

50 years of CMC:

With Siempelkamp from "P

A large part of Siempelkamp's success story has been written in Italy: At the company's location in Colzate, CMC develops and manufactures a significant part of Siempelkamp's machinery for the wood-based materials industry. What started with the mat forming machines has developed into highly modern front-end equipment supporting plant operators worldwide. In an interview with Bulletin, Managing Director Dr. Dario Zoppetti describes 50 years of CMC company history and an important recent milestone.

By Ralf Griesche



Dr. Zoppetti, CMC is celebrating a special anniversary this year. Please tell us a few things about the 50-year history of your company.

Dr. Dario Zoppetti: CMC was established in 1962 by my father Mario Zoppetti and three other companions. Prior to this, my father worked in the metal processing industry. He always had the dream of managing his own company. After work he attended evening classes, finished his high school degree and received additional education.

In 1962 he and his three companions were ready to become self-employed and founded CMC – which stands for “Carpenterie Metalliche di Colzate”. We have been consistent: we are still processing

metal and we are still located in Colzate. In the beginning the company specialized in the manufacture of structural elements for the textile industry.

CMC and Siempelkamp: common focus

How did Siempelkamp come into play in the following years?

Back then Siempelkamp had a branch office in Italy, the ELMAG. In 1976 ELMAG founded the company Texpan which specialized in the engineering of equipment for the wood-based materials industry – especially for fiberboard and particleboard.

Starting in the mid 1970s CMC also got

increasingly involved in the production of machines for the wood-based materials industry. The first movable mat forming machines for particleboard lines were built as well as dryers, screens, discharge systems, bunkers, saws, and other machines. The portfolio was growing; so was the team: our company expanded, new employees were hired.

That was approximately around the time when you joined the company...

At first I had different plans for my life. I focused on a career at the University, received my doctorate in the late 1960s in the field of mechanical engineering. Afterwards, I received a call to become a professor at the University in Milan. 1972 was the turning point. I bought the stocks

arteecipazione" to "Fusione"

(from left to right)

Mario Zoppetti, Founder of CMC
The old factory premises in Colzate
Installation of a dryer
Welded construction
Dryer

Dryer construction
Structure of a wind tunnel
Moving mat forming machine
Finishing work on a submarine
Hammer mill



of one of CMC's co-owners and joined the company. For my father this was a great relief. For me there was the prospect of raising the meager salary of a university professor and starting a family.

However, most important for me was the challenge to develop new machines that would meet my expectations for this growing market.

That means there is even more to celebrate in 2012 – 40 years of Dr. Dario Zoppetti at CMC!

Yes, that is correct. It was a good 40 years. We made great progress back then regarding the technology for machines used in the particleboard industry. We

started a direct cooperation with Siempelkamp in order to build mat forming machines for MDF and OSB plants. Our manufacturing spectrum also included handling machines, saws, and automatic stacking systems.

Many challenges and many services...

...which at first ran on parallel tracks. In one of my lives I was an employee of CMC – in the other a teacher at the evening school. In 1980 I joined the CMC management team.

Mat forming competence from Italy for Krefeld

How did CMC and Texpan finally merge?

After I became Managing Director at CMC in 1980 we stabilized the fruitful connection. In 1995 CMC and Texpan merged, the employees were brought together and the joined know-how from the areas of engineering and manufacturing of machines was consolidated under the brand name CMC Texpan. The efficiency of the machines grew constantly, so did the machines themselves. This was the time for CMC Texpan to establish another production facility close by.

Why did CMC Texpan specialize in mat forming machines?

The machines were getting bigger, the technology became more sophisticated and perfected. Our product range grew: at first, it was mat forming machines



Dr. Dario Zoppetti,
President of CMC Texpan



Dr. Dario Zoppetti and
F. Brembilla Managing Director

for particleboard only, later mat forming machines for MDF and OSB were added.

Furthermore, Siempelkamp had entered into a business relationship with PAL/IMAL – a company that was specializing in front-end machinery. As a result we limited our range of products and primarily manufactured mat forming machines. In 1995 Siempelkamp purchased 25% of CMC's shares.

In the 1990s you bound yourself strongly to Siempelkamp?

Yes, we strongly benefitted from the Texpan know-how and implemented this knowledge into machine technology. At that time, Siempelkamp was our bulk purchaser. Stronger ties to Siempelkamp were only logical. In the following years I focused strongly on this cooperation. Today, 30 years later, we can see that this endeavor has paid off.

Where do you see the most value of this cooperation?

The cooperation was excellently thriving over the years. CMC was a strong partner for Siempelkamp at construction sites all over the world. For us it was vital to have

such a large partner which achieved global leadership in the market for wood-based material plants. For each press that Siempelkamp sold, we supplied the mat forming machines. In that it only made sense that Siempelkamp expanded its shares in CMC.

New opportunities – and back to the roots

When did CMC Texpan start to expand its product range again?

In 2008 the business connection between Siempelkamp and PAL/IMAL ended. With it also went our restraint to produce other products – we began to revive the old roots of our front-end know-how. We invested in our research and development, acquired new experts, designed and optimized the machines for storing, screening, cleaning, and applying resin.

On this basis we could fully utilize the potentials that result from the close relationship to Siempelkamp. Together we designed a range of new and improved machines for the front-end. We successfully introduced this new product portfolio to the market in 2010. Furthermore, we also developed and built products for

other customers and industries. As an example I would like to mention our involvement in the construction of small submarines of which we have already supplied several.

What are first reference projects?

Important projects include Metro and Panel Plus in Thailand for which we supplied and installed the complete front-end equipment together with the Siempelkamp subsidiary Hombak. In 2011 we were especially successful with new plants which Siempelkamp will supply to Eastern Europe and Turkey. However, our machines for the preparation of and resin application onto chips, strands, and fibers were also in demand in China and South Africa.

How did the workforce develop over the years?

My father started the company with a very small team in 1962. In the 1970s we had a staff of 30, in the 1980s/1990s this number increased to 50 employees. Today we have a workforce of 87 in Colzate. Combined with our location in Rumania, we employ a total of 140 people.



Tool for a press

R&D Department



CMC 1 Colzate



CMC 2 Colzate



CMC Texpan Managers



Milestones and new ways

Looking back, what milestone in your professional career has been the most important?

There are two. First, my decision to end my career at the University and to join CMC. Second, the most important strategic decision was the strong attachment of CMC to Siempelkamp. This bond is once more emphasized in that Siempelkamp is acquiring the last stocks that I own. Starting June 2012 our Krefeld partner will be the sole owner of CMC Texpan. And I will leave my company at the age of 65.

Sale and farewell – why did you decide to take this step?

Most important for me was to create a secure foundation for the future of CMC Texpan and its employees. This would only work with a strong partner. Siempel-

kamp has recognized the potentials of acquiring our well-positioned company with its talented and well-trained workers. Furthermore, I have no successor in my own family who could take over the business. Therefore, the decision I made is the best for all involved parties.

What will you do with your new life?

I am toying with the idea of returning to my former teaching activities. I have always enjoyed working with young people.

Furthermore, I want to dedicate more time to my hobby, that is, collecting and reading old historical books. In this way, my wife and I will also be able to share more common interests. We are looking forward to having more time together. The bottom line, the company is in good hands. It is now up to a young team of managers to face the many challenges.

Dr. Zoppetti, we thank you very much for this interview and wish you the very best for the “restless” retirement!