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Consider it Solved

For 125 years, Emerson has been delivering innovative products, services, and solutions that advance industries and enrich lives. While it already has much to celebrate, its next era of operations looks set to be even more exciting.

Images by Selina Meier

Since its conception in 1890, Emerson has evolved to become a global engineering, technology, and solutions provider that drives innovation across some of the world's most complex industries. In the early days, the business helped its clients to live and work more comfortably, manufacturing reliable electric motors and fans. Today, it enables the production and processing of energy in ways never before imagined, the automation of factories to drive efficiency and savings, as well as climate control for people and food.

Roel van Doren became the European president of Emerson's subsidiary Emerson Process

Management in 2012, after previously holding the position of vice president for Northern Europe. He has been with the company for 25 years, progressing through various management roles to get to his current position. Emerson Process Management is known as a world leader in helping businesses automate their production, processing, and distribution in a variety of sectors such as chemical, oil and gas, pulp and paper, power, water and wastewater treatment, food and beverage, and life sciences.

Over the past couple of years, Roel has been leading Emerson Process Management through a transitional period. "We've always been known as a great product and technology company, which

we still are and that is not something that will go away, but we are now positioning ourselves as a problem solver," he says. "We need to be somebody that our customers recognise and want to go to when they need a problem solved. What we aspire to become is our customer's most trusted adviser. I saw an opportunity to transition the organisation to make sure it is ready to deliver that vision to the market.

"We don't want our customers to just see us as a great company that provides transmitters and control valves and processing systems; we want them to see us as a great company that solves their energy efficiency issues, their safety issues, their reliability issues, and their productivity issues—a company >

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which brings the whole package. We have an extensive product portfolio and broad range of services and we are bringing them to the market as a complete solution. That was the biggest opportunity I saw when I took over in 2012.”

To ensure this vision of being a trusted adviser and problem solver is realised, Roel set about employing some strategies based on three core pillars. “They are all very important to me,” he explains.

“The first is to be very close to the customer—we call it ‘customer proximity’—because if you’re not close to the customer then you don’t understand what their values are and what their critical priorities are. So we’ve invested heavily in our service organisation, opening a number of new service centres—about four per year. At those service centres we can provide repairs, quick shipping of inventory, training, calibration, and those types of things.

“We have added quite a lot of service engineers to be able to provide that service and to be in close proximity of our customers’ production sites. We have also invested in strategic accounts at a management level and among site leaders at all of our critical sites.

“The second thing is with regard to the training and development within our organisation—I call this industry fluency. It’s about being able to talk the same language as our customers and move away from just selling the technology. Instead, we want to move towards providing a solution to solve a customer’s problem. We want to work with the customer, understand what their issues are and then provide the right solution, which perhaps isn’t just a single product. It’s about being able to provide a complete package.

“Finally, the third element is what we call ‘ease of doing business with’. Every time we do something, we want the execution to be perfect. We have processes in place so that we can, for example,



generate a quote within 24 hours, process an order in 24 hours, and deliver in a matter of days or weeks instead of months.

“In that respect we have made, and are still making, investments in Europe to provide additional production capacity, because the closer you produce to your customers the quicker you can deliver. Over the past two years, we have invested about €75 million in that area, adding 65,000 square metres of production capacity here in Europe.

“Those are the three areas where we have made changes: investment to have our service and sales people close to our customers and close to the critical sites or clusters; making the transition to selling an application to solve a problem; and then executing perfectly by having the processes in place to speed up the whole order and delivery cycle.”

While Emerson has already experienced success with this approach, Roel says it didn’t happen overnight. The business had to ensure that it had the right people involved and that they were able to work together as a team. Appropriate communication was critical. “I think at the end of the day the challenge was not any different to any other times that there has been change—it just takes a bit of hard work,” Roel notes.

The European marketplace has been quite flat for the past two to three years, at around half a point of growth, but Emerson is defying that and is achieving growth rates of up to 10 times that. “We’re in solid single digits in a market that’s basically flat,” Roel says. “I think that’s an important milestone.”

