

Goettsch International: Partnering with Allegheny to Serve the Globe

As a global corporation representing more than 20 machine manufacturers, Goettsch International of Cincinnati, Ohio relies on only the most reliable equipment and working partnerships it can locate. You simply can't have a machine break down in a plant miles away and solve the customer's problem quickly and effectively.

That's one explanation for the successful, long-term relationship Goettsch has developed with Allegheny Shredders—the high quality, durable shredders Allegheny produces, along with its consistently excellent service, has helped Goettsch to become a trusted name the world over.

“We like to associate with premier suppliers, and Allegheny's name came up about 25 years ago when we were looking for a reliable shredding manufacturer,” said Eric Goettsch, president of the company, who represents the third generation in his family in the export marketing business. “Allegheny is very responsive to our needs, not only supplying us with top of the line equipment that doesn't break down, but attacking a problem immediately, and solving it to our complete satisfaction. It's not just the quality equipment, it's the people that make Allegheny such a great company.”

Goettsch International serves as a worldwide marketing arm for manufacturers of machinery for the corrugated container and recycling industries, with 25 employees in Ohio and 10 in the field. It not only delivers the most advanced machinery (often as a single supplier, so plants can avoid the costs of mismatched equipment and inefficient flow), but also arranges for financing, documentation, technical assistance, and after-sale services. Its reach encompasses Latin and South America, Asia (Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines, Thailand, Hong Kong and more), Europe and the Middle East, and Australia/New Zealand, to name the larger areas. Goettsch was presented with



Eric Goettsch (foreground), with Mike and Andy, Goettsch International

the “E Flag” and “E Star” awards by the US Department of Commerce for exporting excellence.

A History of Global Connections

Herman Goettsch began the tradition of representing American companies in the early 1920s, when he returned to Germany after helping launch the folding carton industry in Chicago, Illinois (the Sefton Box Company, forerunner of Container Corporation of America). His son Carl moved the company to Switzerland in the 1930s, then later to the US, launching the Carl O. Goettsch Company in Cincinnati in 1950. Carl's son Eric joined the family business in 1973 and expanded the market into Latin America.

“My father Carl dealt mostly with consumable materials at the start, such as paper products and tape,” Eric said. “Then corrugator machinery—developed by my uncle Walter—became the core of the business. He began representing American Baler products, and shredders were added in the mid-1960s. Recycling and destruction equipment are a natural

offshoot for the corrugated industry.”

Following Herman's lead, Carl saw that international marketing was the way to go. “My father Carl discovered the niche once he came back to America—we know how to export, so let's make that be our business,” Eric said. “We don't do any sales in the US or Canada, although that would certainly be a heck of a lot easier than across the globe! But we began picking the lines we wanted to represent and the ball got rolling.”

Challenges of International Business

Working in international commerce requires keeping one's eyes and ears open constantly, to react to a fluid market. “You're dealing with cultural and language sensitivities, and an economy that's different in each county and region, and apt to be volatile,” Eric said. “We have to try to understand the culture and do a lot of listening, not just barge in and take over. In general, the international market lags behind the US in confidential paper shredding, and hard drive shredders

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haven't hit yet."

The challenges are many, and Eric says it's not easy to find people willing to work weekends and holidays to accommodate cross-continental customers. "Someone from an Arab country may want their machine on July 4, and we've got to do it," said Eric. "We're competing sometimes with lower-priced products from Europe or Asia. We have to sell in US dollars, the value of which fluctuates greatly with local economies. Inflation is a factor. Then there are the regulations—Argentina, for example, is currently clamping down on imports. So there are many challenges to tackle and information to keep abreast of."

A Good Partnership is a Gold Mine

The majority of Allegheny shredders Goettsch exports are the 16-Series, though they do provide 100- and 1000-Series as well. Goettsch sells the product to the foreign buyer, then buys the product from Allegheny. Once it's purchased, Goettsch takes full ownership, and handles financing, billing, installation, and servicing for the client. "It's a great working arrangement with Allegheny, mutually beneficial," Eric said.

Eric's son Andy serves as Vice President Sales at Goettsch. "When you have ownership and your name is on a product, it brings a pride and also a responsibility," Eric said. "Just like John

"Building relationships with our suppliers and working as a team with quality people makes it most rewarding."

Wagner at Allegheny, we treat our employees like family."

The rewards are worth the work. "This company is my hobby," Eric said. "I like to sell machinery, and the satisfaction of developing a relationship, selling the product, installing the system and then getting the email from the

happy customer is great. But best of all is dealing with quality people in the industry. Building relationships with our suppliers and working as a team with quality people—Allegheny's Evelyn Jefferson comes to mind, a first-class lady who'll stop at nothing to help us out—makes it most rewarding." And Evelyn couldn't agree more. "We couldn't have a better company represent us than Goettsch International, ever," she said. "They are a hardworking, dedicated, professional company that we are so proud to have in our Allegheny familythey're the absolute best." ■

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