Q & A with Wera Tools President Ian Parkhill

Based out of Wuppertal, Germany, Wera Tools has produced some of Europe's finest hand tools for over 70 years. In their quest to broaden the company's reach, Wera opened a North American office in Ontario, Canada in 2005. IMPO recently sat down with the company's president, Ian Parkhill to discuss their reasons for expansion, and how he plans to attack the still competition his company will face in the U.S. industrial hand tool marketplace.

Q What brought about Wera's decision to enter the U.S. marketplace?
A After reaching significant market presence in Europe, the next largest world market is North America, so it was a necessary next step to continue the company's growth.
Q What has presented the biggest obstacle or challenge in breaking into this market as a whole?
A After coming from a position of tremendous brand recognition, it has been a difficult adjustment to have to "start from scratch" in this market.
Q What differentiates your hand tools from others currently available?
A Significant ergonomic benefits are the foundation of our differences, and we also offer many unique additional features (diamond-coating or laser-etching to eliminate camout / slippage, etc.) that solve specific problems in both manufacturing and maintenance applications.
Q What do you feel are the most significant things to consider when purchasing hand tools?
A It is more economical in the long run to buy the best tools possible for the job. It makes the work much easier, and usually faster, which results in cost-savings in the end. The reason there are so many different styles and features is because there are so many different applications to be considered. **Q**From a manufacturing and operations perspective, what are your biggest challenges? How do you work to overcome them in order to stay competitive?
A To remain relevant to our end-user customers. To accomplish this goal, Wera constantly re-invests in product development, resulting in new products designed to solve the new challenges in the industrial markets.
Q What advice would you give your customers, as fellow manufacturers, to help them operate as efficiently as possible? (Other then buying lots of Wera tools.)
A Take advantage of the newest technologies available to work as efficiently as possible. This applies to the area of tool selection as well.
Q What are the biggest trends you see from a manufacturing perspective? And from your position as a hand tool supplier to the industrial marketplace?
A Currently, the biggest trend that we see in the manufacturing area is that the end-users are demanding better quality from the tools they are using in their operations, but without room for cost increases. This puts the challenge on us as a tool supplier to develop better products, more cost-efficiently, to remain as a viable competitor in the industrial markets.
For more information about the company and its products, visit www.weratools.com [1].

Source URL (retrieved on *10/20/2014 - 8:13am*):
http://www.impomag.com/articles/2007/04/q-wera-tools-president-ian-parkhill?qt-recent_content=1

Links:
[1] http://www.weratools.com