

RISE IN OVERSEAS ORDERS PUMPS AMARINTH GROWTH

Implementing an effective management structure has helped a Suffolk manufacturer boost its export markets, increase its sales and take on eight new people.

Amarinth, a specialist in the design, application and manufacture of centrifugal pumps and associated equipment, has seen demand for its API 610 registered products from clients in the petrochemical sector surge and is now on course to hit another record turnover this year.

The Woodbridge-based company, which also supplies into general industry and the chemical markets, is currently exporting 90 per cent of its annual sales to blue chips customers including BP, Petrofac and Shell.

To manage this growth effectively, the firm turned to support from the Manufacturing Advisory Service (MAS) to help it develop its management team further.

This involved creating an effective leadership strategy, embarking on specialist training courses and financial assistance towards securing essential quality accreditations.

Alex Briggins, business development director at Amarinth, said: "MAS recognised that we had gone through significant changes, with 25 per cent more people working here.

"We were keen to ensure that the leadership capabilities of the business matched our own ambitions, which is why we opted for the leadership training. The expansion of the business has meant our managers now have an extended reporting line and we needed to ensure this was as strong as it could be.

"Our systems now reflect the outstanding quality of the products we supply, which are heavily regulated due to the sectors we supply into. To this extent we hold ISO 9001 and ISO18001 and have made the decision to source all of our components and services from the UK.

"This gives us full traceability and the confidence to allow any of our customers to independently verify our performance...a pre-requisite when dealing with the likes of BP and Shell."

With the foundations for growth secured, Amarinth has turned its attention to new export markets, focusing on the North Sea, Asian Pacific and the Middle East where it currently supplies into Iraq and the United Arab Emirates.

A large part of its success in global markets has been built on its ability to deliver innovation in its products and the company has further strengthened this area with a sizeable investment in doubling its office and design facility.

This includes significant research and development, including the work currently utilising advanced design software to develop high efficiency impellers to improve the BEP 'best efficiency points' of its pumps. This project investment alone is worth £1m.

"The market remains challenging, but positive. There are a number of projects we have been tracking over the last three years and these have seen significant investment. We are also keeping a watching brief on the shale gas sector to assess the potential for supplying into this market," said Alex.

"Due to continued growth we have been able to launch our own apprenticeship scheme, the first in our history."

Amarinth's approach has impressed MAS Advisor Robin Cheyne. He concluded: "We have been working with the firm for four to five years and the initial work focused on helping it establish an approach to lean manufacturing.

"More recently, we have supported it with leadership development and helped put the right systems in place. Alex has brought a sales perspective and defined a clear set of objectives for the business, which will work well. Amarinth is now set up as a model of best practice."

• PHOTOGRAPH SHOWS: Alex Briggins, business development director at Amarinth



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