

Zwick Armaturen, Germany invests in

Founded in 1977, Zwick USA parent company, Zwick Armaturen has applied its 35 years of experience in design and production of valves into creating state-of-the-art flow control products for the global oil and gas, chemical, petrochemical, energy, offshore and steel industries. Zwick's in-house design enables the company to offer its customers, customized product solutions for individual global applications. Currently, Zwick Armaturen has three factories located in Ennepetal, Germany, with over 100 employees. Still family owned and operated. Daniel Zwick is now the Technical Director, and his brother Marcel Zwick is the Sales Director. Hans and Ulla Zwick are the patriarchs of the company.

Valve World Americas had the opportunity to meet with Zwick Valves N.A. LLC President, Dave Buse to discuss the company's history, and the move to establish control of their North American distribution as well as the TRI-CON series valve.

By Sarah Bradley



Dave Buse, President

"My former company EVSI (Engineering Valve Specialties Incorporated) - a specialty valve distributor, automation house and repair center, introduced the Zwick TRI-CON to the United States market in 1998. In 2004 we sold EVSI to Puffer Sweiven, at that time Puffer Sweiven took on the role of the Zwick Master Distributor. By 2010 I was thinking of retiring from the business, but Hans had other plans. He decided that he wanted to take control of distribution here in North America. He negotiated the distribution rights with Puffer Sweiven, but keeping them as our exclusive distributor here on the Gulf Coast of Texas. I decided to join Hans and his family to form Zwick Valves N.A. LLC. We incorporated Zwick N.A. then located and purchased the building, bought the racks & warehouse equipment, hired people, and received the inventory from Puffer Sweiven all in three

weeks. I believe three weeks could be a record for something like that."

That determination and efficiency demonstrated in the establishment of its North America Company, is an integral part of Zwick's continued service model, ensuring that their customer's needs are met in a timely and accurate manner.

"We are a family-owned private company serving a niche market, which is triple-offset valves. Our vision is quality, delivery integrity, & performance. I think the market will tell you that if you want a valve quickly and we don't have it in stock, we can make it very quickly. Even specialty valves - chromes, alloys, large diameter, and special face-to-face. That's what we are known for," said Dave. "We recognize that this industry is maturing fast. That means there is more and more demand and we realize that our major competitors were booked full of large, major project business since 2009. When a lot of these major LNG projects or other major petrochemical projects came online and buying material, our competitors' shops became full with \$20, \$30 and \$50 million orders. We were hearing customers say, 'I was just trying to get this standard valve and they were quoting me 18 to 20 weeks.' Sometimes they are waiting a month to even get a quote. Obviously, we recognized this, and this was one justification for our investment. Our only focus is our customers. We're not distracted by 14 other products that we have to take care of, or 14 other companies that are owned by us. It is amazing what that freedom can do as far as paying attention to your customer's needs."



The Importance of Inventory

"Our goal has always been to service this industry with the largest inventory available at any given time and that has worked very well for us. Since we are a privately-held company, we have the flexibility to decide on whatever level of inventory we think is necessary to meet market demands. Currently, we have 2300+ pieces on the shelf here in Deer Park, in sizes 2"-36".We



David Pollard, Operations Manager

have proven to the market that having this kind of inventory is a real asset; we are moving valves through the shop every day to all of the US and Canada, plus we are seeing a great deal of activity from Mexico. We also have a tremendous amount of raw material inventory in Germany. Hans has invested in two new track machines that are fully automated. It pulls all the tools and equipment that is needed to machine all the various functions on the valve automatically. They are highly functional and flexible machines and unmanned, it can run all night. You can set it up and run it for the weekend and come in to have the parts machined and ready to go. This is just another example of the Zwick family's commitment to the business.

Prime Products

Zwick's product line of uniquely designed valves for critical services is another factor in the company's success. The highly engineered product designs meet the highest requirements and industry quality standards and have met the needs of an important niche market.

"The features that Hans has incorporated into the Tri-Con set us apart from the

market. These features offer long-term service life & zero leakage integrity. One of our most successful features is our Patented Sealed Bearing design. The Sealed Bearing design offers mechanically loaded packing rings on the ID and OD of the shaft bearings, thus sealing the bearings from the line media. The standard industry design of a "Bearing Protector Ring" does not seal the bearings from the media; therefore fouling of the bearings is possible in some applications." explained Dave.



Tri-Check Check Valve

Always ensuring that they remain on the cutting edge of new technology, Zwick has invested heavily in research to develop new technology to further improve their products and to create new lines to best support their customer's applications. Putting a strong focus on developing new products that complement the proven Tri-Con features. Thus, the Tri-Block, Tri-Shark and Tri-Check valves have been introduced to the market.



