

# ***Fi*RE*si*DE**

**The House Magazine of the Thermax Group Volume 50 No. 2 April - June 2020**







## **About the Cover**

*Building any structure that will stand the test of time is an act of delicate balancing – between relationships and results; principles and profits; speed and sustenance; personal and professional commitments. When done deftly, it yields a visual treat as captured by our colleague Anurag in the picture.*

*Photo by Anurag Chincholkar (Power O&M)*

## **BACK COVER** **Solar PV** **installations**

*Comment*  
When it rains look for rainbows, when it's dark look for stars.  
– Oscar Wilde

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# What's New?

## A well coordinated plan during COVID-19

### Reopening of manufacturing facilities

**E**mployees' occupational health and safety being a key priority for Thermax, our manufacturing operations across the 10 facilities in India were suspended at the start of the pandemic and later resumed in line with government directives and adherence to Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs). The four facilities abroad operated at a considerably scaled-down pace.

As an input provider to essential services, our three chemical factories were the first to restart manufacturing, followed by other facilities progressively. Here are a few glimpses of how our teams across locations have adopted to the new normal and are ensuring utmost safety through physical distancing, sanitisation and other measures.

*Adhering to physical distancing norms at customer sites (L) and manufacturing locations (R)*



*Thermal scanning at the entrance*



*Physical distancing during toolbox meeting on the shop floor*



*Zig zag seating arrangement in company's transport*



*One person per table in canteen*

**COVID-19  
precautionary  
measures at Thermax's  
manufacturing facility**



*Click on the play button  
to watch the video*



## Going the extra mile for customers

**H**ere are some shining examples of instances when customers lauded our teams:

Thermax Power O&M team received an appreciation certificate for efficiently handling the operation and maintenance of 3X30 MW cogeneration power plants, during COVID-19 lockdown.

Thermax continued to provide solutions to essential services-based customers on priority. To give some examples, Heating division along with Thermax Channel Associate commissioned a hot water generator of capacity 2,00,000 kcal/hr for a 100-bedded hospital treating COVID patients. It also helped an R&D centre that produces medicine by increasing boiler efficiency during the nationwide lockdown. The Chemical division received a certificate of appreciation for supplying ion exchange resins to a leading US based water purifying products company.

Through Remote Online Service Support (ROSS), Thermax detected a parameter deviation in a vapour absorption chiller at CBL Global Foods, a renowned food and snacks manufacturer in Sri Lanka. Necessary fixes were suggested to the plant operator on time to avoid any disruption in plant operations. The customer appreciated Thermax's innovative and advanced technology that helps maintain 100% uptime of the machines.



**Yashpal Yadav,**  
Heating division  
(R) along with TCA  
engineer, Anil Dahale  
at the customer site

*During the COVID-19 pandemic situation, you have helped us tremendously to keep our machine running with uptime, I hope you will continue to support us until the next service, we highly appreciate the services you have rendered to us during the past weeks whenever we requested regardless of the time.*

*- CBL Global Foods Limited*



**Truck load of grocery provisions for the COVID impacted**

## Supporting the community

**T**hermax Foundation (TF) worked collaboratively with credible NGOs and volunteers to help in two areas that needed immediate attention during COVID - provision of grocery and health-related support.

TF provided groceries, masks, sanitisers, and other necessities to the worst affected families in Pune and near the company's manufacturing facilities. TF initiated a fundraising activity where employees voluntarily contributed to support the monthly provisions for the people living in roadside shanties, daily wage workers, and migrant workers who had no source of livelihood. The Foundation also supplied N95 masks and sponsored COVID check-up for the police force as per the need highlighted by them; additionally, X-ray and Gen Xpert equipment were donated to a hospital to cater to an urgent need. TF has also contributed to the PM CARES Fund and Chief Minister's Relief Fund (Andhra Pradesh, Gujarat, and Maharashtra).



