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ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

Bucking the trend is not unusual for leading industrial equipment supplier Goscor. During the past two years, while many of its competitors struggled, the group managed to grow its turnover to just under R500-million and expanded its workforce by more than 20%, to 280 people.

Highlighting the general buoyancy of the group, CEO **Neil Wilson** says that he expects significant growth from all business units in the next three to five years.

"We plan to double turnover to R1-billion in this period, while acutely understanding the need to match this growth with the requisite capacity to support our customers at the world-class levels they are used to," Wilson says.

He adds that there is no reason why the group should not accomplish this aim, as the important business fundamentals are entrenched in the culture of the organisation.

One of these fundamentals is Goscor's emphasis on strong relationships. From day one, Goscor has viewed business as a three-way partnership between itself, its people and its suppliers and customers.

Apart from its many satisfied customers, one of the important results of this philosophy is its long-standing and unusually close relationships with its suppliers.

The business started in 1984 with Crown, Tennant and Robin Engines (now Subaru) and, 26 years later, these high-quality



NEIL WILSON

Expects significant growth from all Goscor business units within the next few years

brands are still with Goscor, having been joined by other world leaders such as Esab, Doosan, Elgin, Ghibli, Meiwa and Sullair, besides others.

Another of these fundamentals is service. "Having these brands in our stable is obviously crucial, but we understand that

a great product is just the starting point.

"It is the quality of service that we provide around the products that really differentiates us from the pack, and we have been successful in providing a world-class service to our customers, both during

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and after the sale, consistently over the years," Wilson says.

Specialisation and focus are also part of the company's fundamentals.

"To give a good service on a Robin Subaru engine, a Doosan forklift, an Esab welding machine or a Tennant industrial cleaner, our customers need to deal with experts in these fields," Wilson says.

For this reason, the company is split into specialist business divisions – namely Goscor Cleaning Equipment, Goscor Lift Truck Company, Goscor Arc Welding, Goscor Power Products, Goscor Rental Company and, most recently, Goscor Compressed Air Systems.

"A parts manager, for example, was previously expected to know everything about all parts across the board.

"Now each business unit concentrates solely on its own products, thus allowing specialisation, which has been a key to our success.

"We will continue to give our customers the best long-term service.

"We are not interested in cutting upfront costs just to get a deal and we are in partnership with our customers for the long haul.

"That is why we are interested in saving them money over the life cycle of our products. We achieve this by providing the best products and the best after-sales systems and service over the life of the product, and this is how we have created real value and how we will continue to do so in good times and in recessionary times," says Wilson.

Beating the Recession

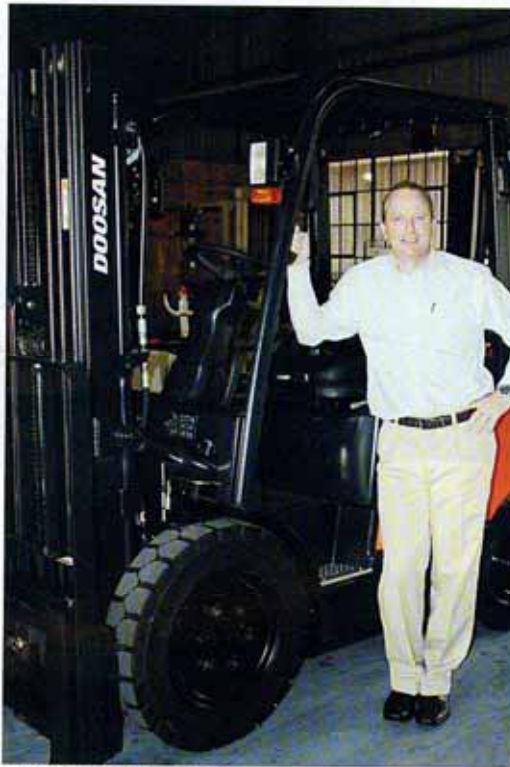
Wilson says that, besides adhering to the basics, which always helps in difficult economic times, Goscor's long-term approach to business is matched by many of its key customers, which has served Goscor well.

"These are businesses that use recessionary conditions to plan and prepare for the inevitable upswing.

"For example, a number of our customers are large retailers, who take advantage of less frenetic times to plan or build new warehouses and then order equipment from us well in advance, as they understand the time constraints involved in building tailor-made machines to fit their stringent requirements," Wilson says.

He says that stock control is also key in a recession.

"Low stock levels can affect the closing of deals, while too much stock can place



DIVERSE BUSINESS UNITS

Neil Wilson with a Doosan forklift, supplied by Goscor Lift Truck Company

terminal strain on a business. One of our undoubted strengths has been our ability to maintain a careful balance between fiscal discipline and ensuring that there is sufficient stock to meet customer demand.

"It is at times like these, when the process of getting the right amount of stock at the right times is business critical, that we appreciate the excellent relationships that we have with our suppliers. The importance of this simply cannot be over-emphasised.

"Finally, there is nothing like excellent and dedicated employees and ours have truly proven the adage, 'When the going gets tough . . .'

