

# Italo-Chinese high-

The Italo-Chinese joint venture, Sessa Klein Shenfei Ltd, supplies two of the three high-speed train manufacturers in China with windows and other furnishings. The BLM machines are at the centre of the production system, which is working at full capacity with the use of the plants over three shifts to meet the agreed delivery times.

**T**he development of the rail industry has undergone a hyperbolic acceleration in China over the past few years. Statistics show that more wagons for high-speed trains are produced in China than anywhere else in the world and that China has the highest number of kilometres of high-speed railroads. This, of course, is good news for operators in the field, provided that one is organised to take these opportunities. This is not an operation that is taken for granted because the railway industry is run either directly or indirectly by the Chinese State and not all suppliers are admitted.

Sessa Klein Spa based in Castronno in the province of Varese designs and produces furnishing systems in light alloys for the railway industry and has decided to take on this challenge and try to enter the difficult and competitive Chinese market considering its high technological and quality level. These are characteristics that are not easy to find and that could be appreciated by the customers in China.

"So after a laborious search, Sessa Klein Italia concluded negotiations in September 2008 to set up a joint venture called Sessa Klein Shenfei Ltd,

of which it holds 51%, with the Chinese partner, Shenfei Vehicle Windows Manufacturer Co., Ltd.(SCE). The Chinese partner is not a competitor and, moreover, has contributed with its knowledge of the Chinese market from a commercial viewpoint.

The results to date appear to be very positive. Sessa Klein Shenfei supplies two of the three high-speed train manufacturers in China with windows and other furnishings" says Alfredo Novelli, President of Sessa Klein Spa and Guido Cardullo, Operations Manager of Sessa Klein Shenfei Ltd.





# speed

To give an idea of the quantity one of the manufactures out of the three mentioned, manages to make eight complete trains with eight wagons per month. That is 64 wagons. The production plans are based on a 4-5 year forecast and in the meantime, important railroads are being completed, such as the Beijing-Shanghai line which will come into operation in 2012. The conditional form in China for these projects does not exist.

"The choice of a local partner was imperative as without there is no chance of getting into these companies. In our case, we are delighted with the level of cooperation that has been achieved considering that we are complementary and necessary to one another." Explains Alfredo Novelli to highlight how the JV was necessary and useful. "The current output of the Chinese unit exceeds the Italian production of windows" continues Guido Cardullo. "To guarantee the same quality level of the products, the Chinese JV has focused on production and quality standards."

All the main processes are carried out internally, such as welding and bending of the aluminium profiles for train windows, likewise the final bonding. The quality controls are carried out both during the manufacturing process as well as at final testing (resistance and fatigue tests). The company is ISO9000-2000, EN15085 certified for aluminium welding in the rail industry and, moreover, has adopted the International Railways Industry Standard (IRIS) quality system that is specific for the railway industry.

"The aluminium profiles are procured locally and we bend them on a BLM 863VGP machine that was supplied with all the equipment. This was a key production strategy that lead us to chose such a machine to guarantee the results that we needed. Moreover, having to bend extruded profile is not as easy as bending pipes and it was necessary to adapt and customise the machine to meet our requirements" explains Guido Cardullo.

**"The technical and commercial support is supplied directly from the BLM GROUP in Shanghai with Chinese staff, which is less than two hours away. It is very useful for us to be able to train our operators directly in China so as to avoid any misunderstanding as much as possible."**

Production has now reached full capacity with the use of plants over three shifts to guarantee the agreed delivery times and prospects are good. A very encouraging start for a choice that was not easy and predictable at the beginning. This is an excellent example of how by choosing the right partner, success can be achieved even in markets that are apparently very difficult.





'80s

### ... and other developments

The '80s witnesses a considerable growth for BLM. The B63 is followed by the B32 and the B42, which represent the basis of the CNC machines that are still produced today.

Even the end-forming line introduces the new AST102.



'80s

### Turnover increases

From 1984 to 1991 BLMs turnover doubles to reach a soaring figure of 23,182,000,000 Lire. This rise in sales consequently means an increase in the sales force which goes from 93 active employees in 1984 to 113 in 1991.

1981

### The TS70

Adige produces the famous TS70; a competitive system thanks to the extremely high production output, easy fine-tuning and possibility of cutting two different lengths.

1987

### The beginning of the laser era

The first experiences with the laser source brings Adige to present the first CO<sub>2</sub> lasertube cutting system in Europe, at the next BIMU in 1988 (on a stand with BLM) the S90.

BLM GROUP Shanghai Co. Ltd was set up at the end of 2003, but the Group has been present in China long before. In fact the initial contact and first sale dates back to the '80s and then since 1992 commercial activities have been constant.

## Speaking the same language

## 我们讲同一种语言

Over the past two decades, China has considerably changed. We have all witnessed this change, which still intimidates us in terms of intensity, depth and duration. The BLM Group has adapted to these radical changes by taking a different sales approach compared to the first decade, which made use of agents and advisors, and that is to set-up its own subsidiary. Even the clientele has changed and the spectrum has slowly completed and grown from a technological point of view from the automotive, conditioning and rail industry to aerospace. The BLM Group Shanghai structure has preserved the continuity of technical-commercial personnel over the years to guarantee a suitable and full cover.

### Structure and services follow the trends

BLM GROUP Shanghai, which moved to its new offices in May, offers all the sales services required to operate in China, including invoicing in local currency and import-export of the goods. The after-sales technical service is complete both in terms of customer assistance and spare parts supplies. The technicians live in the main areas of the territory (centre, north and south) and report to the Shanghai offices for spare parts and coordination. Among the services offered are also machine installation and training in Chinese, the supply of manuals and documentation in Chinese and continuous support throughout the year. Moreover, technical support is also available for the implementation in loco of equipment and accessories



complete with design, production and testing. Commercially, the sales area has been divided into three territorial areas with a resident manager operating locally and reporting to the Shanghai offices. The extent of the territory and the different local cultures have lead us to localise these services so that we can be close to our customers and guarantee them a greater and more efficient service. Furthermore, BLM GROUP Shanghai has a permanent show room where various machines produced by the Italian companies of the BLM Group are on show and can be demonstrated, such as: bending, cutting and end-forming machines. A training room is also available and all customer support services. This is sufficient enough reason to motivate the BLM Group to find more suitable ways to participate in the future growth and guarantee continuity both to the Group and to its clientele.



#### BLM GROUP (SHANGHAI) CO. LTD.

Unit A1, No. 155 Dongshe Road, Dongjing District, Songjiang, 201619, Shanghai  
Tel. 021-57686430-108  
Fax 021-57686432  
E-mail: sales@blmgrouphanghai.com