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C For Your Copper SOLUTIONS

La Farga is a pioneer group within the copper industry. The organisation intimately understands the sector in which it operates and has expanded its capacities to become a more international business.

Images courtesy of La Farga

Founded in 1808, La Farga is a metallurgy company that manufactures and sells semi-finished copper products and its alloys rod and billets for the electrical, metal packaging, railway, piping, automotive, and special conductors markets.

La Farga has a global footprint, with three production plants in Spain: La Farga Lacambra, La Farga Tub, La Farga Rod; one in China: Ganzhou Jiangwu La Farga; one in the US: SDI La Farga; and copper-pipe distribution centres in France and the UK. The organisation also has three research centres that constantly work to develop new products and applications with copper and its alloys. This capability has enabled La Farga to position itself at the forefront of the industry.

Oriol Guixà is Vice-President and CEO of La Farga. Coming from a

background of industrial and aeronautical engineering, he started his career with Motorcycles Montesa in the innovation and development department. It was here that he actively participated in the creation of a joint venture with Honda Motor Company and led the trial team that won the World Championship in 1980.

In 1984, Oriol and his father-in-law embarked on a new metallurgy project, joining La Farga Lacambra as a shareholder and with Oriol as General Manager. Oriol developed the patent for the copper-recycling process and created three new companies: La Farga Tub, La Farga Rod, and La Farga Intec. He is also the founder of La Fundació La Farga, which has the only copper museum in Europe. Oriol was instrumental in La Farga's joint venture with the Italian company Continuus Properzi for the sale of patented technology sold in more than 30 countries around the world, and he helped

create a new copper industrial company in China and another in the United States with La Farga's local partners.

When Oriol joined the company, it was in need of operational and financial revitalisation. "The issue was that the company, when we entered here, was really in a very bad financial situation. Also, all the facilities were very old and without any kind of development. The challenge has been to develop the company in the sense of different products, different knowledge, and different ways of production.

"We started looking around the world to analyse what is state of the art, and in the end we designed a process that would take scrap and from that we would produce copper rods in a continuous-casting way. This was not really in the state-of-the-art of copper-rod manufacturing, and it was supposed that this was not really possible. We fixated on this >



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development and this has been a big improvement for our possibilities of developing the company. Also, as it was a very novel process, we started selling knowledge around the world. Today there is a broad range of organisations that are using our knowledge.”

La Farga is a world leader in recycling technology and, with the proficiency and pending patent of its technology company, La Farga Intec, the organisation has sold its expertise to more than 30 plants worldwide. This reflects La Farga’s commitment to corporate responsibility and is further supported by the annual publication of the company’s sustainability report.

Through its manufacturing process, La Farga optimises the use of natural resources and energy, recovers and re-uses raw material (copper) and is constantly working towards mitigating and minimising the impact on nature. La Farga

promotes green projects, processes, and control emissions.

In 2004, La Farga created Fundació La Farga, a non-profit social, cultural, and educational organisation that seeks to create value and wealth in its environment. In 2008, the company opened the Copper Museum, the only European platform of know-how and technology. La Farga is also a member of the Global Compact of the United Nations, adapting the company’s behaviour and action in terms of human rights, labour, the environment, and anti-corruption and bribery. All of these initiatives highlight La Farga’s philosophy of constant innovation and improvement through investment.

Having been with the organisation for 20 years, Oriol has seen numerous changes within the industry. “A lot of companies disappeared, many companies have been integrated into larger groups, and I saw a lot of mergers

that concentrated our competitors in Europe into big holding groups. This happened from a competitor point of view and also from a customer point of view. The key factor has been a lot of change. So there has been one direction of businesses concentrating into big groups and a lot of smaller companies disappearing from the market.”

With the dynamics of the industry changing, La Farga has had to make various improvements in the way it operates. “We are in the copper business, which is not a very easy business in the sense that copper is quoted every day and has a lot of variety in the value of prices, so we need to be very close to our suppliers in developing our business and adopt a strategy of developing and growing the business. We have been working with our suppliers and with our customers to give them the solutions for their own product development. Copper is used for different applications, so

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we have been working with the customers to develop those applications with the correct materials to be successful.”

Innovation has been a key driver for La Farga as the pursuit for improvement is a continual journey. “We are inside a very mature business because copper has been around for a long time and has a long lifespan. However, there are a lot of new possibilities for copper to give a lot more mechanical and electrical applications to the product. In our case, we have been developing that a lot, but innovation is a matter that you can put into a wide range of business development. You can use innovation for administrative ideas; for example, we developed a copper hedge way of doing things that allows us to be secure and protected against fluctuations in copper prices.