"They have been critical in delivering the level of after-sales service and support and maintaining our competitive edge. Attracting, developing and retaining our employees are certainly of our greatest strengths and challenges into the future," Wilson says.

Acquired by Imperial

Recently Imperial Holdings, through its subsidiary, AMH, acquired a majority shareholding in Goscor.

AMH CEO Manny de Canha says that Goscor's strong presence in the

industrial equipment market is a perfect strategic fit with Imperial's core competences and extensive experience in the fields of transport, distribution and servicing.

"Goscor's existing customer base and access to world-class technologies and products offer growth potential for Imperial.

"We aim to add our expertise to the Goscor product offering and, together, leverage the opportunities that this acquisition offers," De Canha says.

Wilson says that being part of the Imperial group gives Goscor a new platform, enabling it to take advantage of Imperial's substantial Southern African footprint, its financial muscle and solid reputation in the market.

"We are delighted to be a part of this outstanding organisation. Imperial is home to the largest logistics company in the country and we have no doubt that this will help us in our goal to double our turnover in the next few years while maintaining our world-class customer service levels.

"Apart from being having direct access to a host of potential customers within the group, being part of Imperial will assist us to seriously extend our footprint, both locally and beyond the borders of South Africa, which we regard as important, as

many of our key clients are expanding rapidly throughout the sub-Saharan region and beyond," Wilson says.

The Future

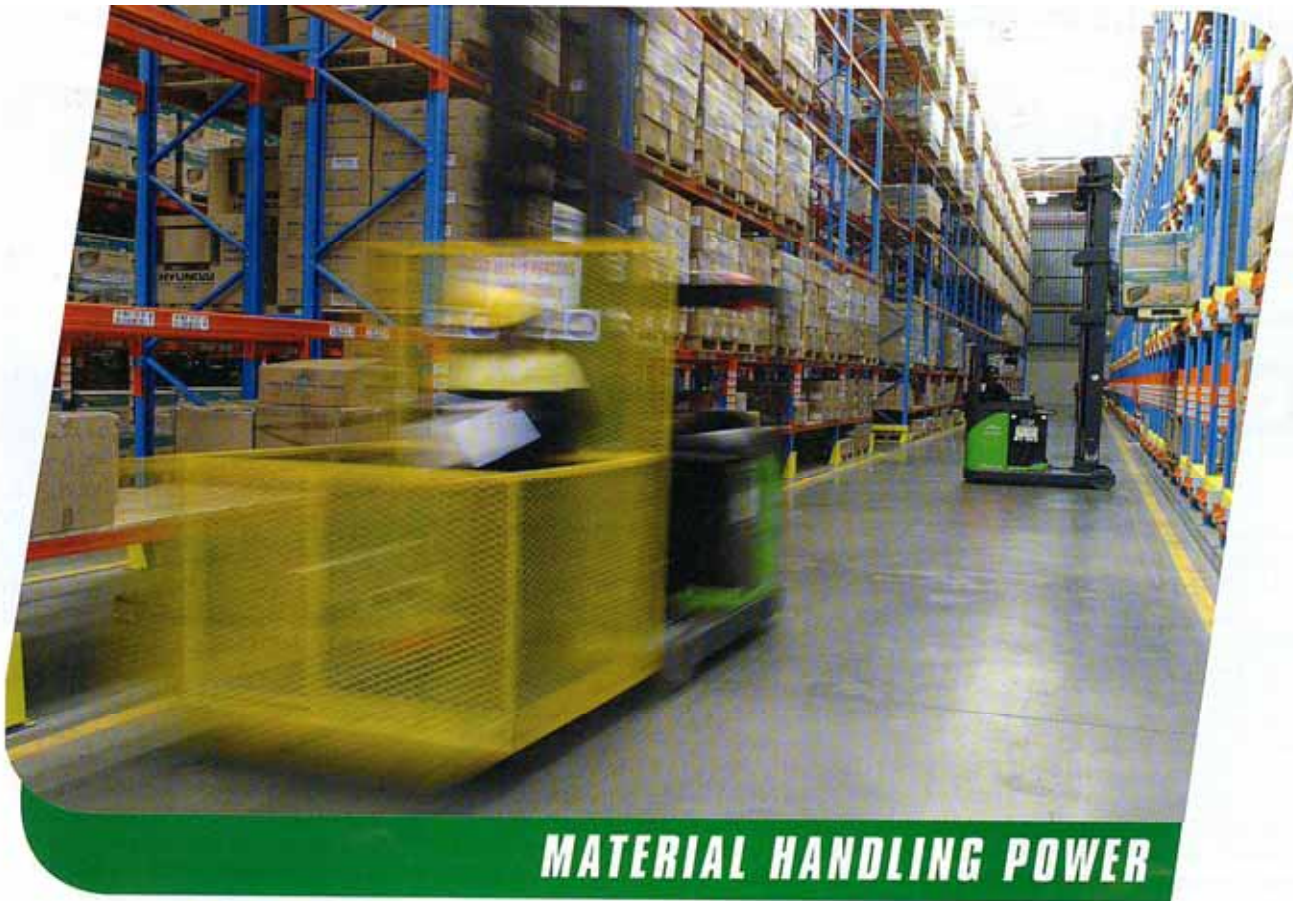
"While our main focus is on organic growth – growing in partnership with our existing customers as they expand their operations and seeking and servicing new markets – we are open to making appropriate acquisitions," Wilson says.

