

After last year's Glasstec, **GLASS SERVICE** looks confidently ahead

G **LASS MACHINERY PLANTS & ACCESSORIES (GMP&A):**

Fulvio how would you summarise this post-Covid period in terms of your company's organisation and markets in general?

Fulvio Puccioni: When the COVID concerns first began to subside we noticed a general acceleration in customer requests. That saw numerous projects become active - with others ready to go. However, project execution had its difficulties with extended delivery times owing to a longstanding shortage



Fulvio Puccioni

of components, valves and electronic boards. Here the lack of materials prompted us to make 'in-house' those critical components which were difficult to find, e.g. Venturi valves and mixers for the channels. As for the choice of suppliers, a possibility to produce within the EU was preferred, given certain difficulties experienced in maintaining delivery times for suppliers who've relocated as far afield as China. As the pandemic waned we contin-

ued to leverage our web skills to ensure constant communication, which is why conference calls have since become customary. These afforded us the significant advantage of being able to reduce travel and any related costs - besides the added value of more frequent contact than our trips abroad were offering. Here company organisation has needed to adapt by making the necessary IT tools available such that, for instance, our technicians' computers are all equipped now

Rubbing shoulders at Glasstec 2022 with so many of the big names in today's glass industry, the editorial team of GMP&A spoke to GLASS SERVICE's Technical Director Fulvio Puccioni about both the trade show and his outlook on the company's future.



with cameras and headphones. Typically today we also exchange project information with customers by using cloud technologies. Then concerning electronic products - which, in our case, are process control panels - remote control has become standardised via web platforms and dedicated hardware. That option has been well-received by customers - a thing rarely necessitated in the pre-Covid years which now also reduces service trips.

Otherwise, the markets have remained much the same in geographical terms, albeit with

the total disappearance of the Russian and Belarusian markets. Still, what we're noticing both Europewide and in the Americas is a high demand for glass factory food containers.

GMP&A: Any noticeable changes in your relationship with customers?

FP: Well, there's the decrease in travel mobility I mentioned before, which has seen customer contact via conference calls increase. It has also meant less business dinners and one-to-one human connection. A result here was that communication largely shifted to corporate documentation in its various forms - namely to websites, social networks, magazines and so on. The shift has necessitated the creation of specific roles dedicated to company marketing and communication activities. Besides, difficulties associated with video calls required the preparation of a series of presentation tools, e.g. PPT files, to ensure that explanations on product excellence were impactful. Admittedly,





the video call has had its limitations in comparison to vis à vis contact. For one thing, time is more limited. Moreover, with the absence of non-verbal communication any language barriers are more difficult to straddle. In visual terms that also demands support to accompany product explanations, e.g. photos, 3D renderings, functional diagrams, technical drawings, etc. Not only. The preparation of these graphic additions requires allocated time

and people in dedicated roles.

GMP&A: What's your post-show assessment of Glasstec and your evaluation of the market prospects for 2023?

FP: Glasstec is for impactful showcasing. It's the trade event where anyone who wants to count must exhibit. How that all translates into sales is difficult to measure. Glasstec was cancelled during COVID and nothing has changed. What's clear is that

requests have increased as a result of the demand for glass products - which indicates, instead, that orders follow dynamics that are quite unconnected to exhibitions and trade shows.

Our prospects for 2023 are excellent. As of today we already have orders for the whole of next year's turnover - so we certainly anticipate further growth. Our market of 'instrumental products', specifically furnaces and channels, follows the glass sales trend. For now, glass product sales are on the rise - much like the demand for furnace-channels and related systems. ■



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