can help oilfield service companies plan for the year ahead, benefiting from direct and indirect savings as well as reducing carbon footprint in the process. Where physical inspection is unavoidable, an up-front technical and safety assessment

underpins the reduction and/or elimination of risk at site.

Advantages of remote inspections include reductions in personnel risk, time and cost by eliminating travel to client premises and helicopter travel to offshore installations, fewer on-site inspections, accommodation requirements, improved green credential and instant accessibility to a broad spectrum of subject matter experts qualified to perform the task.

Several international companies from both the operator and service sectors are already using Bureau Veritas' remote inspection services.

Mr Shrieve said: "At Bureau Veritas we have been very quick to implement long-term changes."

Bureau Veritas
www.group.bureauveritas.com

Expro named best in the country and triumphs with 16th consecutive year of ROSPA awards success

International oilfield services company Expro has been awarded the Scotland Trophy at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents Health and Safety Awards and has been recognised with an Order of Distinction for 16 consecutive gold awards.

The Scotland Trophy recognises the company that has demonstrated the highest standard of health and safety management and performance of all participating companies based in or operating in Scotland, across all industry sectors.

Stuart Paterson, Expro's global HSE and service quality director,

commented: "We pride ourselves on having exemplary health and safety standards across all of our services and capabilities, in every region we operate in.

"The strong safety culture that we have cultivated, encouraged and equipped with our entire workforce is testament to the excellent work done by all to champion safety at every opportunity.

"We are genuinely proud of achieving these industry accolades for our efforts and standards and we look forward to continuing to set the bar as high as possible for health and safety across the globe."

Expro has been recognised by RoSPA every year since 2005, including four Oil and Gas Sector awards, the Gold Medal in 2010, the Scotland Trophy in 2013, and has received the President's Award every year since 2014.

Commenting on the award announcement, Alistair Geddes, CEO, added: "We are honoured to receive this award. This achievement recognises every one of Expro's employees for their outstanding dedication towards safety and safe working practices in accordance with our champion safety culture."

Expro
www.exprogroup.com

Offshore Design Engineering awarded contract to help implement findings of GASSCO's gas terminals integrity review

Independent operations and engineering services company Offshore Design Engineering (ODE) has been awarded a new contract with GASSCO AS to work on the findings of its gas terminals review.

The project is the latest in a three-year relationship between London-headquartered ODE and Norwegian operator GASSCO, which is

responsible for safe and efficient gas transportation from the Norwegian Continental Shelf to mainland Europe and the UK. GASSCO's infrastructure includes export processing plants, gas receiving terminals and an 8,300km network of pipelines and offshore platforms.

ODE project manager Chris Lomax said: "This key contract award is a great opportunity for ODE to once again support and build on our relationship with GASSCO. I am delighted our technical capabilities, asset familiarity, and track record played a part in us securing this latest phase of work with a valued client.

"The contract demonstrates our client's continued trust and faith in us,

our technical skills, and our ability to successfully deliver and complete critical projects to the highest possible standard."

Despite the current COVID-19 pandemic impacting operations around the world, ODE's work for GASSCO will commence immediately, with the project being initiated and coordinated while remote working is in effect for ODE employees.

GASSCO project manager Dag Olav Saeverud said: "ODE has been awarded a technical service contract, and this reflects our past working experiences, the company's knowledge of our assets, and its capabilities to meet our expectations."

GASSCO
www.gassco.no

Offshore Design Engineering
www.ode-ltd.co.uk



The gas terminal

Strong Cooper Basin production helps oil and gas companies in tough times

Santos has reported its strongest quarter of gas production in the Cooper Basin in nine years while Beach Energy told the ASX this week it had achieved a 15 per cent oil production increase in the basin's Western Flank.



In a statement to the Australian Securities Exchange this morning, Santos reported a \$209mn (\$US133mn) fall in sales revenue for the March quarter.

Australia's second-largest independent gas producer's first quarter production of 17.9 million barrels of oil equivalent (mmboe) was 4 per cent lower than the prior quarter, primarily due to an unplanned domestic gas customer outage in Western Australia and the impact of Cyclone Claudia.

This was partially offset by Cooper Basin gas production, which was 23 per cent above the corresponding quarter and the highest quarterly gas production since 2011. Production was driven by strong flow rates from new gas wells combined with lower equipment downtime.

Total Santos Cooper Basin production was at an annualised rate of 17.6 mmboe Santos-share in the first quarter, achieving the 2025 production growth target range ahead of expectations.

The Adelaide-based company's revenue fell to \$1.4bn (\$US883mn) for the quarter ending March 31, down 13 per cent on the \$1.61bn (\$US1.02bn)

it generated in the March quarter last year.

