

LESER: Differentiation –

With more than 2,000,000 installed safety relief valves worldwide, approximately 10,000 active customers and over 800 employees across the globe, LESER is the largest manufacturer of safety relief valves in Europe and the third largest supplier to the global market. Headquartered in Hamburg, Germany, LESER safety relief valves are engineered to support global applications. Eight subsidiaries in Europe, the Americas, the Middle East, and Asia, as well as authorized and trained representatives in over 80 countries, guarantee competent consulting for all industrial applications.

Valve World Americas had the opportunity to speak with Steve Usina, President of LESER US, and Dean Jackins, Director of Sales Market Development for LESER US to discuss the company's commitment to differentiation in the market, maintaining high safety standards, providing quick service and reliable aftermarket care.

By Courtney Brennan, Marketing Manager for LESER US, & Sarah Bradley

Global Operations

Established in 1818 as a brass foundry and family owned / operated for five generations, LESER has continued to expand its business over the past two centuries through its commitment to quality products, on-time deliveries and competitive pricing. LESER has established itself as a leader in the safety relief valve market – its products are on the approved vendor list of over 200 major end-users worldwide proving that LESER fulfills high quality product and service standards to meet even the most difficult demands. Creating and maintaining longterm relationships with its global customer base is a priority at LESER as safety relief valves are a matter of trust.

assembling facility. LESER can supply high quality ASME code-stamped valves from North America into South America for a full range of applications.

Since 2007, LESER US has enjoyed significant growth due to a combination of its broad product range, unique design features and commitment to customer service. This growth has enabled the expansion of its Representative network and LESER Authorized Repair Centers (LARCs) to support local customer requirements. In addition, LESER US has added to its infrastructure including inside sales personnel to support day-to-day and project business, as well as outside sales expertise through its Sales Market De-



velopment staff. LESER US is responsible for geographical territories that include all of North America, Central America and the northern part of South America including Peru, Ecuador, Colombia and Venezuela. Throughout these 16 countries, LESER sells its products through an extensive network of highly-trained Representative organizations, operating from over 90 different offices.

“LESER has earned the trust of our customers by not only delivering a product high in differentiation and quality, but just as important, by providing the customer with a level of service that is above and beyond expectation,” said Dean Jackins.

“LESER has been family owned and operated for almost 200 years. This longevity has been made possible by the focus and care of the company's leadership and workmanship of its employees. The products LESER produces are of the highest quality available in the global market today and are the last line of safety, protecting equipment and personnel at processing sites where some very dangerous products are made. The importance of safeguarding not only workers at the sites, but also those families living in surrounding areas, are of the highest priority for everyone at LESER,” explained Steve Usina.

After supporting the North American market for over 15 years, LESER opened its operations in Charlotte, North Carolina in 2007. LESER US has a fully established sales, distribution, and service network which includes its own stocking, setting, testing and

“In order to reach and maintain a close customer connection, LESER's owner, Martin Leser, envisioned an organization that would be capable of responding to customer queries within 24 hours. In order to meet that expectation, a sizable investment was needed, not only in personnel but in inventory as well. Today, LESER US has grown to over \$14 million in Sales, \$7 million in local inventory and 28 direct employees that support our sales channel,” explained Steve. “Our customers rely on manufacturers to support them with expertise in the products they produce. LESER is very committed to providing a high level of customer support on a daily basis, both in our local representation, and at our location in Charlotte, NC. All of this is ultimately supported

by our engineering and product management teams in Germany. LESER is unique, in that, the only products we manufacture are safety relief valves. Everything we do is focused on supporting application specific requirements for this product alone.”



“Many times our customers are pressed by short lead time requirements either by project constraints or circumstance. LESER understands this and is focused on providing quick turnaround times for both quotations and product shipments,” Steve explained. “LESER has over \$18 million in raw material inventory on the shelf in Germany including castings, bar stock and finished goods. This allows LESER to support not only emergency shipments but also daily requirements from stock. Annually, LESER ships ninety-eight percent of our orders using the inventory we have on hand.”

Strategic Distribution & Supply

LESER US carries a significant inventory of valves and parts at its facility, which enables the supply of safety relief valves in one week or less with same-day service for spare parts. The after-hours service provides 24-hour accessibility in support of plant emergencies, ensuring same-day shipment of valves or parts as needed. Short lead times are crucial for safety relief valves, especially for plants in operation. With the diversified inventory on the shelf, LESER is able to maintain our one week delivery commitment.

