



Interview with Daniel Majewski - Sales Director Crouse-Hinds for Eastern Europe, a leading company in the field of explosion-proof electrical equipment, and Bartos Wolff, president of WOLFF GROUP - one of the leading explosion safety companies in Poland.

Editor: Let's start with an unusual question, your name sounds very Polish, is it a coincidence?

Daniel Majewski: Like many millions of polish also my ancestors emigrated in the 19th century into the Ruhr area for work. Today more than 3 Million people live in Germany. This is a great example and a strong symbol for the European idea and identity. I am a truly believer of Europe. No one needs to explain me how to become a European – my background is fully European. But not only my name sounds „untypical” [laugh]...

E: Exactly, the surname of Bartosz Wolff does not sound Polish – is that a coincidence?

Bartosz Wolff: Yes, in fact my father's father came from Germany. This is, however, of no importance when viewing the matter from the angle of decades of the European experience or European Community which emerged from the interrelationships. I feel a 100% citizen of the modern, united Europe and for me, personally, this is the most important matter.

E: Please explain in a few words the most important Eaton's fields of activity.

DM: Eaton is a leading and global power management company. We provide energy-efficient solutions that help our customers effectively manage electrical, hydraulic and mechanical power more efficiently, safely and sustainably. Eaton is fully dedicated to improving the quality of life and the environment through the use of power management technologies and services. Worldwide Eaton has approximately 95,000 employees and sells products to customers in more than 175 countries.

E: What role plays Daniel Majewski in Crouse Hinds?

DM: I am commercial director for Europe and Africa – heading the product lines,

sales and marketing activities. We brought the function Marketing and Sales together in order to make sure we have a more coherent and joint commercial efforts. At the successful sales reflects a strong marketing. Both function need to operate hand in hand.

E: What is Crouse Hinds' position in the world and what in Poland?

DM: Power is the backbone of our industry, and ensuring the availability of safe, reliable power is at the heart of Eaton's business – even in the most challenging environments. With the Crouse-Hinds series, Eaton has the broadest offering of solutions for harsh and hazardous environments. From explosion proof electrical equipment to communications systems, Crouse-Hinds delivers the safety our customer across various industries can rely on. For more than 100 years the name CEAG and Crouse-Hinds stands for high quality and reliability.

E: What are your plans about Poland?

DM: Looking purely into the economic development and FDI over the last years Poland offers a phenomenal potential. Industrial work and quality is globally competitive and further progress is clearly visible. Today Poland is a key industrial region in Europe. Our key serviced segments like chemistry, pharmaceutical, food and beverage, marine, oil and gas develop very fast and extend capacities in Poland. Therefore Poland is becoming a key growth market within Europe. In this context Crouse Hinds is establishing a wider presence and is keen to develop further deep and strong partnerships in terms of distribution and assembly capabilities for various solutions.

E: Now the world is struggling with the problem of „copying” intellectual property. Available technologies allow to create a product that looks the same like a original in a short time. Did this

problem also touch Crouse-Hinds? How does CH want to protect against this problem?

DM: We experience some fake solutions in a few regions. A few low quality suppliers indeed are great in copying good solutions instead of developing their own solution. We have a good coverage of IP and wherever we see some plagiarism efforts we do everything to take immediate legal actions. Our offerings are there to deliver safety to our customer. We invest every year a great amount of R&D efforts to achieve safer and user friendly solutions. We cannot accept copy and paste actions because it will harm the total value which is needed to develop further safety solutions.

E: Crouse-Hinds was founded in 1833 in the United States and today is one of the largest manufacturers of electrical equipment in the world, employing thousands of people active in more than hundred countries. Why do you owe this success?

DM: Crouse Hinds has a global presence and for many years known for its quality and reliability. This is the reason why Crouse Hinds is specified in key O&G projects from down stream, mid-stream and downstream. We support customers end to end which means from specification advice up to delivery project management, including services. Safety is a key factor for our end-user and they expect the right solutions. Over the year Crouse Hinds has invested in so many innovative solutions from LED to extreme temperature solutions. We are able to cover a wide range of requirements and therefore we will always be involved in key projects worldwide.

E: In the recent years the WOLFF GROUP has been increasing employment by several percent or even several dozens percent a year. Where do you see the source of such fast development?

Customers expect

A RELIABLE

LOCAL PARTNER

WOLFF GROUP has a great reputation in the Polish market and offers a highly

COMPETENT

SALES TEAM

BW: From the moment of creation of our company we have always invested in quality and complementary nature of our offer. I think that after many years of hard work, sometimes very hard, the market has finally appreciated the efforts.

E: On the one hand, you have your own design office as well as service and installation division, and, on the other hand, you distribute the products of other companies. Right now you are also going to start the manufacturing of Ex-rated electrical engineering components. Perhaps you have too many irons in the fire?

BW: For some time now we have observed radical changes undergoing on the market serviced by our company. Customers have more and more strived to order the whole scope of works with one contractor. This year this phenomenon is even more remarkable, as the scope of the potential orders has been clearly extended. It is visible on many occasions that our customers search for one, strong company to perform complete projects. The WOLFF GROUP is well prepared to such new challenges.

E: Crouse Hinds offers a wide range of electrical equipment in explosion-proof design. What kind of product brands includes your offer? What stand out Crouse Hinds in the market compared to other manufacturers?