He adds, though, that the company is in no rush to do this.

"We will be very selective, looking only at quality enterprises to which we can add value through access to capital and the management expertise we have developed in running a lean and effective business," Wilson says.

Vital to any acquisitions will be establishing the same entrepreneurial culture that has served Goscor so well.

"We value, above all, our ability to provide world-class products, which are either number one or two in their respective industries, world-class service and support, and to develop strong and lasting relationships with our suppliers, our staff and our customers," Wilson concludes.



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Giving South African businesses a lift

ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

Goscor Lift Truck Company (GLTC) has become a leading supplier to the logistics and warehousing industry in South Africa, boasting many blue-chip companies among its loyal customers, including major retail stores, bottling plants, third-party logistics companies and engineering plants.

MD Darryl Shafto says that GLTC's service ethic has made the difference. "We have outstanding products, which we support with world-class service. Our service targets are set at the highest levels, with no detail being too small. This has helped us build excellent partnerships with our customers, whose business we deeply value," he adds.

He says that the integration of the company's sales and service functions has been instrumental in GLTC's success.

"They are two sides of the same coin and

making them work as one has made a palpable difference to our business.

"In any organisation, there is always a degree of tension between the sales and service divisions with the salespeople generally getting the 'red carpet' treatment and the technical staff left to cope with any customer backlash.

"Further, while sales staff are usually well rewarded for their efforts, service and support employees seldom receive the appropriate remuneration," Shafto says.

He adds that the first step in reversing this trend at GLTC was to bring sales and service closer together, encouraging mutual respect and a greater appreciation of each other's crucial contribution.

"We introduced monthly meetings that included both sales and service personnel and we make sure everyone is aware of our results.



DARRYL SHAFTO

The integration of the company's sales and service functions have been instrumental in GLTC's success

"We also started recognising and rewarding effort, and worked hard to bridge the salary gap to ensure fair remuneration," Shafto says.

Slowly, attitudes shifted and all GLTC employees started recognising the

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GOSCOR CORPORATE PROFILE

importance of every individual's contribution.

"This change was a key element in the turnaround of the company," he says.

The turnaround is no exaggeration. Within a short time, GLTC became one of the significant players in the industry, winning a large number of blue-chip customers and adding 35% to 45% growth each year.

"Most importantly, we started growing our market share, from 9% to 24%, taking significant business from some of our oldest and best-known competitors, and mainly because of the fundamental understanding that, while the sales team gets the first sale, it is the service and support employees that ensure subsequent sales to a customer," Shafto says.

Also, the rising awareness of the value of each element of the business raised consciousness in terms of the importance of brand building and the necessity of marketing the Goscor brand. While this process involved changing entrenched mindsets, which is always difficult, once it gained traction, it made a significant difference to our results," Shafto says.

Underpinning GLTC's success is a product range that is world famous for its quality, including Crown, Doosan and Bendi – all household names in the industry.

With global manufacturing facilities, Crown is a significant manufacturer of electric materials handling equipment.

Further, in catering to the ever-changing demands of warehousing, Crown has equipment to suit every conceivable warehouse application, GTLC reports.


"Doosan is a world-class manufacturer of one of the finest selections of lift trucks. The company's 'brakes for life' system is an oil-cooled disc brake system, which eliminates all outside contamination by any humid, abrasive or corrosive dust particles, reducing operating costs. GLTC also offers a 60-month, unlimited hours guarantee.

"Bendi, a revolutionary counter-balanced, articulating forklift, can work in very narrow spaces. Even in widths of just 1,8 m, the Bendi articulated forklift helps the operator work faster, [more safely] and more accurately," GTLC states.



CROWN ESR 5000 REACH TRUCK
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Keeping South Africa clean

ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

An integral part of the Goscor group, since the inception of the company in 1984, Goscor Cleaning Equipment (GCE) boasts world-renowned brands including Tennant, Elgin, Italimpia, Ghibli, Green Machine, Guzzler and Vactor, and is a leading supplier of cleaning solutions to the South African industry.

"We have great brands but we are about more than just excellent equipment. We provide a total cleaning solution and were the first in South Africa to move away from the traditional supply of off-the-shelf cleaning equipment and detergents," says GCE MD **Ricky Bodmer**.

He adds that a proper cleaning solution entails a three-step process: firstly, the thorough evaluation of the site; secondly, compiling an appropriate cleaning plan; and, finally, implementing the right

systems and machines for that plan by using either an outsourced cleaning contractor or the end-user doing it in-house.

"There are numerous challenges, which vary from site to site.

"For example, at retail sites, one has to be very precise with the cleaning methods used to achieve the desired results.

"On the other hand, industrial sites present different challenges, such as fugitive dust, for example, which can be hazardous not only to other equipment and the environment but also to one's health.

"In situations like this, we look closely at the filtration required for the cleaning machines, the size of machine most suited to the site, the cleaning frequency and then establish the on-site movements through a 24-hour cycle.