The Cooper Basin covers an area of about 127,000 square kilometres in northeast South Australia and southwest Queensland and is home to Australia's largest onshore oil and gas field development.

Beach Energy's total sales revenue for the three months ending 31 March was \$431mn, 7 per cent lower than the previous March quarter as the 13 per cent decline in average realised price more than offset a 7 per cent increase in sales volumes to 6.94 mmboe.

Its total Cooper Basin production reached 2.68 mmboe, up 10 per cent on the December quarter and 42 per cent higher than the same period last year. Beach managing director and chief executive officer, Matt Kay said the strong operational result was a perfect example of the strength and resilience of Beach's workforce and asset portfolio.

"In a quarter in which global events have required us to reconfigure the way we go about our day-to-day operations,

the entire Beach team has remained focused on the job and delivered a good result," Mr Kay said.

"Our robust asset portfolio and operational capabilities combined with our extremely strong balance sheet, means Beach is well positioned to navigate the turbulent times being experienced across the globe. Last month, Santos cut its full-year capital spending by \$US550mn and deferred an investment decision on its \$US4.7bn Barossa gas project off northern Australia, in which it recently sold a stake to Japan's JERA. It also announced a target free cash flow breakeven oil price of US\$25 per barrel.

Santos managing director and chief executive officer Kevin Gallagher said about 70 per cent of the company's forecast production volumes were either fixed-price domestic gas contracts or oil hedged at an average floor price of US\$39 per barrel. He said the current environment was a time for discipline.

"We have a strong liquidity position with over \$3bn available and we have sufficient headroom in our debt covenants for a number of years at current oil prices," chief executive Kevin Gallagher said in a statement to the ASX this morning.

"The COVID-19 crisis continues to put demand pressure on industries across the globe and we are not immune."

Santos
www.santos.com

Oil & gas platform secures £1.8mn investment

A digital platform that aims to revolutionise the way in which the upstream oil and gas industry resources projects has secured £1.8mn of private investment.

The brainchild of new start-up technology firm, Xergy, Proteus is a cloud-based work management system that allows companies to find the right

people for projects as and when they are needed and by enabling remote-working allows a genuine freelance culture in the industry to flourish.

Xergy claims Proteus will transform the way in which the industry sources and uses talent to resource and deliver projects. Led by industry stalwarts, James McCallum and Colin Manson,

Xergy has already benefited from £1mn of private investment.

Mr Manson said: "By adopting Proteus, as a new way of operating, the working culture in oil and gas can be truly transformed," said Mr Manson.

Xergy
www.xergy.com



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International Tube & Pipe Industry trade fair



Tube China is an international trade fair for the tube and pipe industry, and takes place every two years in Shanghai.

It is one of the world's largest trade fairs for tube and pipe technologies and has firmly established itself on the fair market as an offshoot of the Tube show that takes place in Düsseldorf, Germany.

Exhibitors show the full range of products, from production to processing of pipes, and present not only raw materials, pipes and fittings, but also machines for pipe manufacturing, process technology tools and various other industry-related tools such as welding machines.

Tube China attracts professionals from very different but related industries such as the iron, steel, metal, automotive supplies, electrical, construction, oil, gas and chemical industries, as well as those from the technical trade, craft, associations and the energy and water supply industries.

Since its founding in 2004 Tube China has worked as a forum for innovative technologies, and offers one of the best platforms for trading and networking in Asia. With the industry conference focusing on current issues and challenges in the tube and pipe industry, the trade fair will be a perfect place to network and conduct business.



Case study: Timeless Tube

“Staying small keeps us agile”: why Timeless Tube’s modest set-up allows it to meet the varied needs of its customers

It is a typical day at Timeless Tube. MD Tom McMillan chats at length on the phone to a mechanical engineer who wants a piece of flat-sided oval tubing of a very specific dimension for a brake cooling kit for Renault Mégane 3RS sports cars. Without the right piece of tube the kit will not work — and until now nobody has been able to make this particular component. Meanwhile in the workshop, a team carefully checks hundreds of lengths of the same shaped tubing, which is to be used for luggage racks on state-of-the-art InterCity electric trains.

Based in Poole, on the south coast of the UK, Timeless Tube has been forming shaped tube from standard round tube for over 30 years. They shaped the first-ever oval tubing – 316L stainless steel handrail, which was used onboard a yacht. Since then some of the world’s most prestigious marine architects have used Timeless to make ergonomically shaped railings that look good enough to grace the decks and cabins of luxury yachts.



Oval tube railing, Princess Yachts

“We work across several industries now, and we form tubing into six different profiles. Each shape offers distinct benefits, which means we can provide tubing for so many different applications – be they architectural, electrical, mechanical, structural or decorative. And as far as we know, most of our shapes remain unique to us — at least we don’t know of other manufacturers making the likes of our twisted tubing design. And we have the capacity to form tubes into an impressive range of sizes. Our oval stainless steel tube alone comes in 200 sizes — we don’t know of any other supplier that offers this same spectrum,” said Mr McMillan.