DM: Crouse Hinds has a huge basket of solutions and many brands are linked to it such as MTL (intrinsic safety), HAC (hazardous communication applications) and CEAG.

E: So, your offer is really width - thanks to that you can supply to many industry sectors. How looks presence of this products in Poland?

DM: Poland is a very critical market for us. We serve our customers direct or via a key distributor like WOLFF GROUP. CEAG as a brand is well known but needs to get more proactively present in the local market and therefore we have also chosen WOLFF GROUP to jointly develop the presence.

E: Recently the WOLFF GROUP - a Polish company providing technologies and safety solutions in all major industries - has become Crouse-Hinds authorized distributor. How did your cooperation begin?

DM: We got in contact two years ago and slowly build up relationship at the beginning. Over the last twelve months we have worked very closely on various projects successfully. This really moved both partners to the decision to strengthen further the relationship and business development.

E: You have mentioned that at the early stage you are going to manufacture components under the Crouse-Hinds brand. Why have you decided to run production instead of typical distribution?

BW: With our long experience in cooperation with international concerns we have searched for a global player with full assortment of Ex-equipment which we need in performing both the complete project and unit orders generated by the market. It happened that at the same time Crouse-Hinds – a subsidiary of the Eaton concern – had also been searching for such partner. One of the critical areas of cooperation was the possibility of reacting in a flash to the needs of our customers. This would not be possible without creating our own assembly department supported also with our in-house design office. The synergy effect is impeccable in this case.

E: Did your company solicit for the distribution of Crouse-Hinds products in Poland? Why have you chosen this particular company? How were the negotiations and how long did they last?

BW: J'Catch and Match' is always the problem. In Polish we say after Tadeusz Boy-Żeleński: *Z tym największy jest ambaras, żeby dwoje chciało naraz* [The greatest problem is to get two people together at the same time]. From my perspective, two companies offering high quality have met



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Bartosz Wolff – President of WOLFF GROUP



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Daniel Majewski – Sales Director Crouse-Hinds for Eastern Europe

at proper time, in the same place and made a reasonable decision on starting cooperation. We have spent the last two years in getting to know each other and polishing our cooperation, which resulted in today's position of the WOLFF GROUP.

E: What did influence the selection of WOLFF GROUP as a general supplier of your solutions?

DM: WOLFF GROUP has a great reputation in the Polish market and offers a highly competent sales team. It has the right customer centered mind set and is always willing to advice the customer for the best solution. It has historically a great position in a few segments where Crouse Hinds like to grow and therefore WOLFF GROUP is a key distributor in one of European fast growing market.

E: What, in fact, means the distribution of Crouse Hinds products by the WOLFF GROUP for Polish customers?

DM: With this set up we are able to offer a professional local partner. Able to supply at short lead times which is so relevant in nowadays in our industry. Especially when it comes to maintenance our customers expect a reliable local partner with a solid range of finished goods.

E: How important in the WOLFF GROUP strategy is managing the whole sales of Crouse-Hinds products?

BW: To make it short: enormous! We never start any project counting to be one of many players. We engage our efforts, experience and means only in those areas where we are independently responsible for the actions we undertake and, thus, for the results. The

Crouse-Hinds offer is very important to us – in my opinion, it is one of the last elements in our puzzle. For example, thanks to the cooperation we may finally perform complete projects comprising both automation and electrics, this also applies to projects in explosion hazard zones.

E: Does the contract refer only to Poland or to some other markets as well? If Poland only – what are the plans of expansion into other markets?

BW: This year we have started to implement an expansion plan, which we have been preparing for some years now. The preparations consisted in performing a series of foreign projects, starting from the European countries and ending with Brazil or Dubai. As a result, within the last weeks we have created a company named Grupa Wolff Brasil, which is going to operate in Latin America, whereas in the Balkans we have opened our representation offices. This is not the end of our activities in that direction, we are going to continue both this year and in future.

E: What are your plans for sales increase?

BW: In the recent years, the WOLFF GROUP has been systematically generating growing turnover and profits. Is it going to be forever? Well, when it comes to the Polish market I rather doubt it. Therefore, we go outside, so as to protect ourselves already now against that potential unfavourable situation. But I wish to emphasise that it has never been the main objective of our company to unreasonably increase turnover. We always have been searching for interesting projects, which represented new challenges to us. I hope that all of the

actions undertaken by us will enable us to maintain that direction.

E: Is Crouse-Hinds going to provide the WOLFF GROUP with marketing (or other) support, or does everything lie in your hands?

BW: From the perspective of an owner, I can say that the WOLFF GROUP has a perfectly operating marketing department. However, even a well operating machine needs fuel, and there is no better fuel than cooperation and exchange of experience. Yes, we have closely cooperated with Crouse-Hinds as regards marketing activities, drawing on the long experience of that large concern.

E: I understand that manufacturing of Crouse-Hinds components is not the end, yet. Could you reveal your plans for development of the newly created office and production complex?

BW: The office and production complex we have just built occupies a small part of the plot of land we own. I am really glad about that, because we finally have space giving us broad development opportunities. One of the activities to be performed there is inventing our own production technologies, which will further be offered to the interested businesses. Today, it is too early to reveal further plans. I can only mention that if one of them is successful, next year we can expect further development of our complex. Time will show whether it is possible...

E: Thank you for the interview. I hope that the cooperation between the two companies will develop at the highest possible level. ■