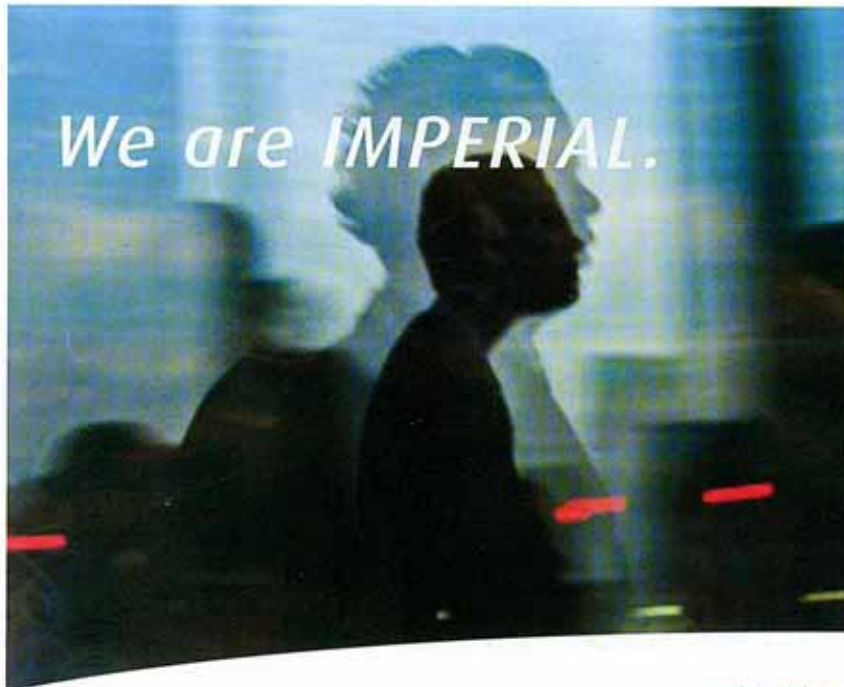
"In short, we create the optimal cleaning system for that site and produce a comprehensive plan for the customer," says Bodmer.

One of the overriding challenges faced by a cleaning company or the end-user is the correct handling of various chemicals.

"One of the issues that we have to deal with constantly is that chemical residue can attract dirt, creating a situation where resoiling is continuous and can actually accelerate dirt build-up," Bodmer says.

For this reason, he is particularly excited about GCE's new award-winning chemical-free Tennant ec-H2O technology, which converts plain tap water into an effective and efficient cleaning agent and is being heralded as a 'miracle cleaner', given the combination of its extraordinary effectiveness as a cleaning agent and its significant environment friendliness.

In line with the group's philosophy of cost savings for its customers in the long term, rather than cutting upfront prices, Bodmer says that one of his main tasks is showing companies that these green cleaning solutions, while sometimes more expensive than the solution they have adopted, are cheaper and far more environment friendly in the long run.



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"I constantly come across companies that are unaware that ineffective cleaning can cost significantly more in the long term than using an appropriate cleaning solution.

"A good example is a warehouse that is being swept: using a traditional broom results in copious amounts of dust getting into the air. This is then deposited on warehouse stock, requiring another crew to clean products prior to distribution.

"With the correct system, the dust is collected safely and contained in the machine, while the floor is being swept," Bodmer says.

He says that GCE works equally well with end-users and contract cleaners.

"There is no doubt that corporate South Africa is making increased use of contract cleaners. To some extent, this helps GCE, as we are able to deal with customers who are experts in what they do," he says.

GCE understands that the key to successful business is excellent customer service.

"Once we have provided the overall solution, we have to be part of the continuing process to help ensure that the machines, which are complex by nature,

remain in a good condition, and that cleaning consumables are replaced quickly and efficiently to ensure effective results.

"We understand that downtime is our customer's number one enemy and our job is to reduce this to the best of our ability," concludes Bodmer.

Tennant's offerings include award-winning industrial and commercial sweepers, scrubbers, detergents, carpet cleaning equipment, vacuum cleaners, floor machines and burnishers, besides others.

Also part of GCE offerings are Elgin sweepers, which have been cleaning roads and airports in South Africa since the 1990s; Cherrington beach cleaners, with a manoeuvrability and unique sifting system that make these ideal for both large and small beaches and many agricultural applications; Italimpia, renowned for its high-quality janitorial products and accessories; and Ghibli, one of the world's leading manufacturers of wet-and-dry industrial vacuum cleaners. New brands, such as the Guzzler vacuum tankers and the Vector combination jetting units, have attracted major attention in the local market, GCE reports.

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In future, Shafto says, GLTC will continue to provide the best product and service to its customers to retain existing customers and attract new ones.

"Meanwhile, Shafto says that, in spite of some uncertainty, the company is optimistic about the market, in general. "It is true that, while some companies are loath, for example, to sign 60-month contracts as they do not know where their businesses will be in five years, we are always ready to offer an alternative of shorter contracts.

"We have what it takes to offer our customers a range of creative financial solutions," Shafto says.

There is little doubt that GLTC is doing something right, he says. In 2009, while the rest of its industry was languishing in the midst of one of the biggest recessions in history, GLTC had its best year ever.