“We believe that we can apply innovation in all the areas of our business. The other thing is that you cannot introduce innovation in an organisation without giving the opportunity for each person to develop their own ideas by themselves. The key thing for innovation is that everybody needs to be allowed to apply their own ideas in their tasks. The main characteristic of our organisation is that; we do not cap the ideas of the people working for us.”

La Farga is continually investing in its talent and empowering its people to better manage change and ensure the team continues to play a leading role in each project it undertakes. The company works towards ensuring that each employee is able to discover his/her talent and promote it. Through a responsible attitude of participation and acknowledgement, La Farga creates healthy, honest relationships that lead to greater personal satisfaction. The organisation accompanies its employees in their



growth, supporting a common direction and leadership and a culture of commitment. In addition, La Farga provides work-life balance policies.

Oriol is proud of the team he has helped build and notes that those working in La Farga also take pride in the work they accomplish. “As we are outside Barcelona, about 80 kilometres north of the city, we are in a countryside area, so our people are very proud to work with us. We’ve got quite a large pool of talent and they’re very good at developing processes and developing products. We are very satisfied with the calibre of people that we have working here.”

La Farga is committed to the social, environmental and economic development and progress of the environment and society in general. Therefore, La Farga has a close relationship of cooperation and collaboration with neighbours,

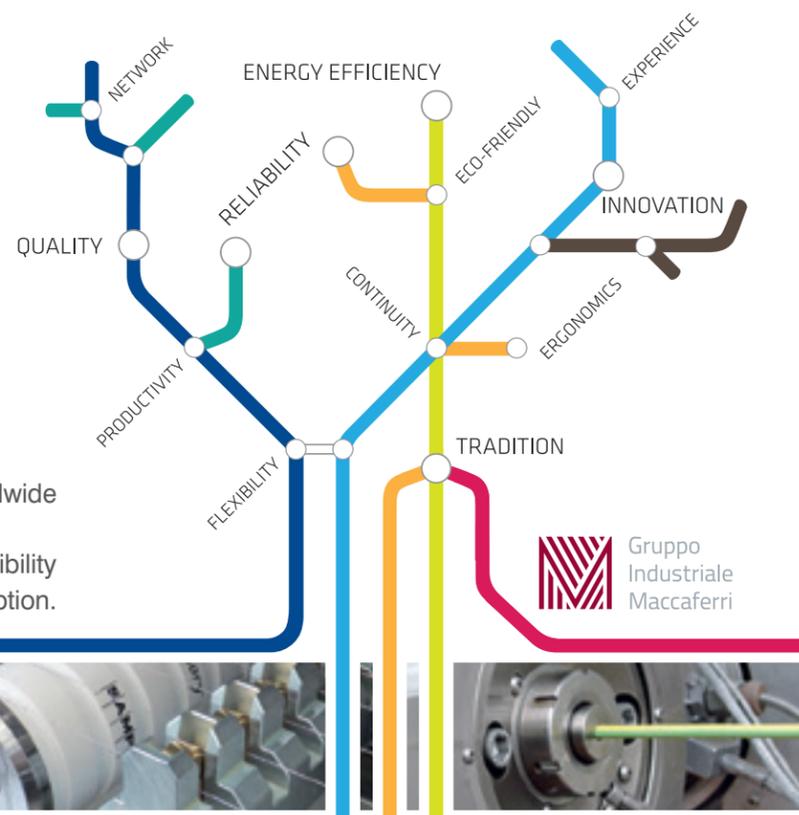
public authorities, the community, and the media. More specifically, the company maintains a policy of good neighbourliness, collaborating and developing social, cultural, and training activities, and seeking to conserve the environment and maintain a respectful relationship of dialogue and transparency with all those around the business.

By being good corporate citizens and investing in its people and processes, La Farga is in good stead for the future. “We are optimistic, even though we believe we’re in a period of huge crisis in Europe and in Spain mainly. We have been developing the business and a different portfolio of customers and a different portfolio of products that allow us to be consistent in our sales. We’ve increased our sales from 160,000 tonnes to 225,000 tonnes. As we have seen such a substantial increase in sales, we remain optimistic for the future.”

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“Working with La Farga means a continuous pursuit of excellence, with constant product optimisation and technological upgrades. La Farga is an inspiring company and an amazing business innovator. Being one of their key suppliers means leading the field in technology.” - Roberto Bazzani, VP Sales and Marketing, SAMP S.p.A.

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