Other successes have been in the North Sea where the business has been growing twice as fast as the market there, with some major >



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projects with strategic accounts. On top of that, there have been some significant wins in the power sector and also in the Eastern European region. Lastly, the investments made into Emerson's processes and production capacity have enabled it to be world class in order cycle and delivery.

Emerson's point of difference in the market is its ability to offer a complete end-to-end solution to its customers. The core of the business is to automate processes, and to do that it has to do three things: measure the variables—whether it's pressure, temperature, level or flow, or condition of equipment; provide a system to process those signals; and compare that with a set point to send signals out into the field to stop a motor or open or close a valve.

According to Roel, when he considers those three tasks he is able to recognise that there are respectable competitors in each area. However, he also notes that none of those competitors has a solid business offering in all three sectors, whereas Emerson does.

"We have strong competitors in the measurement business, strong competitors in the control systems business, and strong competitors in the valve business. But these companies only cover one or two of those elements. None covers all three. If you look at our business, not only in Europe but also on a global basis, it's not 80 per cent measurement, 10 per cent control systems, and 10 per cent control valve business. We're actually fairly evenly split across those areas.

"Why is that important? Our vision and strategy is to be seen as a problem solver and a trusted adviser—a company that people go to when they want to solve their productivity, energy, efficiency, safety, or reliability issues. To be this type of company you must have the whole package available in house, together with a very strong engineering organisation. I think being able to offer all these elements gives Emerson a great point of difference in the process automation industry."



Supply-chain excellence has also aided in Emerson's success over its long history. Roel says suppliers are an extension of the company and that they help it achieve speed to market, competitiveness, development gains, and leads. As the business has grown and expanded globally it has consequently broadened its supply chain, helping it to advance its innovative processes and technologies to access new markets and elevate it to new heights. "One business cannot manufacture absolutely everything itself," Roel notes. "You have to have confidence in the businesses which complement your operations and what you do.

"The suppliers form an integral base for our whole chain of operations and if you don't build

up very strong relationships with your key suppliers then you will never be able to generate that speed to market that you need. Suppliers also keep us informed about certain trends and new technologies that are coming to the market. We live in a very fast-paced business environment. Things change very quickly and picking your key suppliers for each of the components that you need will help you to ensure that you stay on top."

Emerson believes that its people are the most important asset to its operations. As well as working closely with suppliers, it also invests heavily in the training and development of its staff. It is committed to creating an environment where employees are given the opportunity to make a >

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– Roel van Doren



difference with open communication lines and encouragement to succeed. Training is offered at all levels, from the apprentices right up to those wanting to progress into leadership roles.

Every employee is given a personal training plan, which is developed with a supervisor and reviewed on a regular basis. Some use an online tool called 'Process University' to build curriculum to be completed in the coming year and others have specific leadership training.

Developing the skills of the next crop of leaders within the Emerson team is considered a major focus. The best managers are high-achieving and innovative people who seek out the company for its great culture and reputation. They are then given what they need to prosper and grow individually, as well as in line with the business. A considerably high number of

promotions come from within, and business unit and corporate officers typically have 15 or more years of service with Emerson and its businesses.

Roel believes that training should be conducted in a variety of ways to be the most effective and that it must include hands-on experience. "You can do a lot of classroom training but the most important training is completing actual real-life assignments," he says.

"You have what we call the development triangle, which is basically a triangle that's pointing with the tip down. Within this, for all your development, 10 per cent should come from classroom training, 20 per cent from working with your supervisors, peers and mentor programs, and then 70 per cent of your development comes from experience and completing different assignments. At a management level, we have face-to-face discussions and we make sure that our employees go through multiple experiences.

