

# FOREL and PRESS GLASS eye U.S. production expansion together

**W**ith over thirty years of experience, Press Glass has expanded its operational strategies by extending its production horizons from Europe to the United States. After establishing a highly dynamic and modern organization, it currently positions itself as one of the leading global players in the flat glass processing market. The company's first step on American soil was the acquisition of Glass Dynamics, a family-run business in Stoneville, North Carolina. At the time, the production standards met the needs of simple projects with limited final dimensions. "Back in 2017, our focus was on medium and small-sized projects, such as commercial facades, shop windows, and other minor applications," says Director of Manufacturing and Technology at Press Glass Inc. Gregg Vanier.

## PRESS GLASS AND FOREL: IN LOCKSTEP TOWARDS NEW HORIZONS

Just two years later, in 2019, expansion continued with the construction of a new production plant in Ridgeway, a small town in the Virginia countryside. This facility, which became operational in 2020, introduced more complex machinery

to meet the demands of an ever-evolving market. It marked a significant advancement towards specialization in the production of structural glass for commercial buildings. Here the offering was diversified into a wide range of products: from high-quality tempered glass to laminated glass - including printed glass and insulating glass units.

To meet the demands from the world of architecture and contracting, finished product sizes required a more advanced production and logistical asset. Hence, as Gregg Vanier stated after presenting an overview of the multinational's evolution, the need to collaborate with Forel: "Our competitive advantage lies in the exceptional quality



From left, Peter Zawada - Engineering Investments Project Manager at Press Glass Inc., Rafal Wrona - Special Glass Production Director at Press Glass Inc., Gregg Vanier - Director of Manufacturing and Technology at Press Glass Inc., Maciej Migalski - President of Press Glass Inc.

Thanks to its collaboration with FOREL's insulating glass line, PRESS GLASS has been able to further solidify its dedication to tailored solutions - all while enhancing its versatility. Having already expanded from Europe to the US after more than thirty years in flat glass processing, the company's new coveted partnership will now see it moving ever closer to an automated future within the American market.



of our products, achieved through the use of first-rate machinery and the high qualification of our operators. Indeed the reason we chose to collaborate with Forel is because of their vertical processing machines and insulating glass lines since we were looking for machinery that was precise,

fast and reliable." Vanier continues: "Pre-temper processing is one of the most relevant activities within our production cycle and is very susceptible in terms of accuracy, quality, simplicity, and yield. These characteristics are fundamental for our monolithic glasses in view of their future installations as balustrades, handrails,

or shower systems, where the combination of aesthetics and safety is the starting point."

### THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING: ORIENTATION TO CUSTOMER NEEDS

Press Glass has managed to stand out in the global market thanks to its ability to

understand customer needs and offer tailor-made solutions, meeting their requirements despite the challenges of managing large glass sizes. Choosing Forel as a supplier for the expansion in the United States means having identified the ideal partner. Here, in deeply entering the dynamics of a market yet to be discovered, it was necessary to rely upon a company that can respond with a wide and innovative product line, developed to meet unique requirements and needs. Here, Forel's organization, with a branch in Minnesota, has allowed for close monitoring of all project phases. It is thanks to this presence on the territory that the project's evolution has been constantly monitored with flexible management of any unforeseen events - as well as effective achievement of the set goals.

With Forel's No Limits Insulating Glass line, purchased by Press Glass and introduced in the Ridgeway facility, it is possible to manage any format requested by customers with versatility: from the more contained format to Jumbo sizes with a maximum configurable height of 3,300 mm and for an extension in length of up to 6,000 mm. This type of product offers the customer the possibility to choose the most suitable tailor-made configuration for their needs. A direct consequence of this innovation is that it has afforded Press Glass the possibility to specialize in the pro-

duction of structural and architectural glasses which find application in the commercial and design fields. With attention and sensitivity placed on the theme of energy saving; the possibility of packaging an insulating glass panel with three or even four glass sheets and with a maximum insulating thickness of up to 100 mm, significantly impacts the energy efficiency of the buildings in which these glass panels will be installed.

### A SHARED PERSPECTIVE OF THE FUTURE

Although managing the installation of machinery for Jumbo-sized sheets might

have seemed a challenge during the pandemic, the Press Glass work team was fully supported for a successful outcome by Forel's team. During the months of the installation phase, internal staff training courses were conducted in addition to the plant's testing phase for prompt management of any emer-

gencies. Here reliability continues to be guaranteed after the installation phase by Forel's Service Support - delivered through the onboard Forel Remote Control system: a virtual technician of sorts that can intervene immediately in case of anomalies while minimizing any machinery downtime.

As Vanier concludes deci-

sively regarding the next step in the market: "The future is automation." At that he announced that the Ridgeway plant will be further expanded in the near future to increase its production capacity and consolidate its position in the American market - counting on Forel as main partner for the growth path.



Overview of the milling drill combined with the grinding machine.



**GREGG VANIER**  
DIRECTOR OF MANUFACTURING  
AND TECHNOLOGY

**FOREL SpA**

**FOREL**

Via per Monastier, 4  
31056 - Vallio di Roncade TV  
- ITALY  
Tel.: +39-0422-840507  
Fax: +39-0422-840900  
E-mail: info@forelspa.com  
[www.forelspa.com](http://www.forelspa.com)



**PRESSGLASS**

**PRESS GLASS**

8901 US-220  
Stoneville  
NC 27048  
USA  
Tel.: +1-336-573-2393  
E-mail: northamerica@pressglass.us  
[www.pressglass.us](http://www.pressglass.us)





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**Tel: +86-10-57811261, 57811409**

**Fax: +86-10-57811262**

**E-mail: [ceramsoc@chinaglass-expo.com](mailto:ceramsoc@chinaglass-expo.com)**

**<http://www.chinaglass-expo.com>**



WeChat ID: CHINAGLASSEXPO