



BÖHLER – Passion, Strength and Diversity

Special steels are a fundamental part of our modern world. Whether they are integrated as components or serving as tools, special steel will continue to form the basis for economic success and innovation in many important sectors of industry across the globe. With a turnover in excess of MEUR 731 and over 2000 employees world-wide, BÖHLER is one of the driving forces and pioneers behind this progress.

By Rita Bancroft, bancmarketing

For generations the name BÖHLER has been synonymous worldwide with top quality specialty steels. BÖHLER steels are used in the most diverse applications: as dimensionally stable tools for producing goods, as cold-work steels for punching, bending, and cutting, as hot-work steels for pressure die casting, or as highly stressed specialty steels in aircraft, in turbines for energy production, in medical technology, or in offshore oil production. The Bohler Brand is led from its production units in Austria in Kapfenberg (for Bar, Billet & Wire), Murzzuschlag (for Sheet & Plate) &

Waidhofen (For Strip & Profiles). We caught up with three Divisions around the world to understand what drives them and the values they share. From the UK to Singapore and the USA, it was clear that each Division, no matter where it is located, has complete focus on its customers, ensuring they give their best every day. All agreed that special steels are a fundamental part of our modern world. They will continue to form the basis for economic success and innovation in many important sectors of industry in the future – integrated as components or serving as tools. BÖHLER is one of the

driving forces and pioneers behind this progress. So let's take a closer look at each region:

Böhler-Uddeholm UK

Based in the West Midlands, UK's heart of engineering expertise is BÖHLER UDDEHOLM UK. We caught up with Managing Director, Tom Gowans to understand how the UK Divisions are structured to better serve the diverse and challenging industry sectors they operate in.

In the UK, the BÖHLER brand is structured into three core businesses: the recently enhanced Specialty Metals



The Böhler rolled bar material and blooming mill in action.

service that sets us apart from the competition”, explains Tom Gowans.

Focus on specialty metals

In April this year the business restructured, to ensure greater focus on key segments. This involved the creation of Böhler Uddeholm Specialty Metals Division, headed up by Richard Kendall. The new division incorporates the BÖHLER portfolio of Corrosion Resistant Alloy products in Bar, Billet, Sheet, Plate and Forgings for the Oil & Gas, CPI & Energy industries together with the Seamless Tube & Pipe products in stainless, duplex, super duplex & exotic grades, previously branded Schoeller Bleckmann UK. Richard Kendall explains the strategy, “the rebrand of the Schoeller Bleckmann UK business under Böhler Uddeholm UK (BUUK) Specialty Metals harnesses our group strength and provides customers with a comprehensive product solution. Our reputation for quality is built on our technical capability and continued

investment in new products and testing facilities, this will further strengthen our strategy to offer the best products and the best service across each of our industry sectors”.

Trusted to deliver

All steel stock is held in a new purpose built warehouse facility at Böhler-Uddeholm UK Headquarters in Oldbury, West Midlands. The new KASTO system is the tallest in the UK and one of the largest in Europe. With an average picking time of 6mins, orders can be picked and despatched the same day. Value-Added solutions give customers access to cutting, machining, bevelling, testing and other services providing turnkey customer solutions. This includes an onsite testing service, used when customers require additional certification to that supplied by the Mill. The UK’s strategy is to be a one-stop-shop and it looks like that’s exactly what they have achieved.

Division which targets the Oil & Gas, CPI & Energy industries; the Tool Steel & High Speed Steel Division which support all sectors with high performance steels for tooling applications; and the newly formed Aerospace Division which operates in the Aviation and Power Generation segments. Each Division is an expert in their product category and work in unison to target their diverse customer base. All benefit from the £4m investment in the state-of-the-art Kasto distribution facility which supports the UK business as a whole.

The BÖHLER UK strategy has been to broaden the business focus from being more than established specialty steel supplier to becoming a solution provider. “Our customers are incredibly discerning as they work in extreme sectors. The BÖHLER brand continues to deliver the consistent assured quality that the industry has come to expect. What we do here in the UK is provide solutions – it is the combination of a trusted product and good consistent



The new £4 state-of-the-art Kasto distribution facility is the tallest in the UK and one of the largest in Europe.

Böhler Pacific

BÖHLER Pacific is doing more than simply defying the investment slump in the oil & gas industry. Managing Director, Neil Kite explains “BÖHLER Pacific PTE. LTD, was set up in 2013 to sell corrosion-resistant steels and special grades to the oil & gas industry throughout the entire Southeast Asian and Pacific regions”.

Today, the specialized sales company has 35 employees. We asked how they achieved this, with the lowest oil price since 2009 and a concomitant investment slump in this industry segment? “BÖHLER Pacific is doing extremely well under the circumstances,” stresses Kite. “Although upstream oil & gas projects really have been put on hold, our team has succeeded in expanding sales outside our original target market.” And very successfully, too: from supplying only a few customers in Singapore in the first year, to over 200 in ten countries this year. The first year’s revenue of a little over USD 1 million has increased to over USD 9 million at the end of the financial year 2015/16, its third business year. Last autumn, BÖHLER Pacific opened its first representative office in China and, unsurprisingly, has needed more space, and particularly its own premises, in Singapore to expand its service capabilities for the rapidly growing number of customers.