"For Emerson, the three elements to improve managers' performance

are: for people to have different functions—that could be sales or marketing or operations; to build experience in different geographical areas, working in different countries and regions; and finally, to have what we call business unit roles focused on perhaps measurement or systems, as well as 'platform' roles like, for example, my job where you have overarching responsibility.

"If you want to develop what we call a problem-solving organisation then you cannot have people stuck in silos within your organisation. You need to make sure that people can move around. So we have a combination of a strong curriculum of classroom, face-to-face and online training, and real-life assignments. There are some types of training that you just cannot do online. For example, improving presentation techniques is difficult to achieve online; it needs to take place in a classroom.

"We have a very solid training portfolio. We have a mentor program at different levels of the organisation so that our people are linked with managers. We >

"Through our partnership and by making strategic investments, we have been able to drive an end-to-end view on operational excellence, from new product introduction through to delivery to after-sales support, which enables us to continue building on our operational and supply-chain capabilities in the OEM marketplace." – Joyce Mullen, Vice President and General Manager – Global OEM Solutions, Dell



have the development by completing assignments, and we make sure that a good proportion of our people move around into different geographic areas and business units.”

The Emerson team was proud to celebrate 125 years of operations in industrial automation earlier this year. Every Emerson office across the world joined in the festivities and the moment of joy. Roel enjoyed a party at Emerson’s European headquarters in Baar, Switzerland, and says it was a great opportunity to look back at the success of the business. A number of videos were produced highlighting the careers of various icons within the organisation and the Emerson’s global chairman and CEO rang the closing bell at the New York Stock Exchange that same day.



“When I think of what the fundamentals of the success of Emerson are, there are a couple of things that come to mind,” Roel notes. “As of this summer, I myself celebrate 25 years with the Emerson brand. From what I’ve seen in those 25 years, and the years before that, it is not really that different—it is a very well managed, results-oriented, and engineering-driven company that has always had a commitment to excellence. That has long been its fundamentals.

“A strong partnership with our customers is another. We have a very strong strategic account program and we have a very disciplined management process—not only to perform the short-term planning about the next period or next quarter, but also the long-term planning to make sure that we have our three- to five-year plans in place. Last, but not least, I would say that we also always only accept the highest standards with respect to corporate ethics.”

“Working with Emerson Process Management is challenging but rewarding. The working partnership that we have leaves us in a perfect position to deal with the ever-expanding requirements within the industries that we collectively serve.” - Adam Dalby, Business Development Manager, BrafE Engineering



A milestone anniversary is not only a fitting time to look back at the highlights and memorable moments over the years, but to also think about what’s next for the future of the company. Roel’s vision is to ensure that customers continue to see Emerson Process Management in Europe as a trusted adviser. This is in terms of process automation, issues and challenges. Roel doesn’t want

Emerson to be viewed as a business that can only provide a transmitter, a control system, or a control valve.

“I want people to see Emerson as a company that can help them to make their plants more efficient, that can help them to make their plants safer, and that can help them to make their plants more reliable and productive. That is

my vision. If they are struggling with something then they can come to us and we will help them to solve that challenge.

“Over the past 20 or 30 years, if one of our customers was going to build a new plant, unit or refinery, then, in most cases, we would be consulted and asked to quote for products or services. What we would like to achieve with our customers is when, for example, they struggle with the inefficiencies in their plant—which today in Europe is a big thing because of the energy directive—then they will say, ‘Emerson is the company that can help us with that’. Or, if they want to improve the overall safety of a plant, then they will say, ‘Emerson is the company that can help us with that’. Or, if they want to decrease the downtime and increase the availability of a plant, then they will say, ‘Emerson is the company that’s going to help me manage my processes much better’. We want to be the very first business they think of.” •

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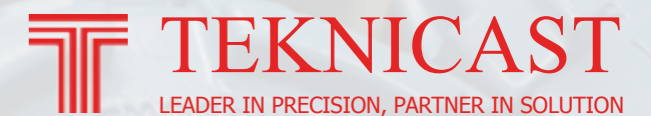


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