



Anderson Pontalti, managing director della Fras-le Europe GmbH

Fras-le Europe, best practice for overcoming the crisis. Goal: worldwide expansion

Inforicambi interviews Anderson Pontalti, managing director of the brazilian company specializing friction materials

Second **Inforicambi** appointment between international aftermarket companies: interviews result of intense partnership between our online newspaper and industry manufacturers. Talking is **Anderson Pontalti**, managing director of **Fras-le Europe GmbH**: global leader in its business of safety in motion control. The company, with headquarter in Caxias do Sul (Brazil), is a best business practice of how to turn the crisis into opportunities to improve the products and the presence of the brand pointing increasingly to a worldwide expansion.

Which field of the automotive Aftermarket does your company work in?

A global leader in brake technology and innovation, Fras-le is one of the largest friction materials manufacturers in the world. Fras-le, certified in ISO 9001, ISO 14000 and ISO TS 16949, also has its own state-of-the-art research & development center. Fras-le manufactures over 10,000 part numbers including heavy duty brake linings, light brake linings, brake pads, clutch facings, motorcycle brake shoes and pads, molded and woven brake linings, brake shoes for railway and subway and universal flat sheets. Fras-le brake pads and linings are available in the North American OE and aftermarket, and around the world. All of the company's friction products are comprised of application specific formulations, are made from top-quality raw materials and are asbestos-free. Applications include a wide variety of on- and off-highway commercial vehicles, trucks, tractors, trailers, buses, dump trucks, light vehicles and other specialty vehicles and equipment. With plants in Brazil, China and the United States, distribution centers in Argentina and Europe, and commercial offices in the United States, Chile, Europe, Mexico, the United Arab Emirates, Africa and China, Fras-le keeps a well-structured team to serve its customers in more than 90 countries on all continents. More information about Fras-le can be found at www.fras-le.com.br/en.

Safety, efficiency and quality are the three characteristics that distinguish the range of your products. Did these gains produce results in terms of business for the company?

Certainly. Fras-le's business is Safety in Motion Control and it is a group of benefits that has to be "perceived" and valorized by all stakeholders, mainly customers and end users.

Fras-le has invested more than 3% per year on Research and Development in order to guarantee these attributes. Fras-le is proud of its R&D Center which is divided in Physical, Chemical and Pilot Lab and it is considered one of the best and most equipped of the world. Additionally, Fras-le can test your products on its own Proving Grounds specially developed for all kind of vehicles, from a small passenger car to a large off-road truck and trailer.

Other than guarantee the quality and the safety it is also the way to accomplish with the most demanding technical requirements of the worldwide different homologations.

On the market, there are about a billion vehicles in operation that creates an enormous opportunity for aftermarket services. In this regard, what will 2013 reserve?

The global market is huge and there is room for all the companies that prioritize safety, quality, relationship and efficient support. In order to keep growing it is necessary to be close and it is the reason we are globalizing day by day.

Fras-le is leader in South America, has a strong presence in North America and it is expanding in Europe, Asia and Africa. We also believe that our market share with the vehicle manufactures is a "key point" to keep developing and growing business in the aftermarket.

With manufacture plants in Brazil, China and United States, Fras-le exports around 45% of its production to more than 90 countries on the five continents. It is a proof of Fras-le's commitment to the globalization strategies.

The fall of European automotive industryHow did your company face it?

Fras-le is present in Europe for more than 10 years with constant growing. We understand that the crisis is a difficult moment and a challenge for all the players but we also see it as an opportunity of keep improving products, services, relationship and presence.

The decision of having a local warehouse in Europe, located in Germany, was an important step to expand the distribution channel, market share and brand recognition. Fras-le is present in 34 countries in Europe with more than 80 active customers.

Which business projects do you plan to invest in the near future?

In 2009, Fras-le has established its main vision which is "To be a global company with sales of 1 billion reais (US\$ 500M) by 2013, with Sustainability" and everyone of its 3.300 employees are committed to.

As we have mentioned before, Fras-le is constantly investing on its sustainable growing and expansion worldwide and it has being possible trough successful acquisitions, partnerships and new technologies