"It is all about the partnerships, our customers, our suppliers and our team. We will continue to nurture these relationships in the understanding that our business is these people," Shafto concludes.



The advertisement features a collage of images related to welding and cutting. On the left, there's a close-up of a yellow ESAB welding torch. In the center, a person in a white shirt is operating a control panel. On the right, a welder in protective gear is working on a metal piece, with bright sparks flying from the welding point. The ESAB logo is prominently displayed in the top right corner.

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Award winning technology

ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

Goscor Cleaning Equipment's (GCE's) new award-winning Tennant ec-H2O technology, which converts plain tap water into an effective and efficient cleaning agent, is being heralded as a 'miracle cleaner', given the combination of its effective-

ness as a cleaning agent and that it is environment friendly.

"As no chemicals are involved in the cleaning process, users are reducing their carbon footprint normally associated with chemical use," GCE national sales manager **Alex Theodoridis** says.

Less Use of Chemicals

GCE MD **Ricky Bodmer** adds that tests have shown that, with the Tennant ec-H2O technology, there is a reduction of no less than 50% in the use of chemicals and, in some environments, as much as 95%.

The ec-H2O technology will not completely replace the need for chemicals when cleaning. Using the technology for continuous cleaning enables simultaneous rinsing, without leaving a chemical residue, while maintaining the floor surface. This reduces resoiling and extends the rinse cycle, thereby reducing the quantity of chemicals required.

"Industry is very excited about this new technology. There is a lot of interest in this system, including from contract cleaners, who are impressed with not only its effectiveness, but also its ecological benefits," Bodmer says.

Currently, 30% of all scrubbers sold by GCE include the ec-H2O technology – a number which the company expects will increase.

Ion-Exchange Technology

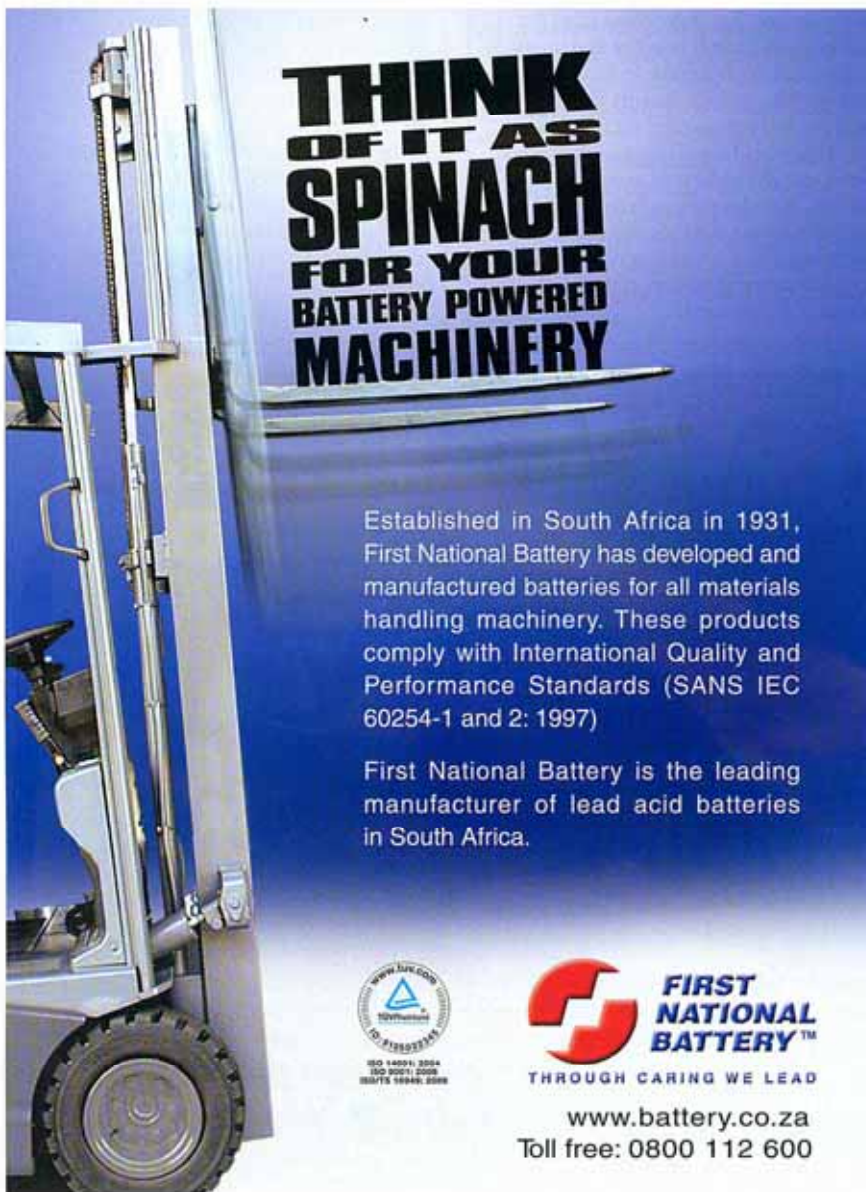
The ec-H2O technology is an ion-exchange technology based on the electrolysis of water, using a system that has been around for over 100 years.