Tri Con Valve

the North & South American markets



Tri Shark Control Valve

"We are excited about our new TRI-BLOCK, double block and bleed valve. The Tri-Block has one cast or fabricated body with two shafts & discs and a bleed port combined with a Patented linkage that allows both disc to properly torque into the seats. More and more of our end users are requiring double block and bleed systems when isolating fixed equipment for maintenance or repair. In our 300lb offering we make this product in the same face-to-face required by ANSI B16.10. If a customer has a gate valve that he doesn't have faith in shutting off, the TRI-BLOCK can be installed without any piping changes and now they have a safety integrity system, double block and bleed in one valve," explained Dave. "The other product that we are starting to get some traction with is our TRI-CHECK, an engineered tilted disc check valve. It incorporates most features we have with the TRI-CON – laminated seal ring, zero leakage, zero friction through the travel, integrity of shut-off and it has a special Stop/Check feature utilizing our lost motion coupling. These valves are sold per application because all these applications are normally very specific about what kind of check system they want. We have been seeing a lot of applications in the larger diameter and that demand is right in one of our core competences.

Another new product for Zwick is the Tri-Shark. The Tri-Shark is a "Throttling

Trim Cartridge" that is either attached or inserted into a Tri-Con. The Tri-Shark has excellent throttling characteristics, provides aerodynamic noise attenuation, and reduces liquid cavitation while delivering the total range of benefits offered by the Tri-Con valve. With the Tri-Shark the effective control range extends from 1% at 5 degrees travel to 100% at 90 degrees of travel, and produces a flow curve that is far superior to conventional butterfly valves and many other types of rotary valves. With the Shark Tooth the Tri-Con can reduce Aerodynamic Noise up to 15 dBA. Larger diameter control valve applications are especially ideal candidates for the Tri-Shark.

With the importance the industry places on safety and quality, Zwick ensures that all of their products uphold the highest quality standards of the industry and are tested to industry required certifications.

"We just recently accomplished our recertification for ISO 2000 in September 2012. We also have SIL level III certification.

Plus, we have passed the stringent Shell TAT test. We test to all of the recognized global standards. Our standard test is an API 598 Resilient Seat test which requires Zero Leakage past the valve. "All of our valves are serialized and MTR's are available upon request," said Dave. "Traceability is extremely important. Because we are selling a high-integrity valve – it is not the cheapest valve on the market and they are buying it to isolate expensive equipment and if there are any issues, they want to be able to look at the paper trail to know 'What's the pedigree for this valve? What are the materials of construction? Where



Tri Block Double Block and Bleed Valve



Freddie Rubio, Shop Manager & Tim Buse, Shop Technician

did the materials come from? Was it tested and what was the result of that test? We can provide all of those demands."

Into The Future

With the company's continued growth in North America, Zwick has been making efforts to introduce the brand to Central and South America to serve the growing demands for the industrial valve markets in the region.

"Mexico is on the verge of billions of dollars of infrastructure investments and they're opening the market to joint ventures with companies such as Exxon, Shell, Chevron, etc. and our established relationships with those companies will help us with that. "In Mexico we have seen a change in Pemex's buying habits for triple offset valves. In the past it seems they had zeroed in one manufacture. But now we believe they are more open to other quality manufactures such as Zwick We are also very interested in exploring the growing market in Brazil," explained Dave. "Canada is another exciting market for us and we recently signed up the largest specialty valve distributor in Alberta, Spartan Controls. They are going to put another 60,000 square foot facility in Edmonton for their valve automation division. And according to one of their Vice Presidents the market in that region is still years away from peak valve demand, so that will be a huge opportunity for us."

For us here in Deer Park, we see a possible expansion within the next several years



Andy Brieden, Sales

to accommodate final assembly & testing of the Tri-Con here. We have the land for expanding our existing 35,000 square foot building another 35,000 square foot.

As for the future of the valve industry, Dave foresees more growth in the future and is confident that Zwick will continue to be a key player in the market.

"I see a strong market for the next three to five years and beyond, and we are going to play the same we have been playing. That is integrity of delivery, integrity of product, inventory and more customer service," concluded Dave.



About Zwick

Zwick N.A. LLC Team

| | |
|---------------|-------------------------------------|
| Andy Brieden | Inside Sales |
| David Pollard | Operations Mgr./Customer Service |
| Bill Spangler | National Sales Mgr. |
| Freddie Rubio | Shop Mgr. |
| Tim Buse | Valve Technician |
| Monica Garza | Administrative Assistant/Accounting |

Zwick Distributors North America

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| Puffer Sweiven | Texas Gulf Coast |
| Vinson Process | North & West Texas, Oklahoma |
| Caltrol | Nevada & California |
| PCE Pacific | Washington, Oregon, & Utah |
| AWC | Louisiana, Alabama, Georgia, & Tennessee |
| FcX | Ohio, Illinois, Wisconsin, Nebraska, Iowa, Dakota's, Kansas, New Jersey, Virginia, Carolina's & Florida |
| RJM Process | Michigan |
| System Specialties | Connecticut, Vermont, Maine, & Massachusetts |
| Ryan Specialties | Upstate New York |
| Spartan Controls | Alberta and British Columbia Canada |
| Nichols Givens | Colorado, Wyoming, & Idaho |