“You know the old saying ‘You can't sell from an empty wagon.’ We believe in inventory. We don't have some of the constraints that the larger, publicly traded companies have. If we see that the market needs it, we'll put it on the shelf. Our customers have come to appreciate this and have truly benefitted from it,” said Dean. “Speed of

response is critical. We want our knowledge and expertise to be at the customer interaction level. If the customer poses a challenging question or application, we need to be able to respond in an expedient manner. We are relatively new to the North American market, compared to our competitors. Customers know their name. LESER has to be better and/or different.”

Premium Products / Services and Worldwide Usability

Ensuring high quality is an important focus for LESER, having obtained most major global approvals such as ASME, PED/CE, EAC, China AQSIIQ, CRN, etc. Through eight different product groups ranging up to 16" x 20" sizes and pressures over 12,000 psi, LESER is focused on application-based solutions for all industries. LESER has the answer to application requirements with standardized industry solutions up to 90% back pressure, -321° F medium temperature, zero dead space, etc.

LESER products feature single trim for all media, a Bellows Shield to extend the life cycle of the bellows and can be installed and shipped horizontally. Two of our most notable products are the API 526 series and the Pilot Operated Safety Valve:

The API 526 Series features a one piece spindle, upper and lower guiding, reduced guiding area to reduce galling and parts replacement and lifting lugs which are integrally cast. The product also features needle bearing on the upper spring button for easy setting to ensure no deformation of the adjusting bolt, especially on larger orifice sizes. The disc attachment is out of process flow/media to allow for easy removal for repair or replacement without concern for replacing other parts.



Our state-of-the-art test lab in Hamburg, Germany is an example of our constant flow of innovation and our passion for technology.

The Key to Our Success



LESER's Pilot Operated Safety Valves (POSVs) are available in both modulating and pop-action design to meet a variety of application requirements. The lower weight and compact size make these valves an ideal option for offshore platforms. Tighter to set point with the ability to handle higher back pressures, Pilot Operated Safety Valves provide an alternative for customers when spring loaded valves are unable to support the application. LESER's unique design eliminates tubing by incorporating pathways for operation through the top plate of the valve. Accessories including filters, field test capability, manual blowdown, etc. provide flexibility to support various applications. Due to its modular design, LESER US is able to stock a broad range and quantity of POSVs (over 1,500 different configurations) and accessories to support market demand.

pair Centers program globally and currently has 26 locations in the US and Canada alone," Steve stated.

"We sell a safety product that by code, and by normal use, needs to be serviced. We have established the LARC network to be able to provide this support. However, any valve repair shop with a VR Stamp can repair a LESER valve, as well as any of our competitors," added Dean. "Truly, our customers are the ones who drove the need for the LARC network. By establishing the LARC network, we answered the very basic question of who services and supports our product."

Valve maintenance and repair play a significant role in the total cost of ownership in the lifecycle of a valve. LESER has the lowest total cost of ownership due to competitive initial pricing and the fact that only 3-5% of our annual revenues result from spare parts sales compared to 30-50% for the competition. Better design leads to better operation; better operation leads to less parts replacement; less parts replacement leads to lower cost of ownership.

Looking to the Future

LESER has continued to make global expansion an area of focus from improving production and sales facilities to entering new markets. Among a few of the notable highlights are the facility expansion at LESER US, new product certification in India, and market entry in China.

LESER US recently expanded its facility by 40% to over 17,000 square feet. The additional space allows for expanding inventory capabilities, a new location for incoming goods receipt and processing, and additional testing capability to support Pilot Operated Safety Valve assembly from local stock.