Standard tap water first passes through an electrified screen in the machine's oxygenation chamber, creating highly oxygenated micro-bubbles.

This is followed by the oxygenated water being sent through a water cell, where an electric current is applied, creating a stream of blended, highly charged acidic and alkaline water that has the same attributes of a general purpose cleaner.

In this activated state, the electrically charged water breaks down dirt into small particles, removes it from the floor surface and, about 45 seconds later, the water returns to its original state and can be handled and disposed of safely.


Originating in the US, the ec-H2O technology, a Tennant innovation, boasts a number of international awards, including being chosen as one of the most technologically significant innovations by R&D Magazine and winning the Australian Business Award's Most Ecofriendly Product category.



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Solutions for a wider range of applications

ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

Acquired by the Goscor group in 1986, Goscor Arc reports that it is a leading solutions provider to the welding and cutting industries in Southern Africa. It originally built its name on the quality of its service and the Esab brand but, more recently, took on the Lincoln Electric agency for this region.

Goscor Arc MD **Rob Pirie** says: "We now have the two leading welding brand names in the world, enabling us to provide our customers with solutions for a wider range of applications than ever before. It is a privilege to be able to work with them.

"The quality of their research and development, products and service enables us to offer our customers a significant range of superior machines and consumables that fit the tailor-made welding solutions we offer our customers."

He adds that Goscor Arc has become an expert in the products of these two leading brands and it provides total solutions to welding challenges.

"In essence, the company has, since 1934, provided its customers with the most cost-effective and efficient solutions for their welding needs, irrespective of the equipment or service required, and it will continue to do so," Pirie says.

Providing solutions is not just a meaningless slogan, but the heart of the business, Pirie believes, and, more than that, these solutions must take evolving needs into account.

"We like to take a long-term view and provide a solution that

is not only right for the current situation but one that will also be part of the customer's future solution," Pirie says.

He says that one of the strengths of Goscor Arc is the broad exposure its sales staff have to the industries in which they operate and their ability to work in close cooperation with customers in developing solutions.

"The partnership between staff, suppliers and customers is a critical concept in the Goscor group and Goscor Arc is no different.

"Of course, establishing excellent relationships with customers is fundamental to business, and determining their needs and then doing one's best to provide a solution is really the *raison d'être* of any business.

"Our cutting division, run by **Sean Moriarty**, is an excellent example. We saw a need for this specialist service and it has taken off beyond all expectations.

"Precision plasma and plasma cutting technology is the fastest growing cutting technology in the world, with many previous users of laser technology having changed to this technology, and South Africa is no different.

"Apart from contractors, such as MM&G, many of the leading cutting specialists, such as Sentinel Steel, National Stainless Steel Centre and TW Profiles, have bought Esab machines because of the obvious advantages of the technology," Pirie says.

He says Esab plasma machines significantly reduce costs while maintaining, or even improving, the quality of the cut.



ROB PIRIE

The company has, since 1934, provided its customers with the most cost-effective and efficient solutions for their welding needs

"In many areas of cutting, where, previously, only laser technology was used, plasma and precision plasma technology

is achieving better results. However, crucially, these results are being attained at a signifi-

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cantly reduced cost.

"It is generally accepted that there is a 60% reduction in up-front costs and a 60% reduction in the ongoing operational costs of the plasma and precision plasma machines," Pirie says.

He is equally enthusiastic about the Lincoln Electric product range. He says its new submerged arc welding tractor, as well as the Cruiser Tractor, has a new Power Wave ac/dc 1 000-W power source.

"We have sold several of these systems since the launch in February this year. It is a great system and we are delighted about our success with it," Pirie says.

In line with the group's philosophy of providing the most creative and beneficial financial solutions to its customers, Pirie says that it is important that customers make use of Goscor Arc's monthly maintenance contracts, especially with high-ticket items, such as the automated profile cutting machines, which can



ESAB CUTTING MACHINE

Esab plasma machines significantly reduce costs while maintaining, or even improving, the quality of the cut

cost up to R5-million.

"Maximum uptime is essential in the environments in which these machines operate and maintenance contracts are an important insurance," Pirie says.

However, he also points out that one of Goscor Arc's most important services is the training it provides from its dedicated Manufacturing, Engineering and

Related Services Sector Education and Training Authority-accredited training centre, in Richards Bay, where the central aim is to supply industry with adequately qualified welders for specific jobs. The training centre can train up to 40 people a day, catering for private and company-sponsored people.

Currently, the centre is training

around 150 people a year but this is expected to increase as more people seek training to improve their career prospects.

"The courses are structured modularly, enabling people to improve their skills as they develop their careers," Pirie says.

On the recent acquisition of the Goscor group by Imperial, he says that there are many benefits to being part of a large, powerful organisation, particularly in challenging trading times.

"People trust large organisations, having more faith in their ability to deliver a service long after the deal is done.

"This is why we originally changed our name from Arc Engineering to Goscor Arc and now, having the immense power of Imperial behind us will be invaluable," he concludes.