From service to production company

The Special Steel Division has invested USD 20 million in the new Singapore hub for steel stocks, infrastructure and equipment for the 7,000 m² rented premises. With deep hole drilling, turning

and CNC milling capabilities, BÖHLER Pacific can now manufacture semi-finished and finished components for OEMs in the oil & gas industry: “We have grown very fast but it was still necessary to offer OEMs processing services in order to achieve our growth targets”.

Dream team

Responsible for two key market segments, aerospace, energy, chemical, oil & gas within the Southeast Asia and Pacific region, recruiting the right industry experts to deliver the company’s vision is crucial. “We have a ‘dream team’ in place”, Neil Kite says about his management team of six highly experienced individuals. With the majority of the upstream oil & gas projects on hold due to the low oil prices, the commercial team had to shift its focus and it has done so exceptionally well. A challenge for his team, Kite admits, yet they have successfully expanded their activities and identified additional business targets by country. It is quality which underpins everything, Neil Kite echoes the BÖHLER ethos, “Quality is more than a system, it’s a culture, and one for which we are all responsible”.

Böhler-Uddeholm North America Exploring aerospace

Over the last year, Böhler-Uddeholm North America (BUNA) has developed a focused market strategy and expanded its distribution network. They have hired key employees and positioned the company for substantial growth in the coming years. Now, the aerospace business is ready to take off. The market continues to be robust and growing. Art Smoljan,



Böhler ingots produced in an induction furnace.

Vice President Sales - Aerospace, comments, “the aerospace business is a very exciting opportunity for BUNA and our new team members. Coupled with high quality materials and our capability to distribute these materials to the market, we expect to gain market share in the coming months and years.” BUNA has increased inventories, starting with materials for structural components in the air frame; “we intend to add more sophisticated materials such as nickel-based alloys,” reports Mark Appleton, Customer Experience and Engagement Manager at Böhler-Uddeholm Ltd. in Canada. Firm orders have been booked and new opportunities are coming each day.

Intelligent logistics concept

“Follow the customer” is also the BUNA motto. BUNA understands that they must be able to service their customers. To do this, the company is setting up warehouses and service centers near industry hotspots. The company had an existing warehouse in Kent, Washington, which has been “reconfigured” to support the aerospace distribution strategy within “hailing distance” of Boeing and its suppliers. It is also developing a new warehouse for specialty steels in Walnut, CA, near the world’s largest aerospace workshop in Southern California.

Promising HR strategy

BUNA also understands that in order to be successful they need the “right



The Böhler Pacific team (L to R): Neil Kite, Managing Director; Tom Ferguson, Commercial Director; Monty Alan Hubbard, Operations Manager and Daniel Lee, Shop Floor.



The Böhler car bottom furnace for the rotary forging process.



voestalpine Specialty Metals Houston supplies a range of stainless and nickel alloys to support the oil and gas industry for subsea, wellhead, drilling, and downhole completion equipment.

people in the right seats". They need people who understand the market and have strong relationships within the industry. "The aerospace industry is a relatively small community of specialized companies. Business relationships grow over years and are based on a strong level of trust," noted Art Smoljan. "By choosing the right team members these relationships can be transferred to help us build our business. We've been able to bring on board highly experienced specialists, such as Regional Sales Manager Rob Brown. Rob brings a lot of knowledge and expertise that we simply did not have before." The insights of these "industry insiders" being shared with

the current employees will help BUNA achieve long-term success in the aerospace industry for years to come.

High speed steel

For cutting tools such as drills, mills, or broaches for cold-forming tools, high-speed steels are the primary choice. BÖHLER offer ultra-pure powder metallurgy steels known as MICROCLEAN®. They have the required properties of high wear resistance, red hardness, and toughness, which prevent the cutting edges from breaking off. For customers this means longer service life, lower setup costs, and reproducible production processes. Böhler-Uddeholm stocks a wide

range of Cutting Tool Steel in both conventionally produced and powder metallurgically produced grades.

Oil & gas division

The North American oil and gas market is served by the voestalpine Specialty Metals Division based in Houston. Products and services can be found in every field of oil and gas production and processing, from upstream processes in which petroleum compounds are explored, to downstream activities in which extracted oil and gas is processed, cracked or transformed as a feedstock. The division also supports products and services in midstream technologies used in the transport of hydrocarbons.

	BOHLER-UDDEHOLM UK	BÖHLER PACIFIC	BOHLER-UDDEHOLM NORTH AMERICA
FOUNDED	April 1928	March 2013	1925 - USA 1953 - Canada
HEADQUARTERS	Oldbury, West Midlands, UK	Singapore	Elgin, Illinois, U.S.A. Mississauga, ON, Canada
KEY PRODUCTS	Tool Steel, High Speed Steel, Special Materials for Oil & Gas/CPI, Aerospace, Powergen	Special Steel for aerospace, Oil & Gas	Tool Steel, High Speed Steel, Special Materials, PVD Coatings, Heat Treatment
MAIN MARKETS	Automotive, Mechanical Engineering, Consumer Goods, Oil & Gas, Petrochem, Powergen, Aerospace	Aerospace, Energy, Chemical, Oil & Gas	Automotive, Civil & Mechanical Engineering, Whitegoods/Consumer Goods, Aerospace, Power Generation, Construction Industry
EMPLOYEES	100	35	660
WEBSITE	www.bohlersteels.co.uk	www.bohlerpac.com.sg	www.bucorp.com www.bucanada.ca www.bu-mexico.com www.eifeler.us www.sturdell.com www.edro.com