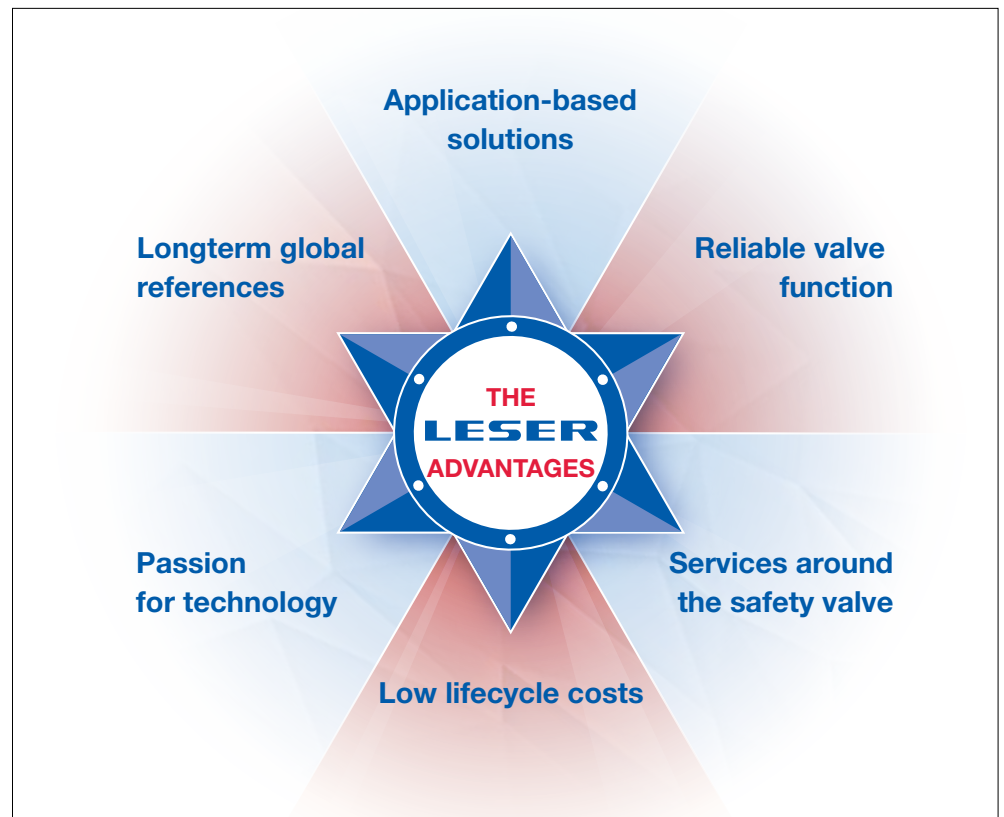
"LESER is growing not just in the US and Canada but globally. We have recently up-fitted our manufacturing location in India with SAP and certified our API 526 Series at that location for the Indian market. We recently opened a new facility in China with expectations of expanding into manufacturing for the local market. LESER is expanding in many markets throughout the world and it is a pleasure to be part of such a forward thinking organization," said Steve. "Industrial applications for our products will continue to grow as the world population expands. Individual markets may expand or contract periodically, but overall, the future is full of opportunities and LESER will be a leader in this business for decades to come."



Supporting the Market After the Sale

Many end-users require local authorized repair support for LESER products sold into their plants as a means of ensuring proper servicing of their valves - this is precisely why LESER US has established a strong network of LESER Authorized Repair Centers (LARCs). A LARC is defined as an organization authorized by LESER to repair and adjust LESER safety relief valves.

"Specifically in the US and Canada, valve service and repair is a significant industry in and of itself. Being a manufacturer of industrial valves, there is an expectation by our customers that we will have a trained staff available to support local requirements for periodic maintenance. LESER has established the LESER Authorized Re-



The LESER Valve-Star identifies the six key customer benefits that LESER offers as a company 100% focused on safety relief valves. All of our efforts are centered around providing our customers with the advantages of selecting LESER products and services.



Dean Jackins and Steve Usina of LESER US

LESER AT A GLANCE

Products:

- API 526 Series
- Pilot Operated Safety Valves – variety of process applications, Oil & Gas, Offshore, etc.
- Compact Performance valves – compact dimensions for economical protection
- PTFE-Lined valves available for Critical Services – for specialty chemical applications
- High Performance valves – full bore, smaller valve with larger flow capacity
- Clean Service valves – Sanitize/Clean in Place (SIP/CIP) capable with minimal "dead space"
- Modulate Action valves – for positive displacement pump applications

Industries Served:

Oil & Gas, Chemical, Petrochemical, Pharmaceutical, Food & Beverage, Technical Gases, Power, Marine, LNG/LPG, Mining, etc.

Talking Points:

- Founded in 1818 – 5th Generation, family owned / operated business
- All products are ASME certified by the National Board, Reference NB-18
- ISO 9001 Cluster Certification
- Availability – four week shipment from factory in Germany, one week shipment from Charlotte stock for North American locations
- All manufacturing done in Germany, with a manufacturing capacity exceeding 150,000 valves per year
- Global net sales > \$130 Million

This Spotlight article is paid for by LESER. The views and opinions expressed in this article are those of the profiled company and do not reflect the position of Valve World Americas.