

CM Pulling Strings

by Rebecca D'Amico

From Small Boats to RVs to Class 8 Trucks, Marine Plastics Has Evolved

CM interviews Marine Plastics' General Manager, Darrell Devries

CM: What is the nature of your business?

DD: Marine Plastics supplies open-molded and RTM composite products, primarily to the class 8 truck market.

CM: How many employees do you have?

DD: We currently employ 120 people at our 40,000 square foot facility in Langley, BC, Canada.

CM: What is your company's background?

DD: Marine Plastics was established in the early 1960s and manufactured small boats and components for B.C. Ferries. In the late 1960s, we diversified into manufacturing chemical processing equipment and supplying components to the RV industry. 1970 was the beginning of our involvement with the trucking industry, as well as the railroad and telecommunications industry. From the 1960s through today, Marine Plastics has established a reputation as a quality supplier of composite products in Canada and the United States.

CM: How has it evolved from its beginnings?

DD: From its origins in North Vancouver as a custom molder of products for the marine and industrial sectors, the company has gone through two moves and a major expansion in 2000. Currently in its second generation of management, physical growth has been accompanied by technological enhancements in areas such as CMM, five-axes CNC capability, closed-molding and electronic data interchange, to list a few. The company has been ISO 9000 certified since 1997.

CM: How did you get started in the industry?

DD: The company was purchased in 1970 by current owner Peter Devries. Together with partner Don Hings, he managed the company



Marine Plastics, Langley, BC Canada

through the early nineties, during which period the focus became lightweight, aerodynamic parts for the heavy truck sector. We continue to refine our products and processes in this target market, while developing new products for other sectors.

CM: What obstacles does your company face today in the regulatory or technical arenas?

DD: The company operates under an air emissions permit issued by the Greater Vancouver Regional district, and also provides emissions data to the National Pollutant Release

Inventory (NPRI) for Environment Canada. Major regulatory concerns at this time pertain to a draft proposal by Worksafe BC to lower occupational exposure limits to 20 ppm TWA.

CM: What are your marketing efforts?

DD: New industrial applications are the focus of our marketing efforts, which are aimed at improved diversification in our market sectors.

CM: What development or research would you like to see happen to improve the industry?

DD: Practical ways to recycle composites.

CM: Where do you see your business in five years?

DD: We foresee huge potential in some exciting new products, some requiring entirely new processes. This will result in much greater diversification, while retaining our emphasis on our major target market. **CM**

Rebecca D'Amico is CM magazine's production & marketing coordinator: 703.525.0511; rdamico@acmanet.org.

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