Goscor Arc markets to a wide range of leading original-equipment manufacturers, welding fabricators and contractors for all welding or cutting, including mild steel, stainless steel, aluminium or hard facing.



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*Congratulations
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Power products division reinvents itself, diversifies markets

ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

Goscor Power Products (GPP) started business 14 years ago by primarily supplying engines to the lawn mower industry and being the Southern African distributor for Dixon Zero Turn Radius ride-on mowers.

While the company still offers a full range of petrol and diesel Grasshopper ride-on lawn-mowers, unique challenges brought about strategic changes which led to GPP reinventing itself five years ago by entering the light industrial equipment market to further establish the Robin/

Subaru (now Subaru) brand.

"We now offer quality equipment to a wide range of sectors, including the construction and agriculture industries. All of our equipment has been tested for the harsh, dry and dusty Southern African conditions," says GPP MD Anton Bothma.

GPP's construction/agricultural range includes Meiwa rammers, Meiwa vibratory rollers, plate compactors, reversible plate compactors, power floats, vibrating pokers and drive units, concrete cutters, high-pressure washers, 2,5-kVA to 15-kVA generators, generator/

welders, firefighting equipment and a wide range of water pumps, all of which are powered by the world-renowned Subaru engine, the latest version of which, the new EX-series engine, is the Subaru overhead cam (OHC) pump engine, which is modelled on the renowned Subaru WRX motor car engine.

GPP national sales manager Mark Bester says that the OHC design, in which Subaru is the world leader, is the technology of the future. "These engines have many advantages, including, firstly, that they have fewer parts, which means less wear and tear,

and less that can go wrong.

"Secondly, the crank case ribbing, both inside and out, effectively sheds the engine heat, resulting in it running 30% cooler than any of its competitors. This maintains the protective integrity of the oil for much longer periods and significantly lengthens the engine's life span.

"Thirdly, the OHC design is capable of achieving low emissions and it will be the only engine in this country able to meet the stringent US Environmental Protection Agency standards, which are currently critical for original-equipment manufacturers that export.

"Fourthly, the entire lubrication system on these engines is superior because of the new L-shaped conrod oil-pickup, which lubricates the timing chain, which, in turn, lubricates the valves and the upper part of the engine. This system is a patented design and unique to the Subaru OHC system," says Bester.

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New compressed air division more focused

ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

In line with the group's strategy of maintaining highly focused business units, Goscor recently spun off its successful compressed air business into a separate business unit.

Formerly part of Goscor Power Products, the new division, which includes the Sullair range of products, is known as Goscor Compressed Air Systems (GCAS).

GCAS MD **Anton Bothma** says that a significant challenge for the future will be supplying energy-saving solutions to the local compressed air industry.

"Everyone is under pressure to be as efficient as possible and, in Sullair, we have a significant competitive advantage in this regard," he says.

Bothma is confident that the compressed air division's new-

found independence will help the business in these tough economic conditions.

"We will be able to focus on what we are best at and I have no doubt that this will considerably improve our position in the marketplace," he says.

Industry stalwart **Paul Combe**, who has been responsible for the daily operations of the compressed air business, since it joined the Goscor group in 2008, says that among GCAS's significant assets is the uniqueness of the Sullair Series VS vacuum pumps.

"Sullair Series VS vacuum pumps are built from high-quality components to assure the utmost reliability and minimum maintenance expense, offering more features and options than most

vacuum pumps in this size range," he says.

Sullair vacuum systems use proven rotary screw technology to produce vacuum at unrivalled efficiencies. As they are air-cooled and require no water, there are no water acquisition, treatment or disposal costs and, as a result, these systems offer lower power costs and up to 50% lower operating costs than other types, the company reports.

The system has two control modes – a constant vacuum and load/no-load control – which also contribute to lower operating costs.

The full vacuum range offered by Sullair is 70 ACFM to 2 500 ACFM at a vacuum of 85 kPa. The 75-hp VS20-75 has a capacity of 795 ACFM to 1034 ACFM

and the 50-hp VS16-50 has a capacity of 409 ACFM to 627 ACFM.

Goscor's main markets for these systems are hospitals and related industries.

Sullair is also renowned for its world-class portable and stationary single/twin screw compressors, which GCAS markets in the mining, construction, drilling and other industries.

The company has won many awards, including the 2008 Plant Engineering Product of the Year, and one of the key benefits of Sullair compressors is that the guesswork has been taken out of matching compressors to dryers.

"Sullair's integral dryers have been perfectly matched and sized to their compressors, providing maximum performance.

"With adjustments to our business model, combined with the continued recovery of commodity prices, which should improve our mining sales, and an anticipated widespread replacement cycle, this division can become one of Goscor's best performers," Combe says.

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One of the important applications for this state-of-the-art engine is in pumps, including the newly launched PTX series of Subaru pumps, which includes the PTX 220 two-inch pump and the PTX 320 three-inch pump.

Bester says that over and above the other advantages of the engine, these pumps come standard with an oil sensor, which is a low-level cutout mechanism preventing the engine from seizing. He adds that the PTX 2" (220) has a 4,5-hp pump, compared with the 3,5 hp of its competitors, and the 3" (320) has a 6-hp engine, compared with the 5 hp of its competitors.