A consultative approach

When Timeless rebranded at the start of the year it thought about what it is that makes them different from other tubing manufacturers: “The quality of our tubing is excellent and we pride ourselves on that. But the other key benefit to our clients – one of the big differences that Timeless offers – is that we genuinely consult with clients. We take the time to listen and understand what the application is. After this consultation process, we can experiment with the tooling and the tubing to provide what is required. A large manufacturing plant could not afford to stop their huge machines to do this. They don’t have the flexibility and they cannot be as nimble,” continued Mr McMillan.

This consultative approach is the reason that trained engineer Mr McMillan finds himself so often talking to clients to discover what they actually need from their tubing, rather than what they think they need. “Quite often people don’t realise that there is an easier way of forming or fitting the tubing, or they won’t have considered the importance of choosing the right metal or finish. Or they aren’t aware that there is such a choice of shapes. Being an engineer is all about finding solutions.”



Millennium Bridge, London – one of many iconic London structures that features Timeless tubing

The forming process itself

Timeless do not simply crush the tubing into shape, and nor is it an automated process. It is more delicate than that. The round tube is cold drawn through one or two dies, depending upon the chosen shape. The engineers have a deep knowledge of which dimensions will and will not work, and know how certain metals behave when they are shaped (stainless steel is easier to work with than aluminium and copper). However, when they are trying out a new size or material they do not always know exactly how the tubing will form.

Timeless often use the analogy of a potter shaping a clay bowl to explain the process of forming tubing from one shape to another. "A potter feels the clay in their hands while turning it, so they can gauge the softness of the clay and determine its limits when shaping. Similarly when we shape tube there is something artisanal, something organic – something deeply satisfying about the whole process," said Mr McMillan.

Timeless always calibrate settings on the machinery so that they can recreate exact tube sizes and shapes. It is hugely important that they are able to guarantee accurate uniformity of shape and finish. Not all of their orders are small, one-off jobs. Some clients require Timeless to supply tube components of the exact same size, where tolerance levels are crucial.

One such client is US electronics company Modal Shop, which uses Timeless to make the tube housing for its patented USB pen, which measures sound vibrations. The stainless steel tubing contains electrical components, so it is imperative that the dimensions are absolutely accurate. To guarantee the repeatability of this sizing, Timeless calibrate the precise measurements and source material from the same origin to ensure consistency.

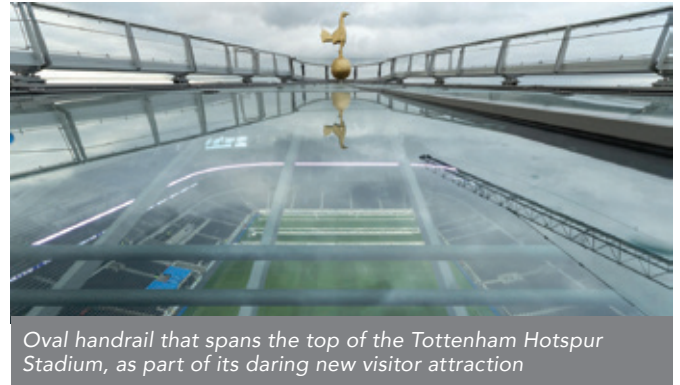
Pioneering prototypes

The Modal Shop USB pen started as a prototype that turned into a high-volume manufacturing job. Timeless engineers are regularly entrusted to help create prototypes and bespoke tubing for niche jobs in cases where other tubing fabricators would not have the set-up or skills to do so. Clients can order just one length of tubing (about 6m), which enables designers to try out proof of concepts without having to order hundreds of lengths.

Laboratory equipment, mobility chairs and sports car fuel tanks are all projects that have benefitted from Timeless's ability to create prototypes.

The evolution of new tube shapes

This careful consultation process has also led to the evolution of new tubing profiles. The twisted oval tubing is a result of a refinement made for a client who wanted a staircase with twisted spindles, but with the elliptical characteristics of oval tube. Timeless experimented and eventually made some new tooling that resulted in this profile.



Now used in 'decorative' architectural projects such as balustrades, the loosely twisted tubes have a sculpted, contemporary look, while the tightly twisted tubes are reminiscent of the barleycorn design that first came about in wooden furniture design of the 17th century. In both cases, the helical design is structurally strong – accordingly to Timeless's robust 'deflection' testing, they are significantly stronger than standard round tube.

