



New Verbruggen management has ambitious plans

Happy faces at the celebration of the 25th anniversary of Verbruggen Palletizing Solutions in Emmeloord. At the end of 2016, founder Alex Verbruggen passed the baton to the new General Manager Erik Bruggink and his own sons Wouter and Maarten. Over the coming five years, the new team wants to make the company market leader in every country where it operates.

'It's with teamwork, which is in the Verbruggen commercial DNA, that we want to distinguish ourselves'. It was the appropriate moment for the company to present its new structure to the outside world. One of the changes concerns a new design of the dealer structure. 'We'd noticed that some dealers didn't have the DNA of our company in their commercial genes, which means they often couldn't offer the same level of service as we do. From now on, we're going to sell our machinery via multi-channel marketing. This is now also possible because, as a result of the advent of the internet, we're less dependent on our distributors. We now like clients to choose themselves who they wish to do business with. Directly via us or through the local dealer in a country. Another possibility is that the client buys via the dealer and receives his service directly from us', Bruggink explains his market approach. 'In order to pursue this strategy, it's important that we have good and competent people working at the sales locations', adds Maarten Verbruggen, who is responsi-

ble for the development of new markets within the company. 'We currently employ one staff member from Mexico, one from India, one from Russia, one from America and two from China who can maintain contact with the local customers in their own language', Maarten explains. 'In order to be able to reach those customers in the best possible way, they can reach us 24/6 at our own offices in Emmeloord (NL), Pasco (USA) and Beijing (China)', Bruggink continued. 'This contributes to our strategy whereby we want to reduce the burden for our customers, from the start to the finish of the logistics process after weighing and packaging. For example, if you look at the United States, this approach has already paid off', Wouter Verbruggen, who is responsible for addressing worldwide sales, tells us. At the moment, he lives with his family in America in order to transfer the Verbruggen-DNA to the local staff. He notices a trend whereby the projects in professional potato countries such as America are becoming increasingly bigger. 'Projects costing a million or more euros are becoming the rule rather than the exception', he explains. Market leader everywhere Verbruggen has expanded rapidly in recent years. The company realised a turnover of 6 million euros with 25 FTE employees five years ago. This has now increased to 12 million with 50 FTs. 'In the coming five years, we want to grow towards a turnover between 30 and 40 million euros, and we want to become



'Teamwork which has the Verbruggen-DNA, that's what we want to distinguish ourselves within the coming years', is what Alex Verbruggen, Wouter Verbruggen, Erik Bruggink and Maarten Verbruggen (from left to right) firmly believe.

the market leader in all the countries we're active in', Bruggink firmly believes. He expects to realise this objective partly by further optimising the internal management, which will make it possible to deliver a palleting machine within seven weeks instead of ten. 'In addition, we want to develop solutions together with the customer that will improve the logistics process in his business. We can do this because we also do the programming of the control software ourselves. We also want to lighten the load of the ever-growing businesses of our customers. Take the constantly-increasing business volume of the seed potato growers in the Netherlands, for example. This requires new logistics solutions. In the past, the grower chose a stacking pattern and a pallet size and started work. If we control the entire logistics process for this grower in the future, he'll be able to prepare the exact amount of seed for Algeria using, for example,

25-kilogram bags in 2.5 pallets. This helps him to gear optimally to the demands of his buyer and to process his product optimally', Bruggink explains. 'We're going to roll out this proactive thinking all over the world and raise the company to an even higher level.' ●