This extra horsepower brings significant advantages, says Bester.

"The performance of the pump, in terms of flow and pressure, is enhanced, making the pump more efficient, and the increased power adds to the

durability and longevity of the engine and enables Goscor to offer an extended three-year warranty on the engine," Bester says.

GPP carries pumps for a wide range of applications, including clear-water pumps that pump clean water, trash pumps that are designed to pump dirty water, like water on construction sites after heavy rain, and an innovative fertiliser pump, which has a unique corrosionproof lining.

Bester says that GPP's specialised firefighting pump, which can be installed on the back of a bakkie, is doing well in the agriculture market. "This pump is designed to give farmers a rapid-response firefighting solution, where they can contain a fire until larger firefighting units arrive."

GPP's generators, which are also proving to be popular, are used in homes and on construction sites, where they are used to power up electric tools and

welding machines, besides other equipment. "These generators are state of the art and come with a 24- to 36-month warranty, while the industry standard is 12 months," says Bester.

Meanwhile, Bothma says that the company is focusing on extending its footprint through the appointment of dealers throughout the country. "We plan to increase our current network of 45 dealers to over 80 in the short to medium term," he says.

He adds that GPP is looking for strong, professional businesses that want to add GPP's state-of-the-art products to their offering. "To become one of our dealers is not an opportunity for all and sundry. We will look only at those who we believe will do our products justice."

GPP segments its dealers into three main categories – construction, agriculture, and engines and parts. "Ideally, our new dealers will be well entrenched in one or

even all of these segments, with an excellent record and a substantial database of customers," says Bothma.

"Subaru engines and our range of products are market leaders and represent an exciting opportunity for those who are willing to commit to a long-term partnership with the Goscor group," he says.

Bothma says that, while the business environment has been tough this year, the quality of GPP's products and the excellent relationships the company has built with its suppliers and customers and the technical skills of the team have all made the difference.

"The basic philosophies of the group – integrity, focus, service and leading products – are powerful and our division is a good example of these philosophies in practice," says Bothma.

"In short, we have excellent products backed by excellent people," he concluded.

Creative financial solutions key to success

ANDREW GILLINGHAM | SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR

One of the reasons for the Goscor group's success over the years, has been its ability to offer customers a wide range of creative financial solutions, it reports. In the broadest sense, this was the *raison d'être* for the creation of the highly successful Goscor Rental Company (GRC).

"Renting affords companies both operational flexibility and opportunities to cut costs," says GRC operations manager **Greg Venter**.

In business for only two years, GRC's fork-lift truck rental business already includes some of South Africa's leading blue-chip corporations, such as Unitrans, Dischem, Afrox and Xstrata, while its cleaning division has experienced a fourfold growth and now has more than 160 units for rental.

Venter says that renting capital equipment is certainly not only for smaller companies, with the service being used by an increasing number of major organisations.

"This may seem unusual, but renting makes good business sense in many instances.

"For example, many of our big customers determine how many machines they require and then, to maximise efficiencies, buy fewer and rent only if there is the need.

"This avoids having machines sitting idle when demand tapers [off]," Venter says.

He adds that customers also tend to use rented machines if they have breakdowns with their existing equipment or they have special short-term projects that require additional equipment.

Venter admits that the recessionary conditions have helped GRC to grow.

"During a recession, there is a general shortage of cash and, perhaps most importantly, banks tend to be more reluctant to lend money for buying capital equipment.

"This creates the ideal condition for rental, where an outright purchase might otherwise have made sense," Venter says.

In terms of fork-lift rentals, GRC started with just over 100 trucks and now has over 300 vehicles in its rental fleet. "Our equipment use is running at around 98%," he says. It is not clear if the fork-lift vehicles are part of the trucks.

A more recent initiative by GRC is the rental of industrial cleaning equipment made famous by sister company Goscor Cleaning Equipment. Venter says that much of GRC's success with this equipment is due to the company's unique service.

"Not only were we one of the first to rent large industrial cleaning equipment, but we were certainly the first to offer a complete service, which included operators. We are truly a one-stop shop in this regard."

Fluctuating demand situations are bread and butter for GRC, and stadiums, which recently were a strong focus in South Africa, are ideal examples.

Firstly, a stadium only needs to be cleaned after an event, and, secondly, the size of the event will also determine the number of machines required and the period of time those machines will be needed. "An event with 8 000 people may only need one day of cleaning with one machine, whereas cleaning up after 88 000 visitors may take four days and several machines. At one stage, we had five machines sweeping, cleaning and scrubbing Soccer City," he says.

GRC's main customers are contract cleaning companies (60%), and construction and other companies that have an occasional need for cleaning.

"The construction companies were very active in the run-up to the World Cup, cleaning roads, car parks and the stadiums," Venter says.

In keeping with the group's philosophy, service and reliable equipment are the company's first priority. "We aim to give our customers the best service. We understand that reducing downtime is a high priority for our customers and we assist in this regard in any way we can," he concludes.



GREG VENTER
Renting affords companies both operational flexibility and opportunities to cut costs

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