The D-shaped tube, predominantly used as handrail, is ergonomically shaped to be 'graspable' (and to comply with the UK's stringent handrail safety stipulations). Its underside is flattened to make further fabrication and installation a relatively simple task; fitters can easily attach its flat side to other components such as structural glass on a balcony, brickwork or spindles. Timeless also produce a range of metal joiners, which enable fitters to seamlessly join tubing together with a reduced need for complicated cutting and welding. "We have to consider the fabricators who work with our tubing as much as we do the end-clients", said Mr McMillan. "Once again, it's about finding solutions".

Artistic projects

There is little doubt about the fact that this tubing can be beautiful. The tubes are carefully contoured to both look and feel sculptural – an asset that has been taken advantage of by artists, interior designers and lighting engineers over the years. "We love working with artists and designers to help them actualise their creative visions" said Mr McMillan.





Aerialist Beth Thomas performs on lunar-inspired tubing apparatus, commissioned by Fenella Marie costume design



MD Tom McMillan sits upon lunar-inspired aerial apparatus (made exclusively by Timeless for Fenella Marie costume design)

for purpose, which is why engineers will come to us from all over to modify tubes.

“For over three decades Timeless had been at the forefront of bespoke tubing design. It is exciting to be involved with original projects and new applications. We’re a small British manufacturer using traditional fabrication methods, and yet we can still create customised tubing for global heavy-weights.”

“We were recently commissioned to create a unique moon-shaped apparatus for aerialists to perform upon. This was an unusual commission for us because we had to make the main structure out of round tubing.

“Most of our other orders require the tubing to be oval or square so it can be easily gripped – railings and rungs are far safer when hands and feet can’t slip around them. But in the case of aerial ‘hoop work’, performers need to be able to slide their bodies around the tubing. The flourishes that set this performance piece apart are the twisted tube sections that sit within the moon. They refract the light beautifully,” explained Mr McMillan.

Restorative work

In the past few years the team at Timeless have witnessed a growing appetite for tubing for restorative work, from twisted brass fairground carousel poles to decorative copper trims on shop fronts. They often have clients who wish to bring a traditional feel into their home through decorative metal architecture.

“There seems to be a hankering for beautiful design in everyday objects and architecture. I’m not saying that this is a new phenomenon, or that humans have ever lost this desire. But it seems that in a world where so much is mass-produced, there is a need for these one-off pieces, for custom-mades – and to some extent, for designs from the past,” claimed Mr McMillan. “It is so nice to be able to meet this demand by replicating past designs.”

A world-renowned reputation

Timeless have a client-base that spans most continents, with customers from as far as Tokyo, Tel Aviv, Singapore, Ohio and New York who are prepared to pay shipping costs to get their hands on the tubes.

“The right tubing can elevate a design project. If a shipbuilder is making a multi-million pound yacht, they need to make sure that every detail is impeccable – including the railings. Or tubing that houses electronic circuit boards... it has to be fit

Timeless Tube – UK
info@timelesstube.com
www.timelesstube.com

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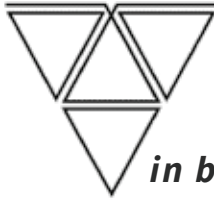
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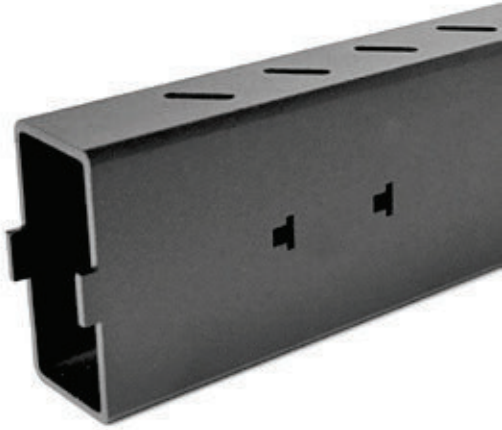
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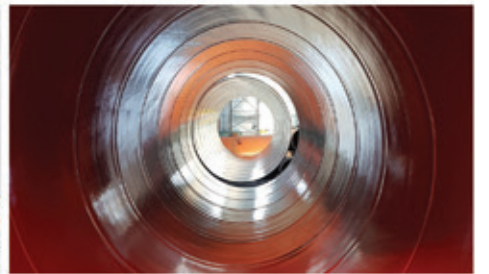
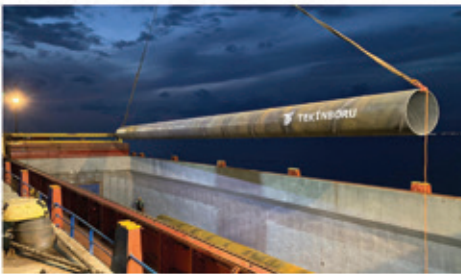
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