# Enviro helps customer to Make in India

In a first-of-a-kind project, which is a part of Make in India initiative, the Enviro division of Thermax supplied six units of reactors along with bulk material handling system for a chemical manufacturing major. The customer's plant manufactures Silicon Tetra Chloride ( $\text{SiCl}_4$ ) of ultra-high purity (99.99%), which in turn is used for manufacturing optical fibres.

One of the most challenging aspects was designing reactors which are at the heart of this project. These reactors are semi batch type, which facilitate reaction between silicon metalloid and chlorine gas and produce 98% pure  $\text{SiCl}_4$ , further purified in distillation columns.

As extremely hazardous chemicals are handled in the reactor at a temperature above  $600^\circ\text{C}$ , robust design was required with utmost safe practices during operation of the reactor. These reactors are made up of high grade killed carbon steel with cladding of Hastelloy and the process is designed to provide complete automation and minimal human intervention.

Another critical requirement of the project was the safe handling and conveying of silicon metalloid, the primary raw material in the manufacturing process. Since silicon dust is highly inflammable and dangerous to the operator's health, it was crucial to ensure that there is no ingress of silicon in the

atmosphere during its transfer into the reactors.

Leveraging its expertise in managing dust and particulate emissions of varied forms, Enviro provided a system to the customer which transfers silicon bulk material at a height of 30 meter into the reactor with no emission of dust in the atmosphere.

Silicon bag unloading, lifting, tearing, massaging, transfer and loading in the reactor are the key features of this system. It also ensures that moisture is removed from the material before loading into the reactor which increases the purity of the end product,  $\text{SiCl}_4$ .



Reactors for a Silicon Tetra Chloride producing plant



# Meticulous relocation planning saves time and money for an oil & gas major



*HRSGs successfully relocated and recommissioned*

**T**hermax Babcock & Wilcox Energy Solutions (TBWES) has successfully relocated and recommissioned two Heat Recovery Steam Generators (HRSGs) for an Indian oil and gas major's plant in Jamnagar, Gujarat.

These HRSGs were part of the customer's captive power generation units at Dahej and Hazira and were lying idle, since these plants had recently switched to coal based power generation. At the same time, their Jamnagar plant was looking for addition of power and steam generation units to their existing captive power plant (CPP) to meet the increased load demand.

As part of idle asset utilisation initiative, TBWES conceptualised the relocation project, which salvages major components of the units. One of the units was supplied by another Indian OEM

two decades ago, with limited access to related drawings and data for reference. TBWES reverse engineered the entire HRSG parts, their piping and auxiliaries to document them for statutory approvals and records.

The HRSGs have been commissioned recently, and their performance has been proven up to their rated generation parameters. Additionally, refurbishment of deteriorated parts has ensured extended life of the units for another 30 years with reduced operation and maintenance costs.

This unique relocation project executed by Thermax has helped the customer to meet its plant's steam demand at a much lower cost and at shorter project execution time with assured extended life and minimum maintenance.



# Expressions



These difficult times bring out the real character of organisations, and we have demonstrated both commitment and compassion to take care of our entire stakeholder ecosystem.

I am proud to share that the 2019-20 Annual Report was a milestone for us as we transitioned from financial reporting to Integrated Reporting <IR> encompassing the performance of the company in line with the six capitals – Financial, Manufactured, Human, Social and Relationship, Natural and Intellectual. This approach enables us to present the company's information in a comprehensive format, that resonates with our philosophy of creating long term sustainable value for all our stakeholders. Further, the <IR> encapsulates the alignment of our capitals with the 17 UN Sustainable Goals, thus reflecting our focus on addressing the immediate global challenges of poverty, inequality, climate change and environmental degradation, among others.

Instead of repeating the financials for either 2019-20 or Q1 as we usually do in this issue of Fireside every year, I thought I would take this opportunity to thank and appreciate Unny, Ashish, the EC and our entire management team for ensuring that employee safety and wellbeing take precedence over revenues. A big thank you to all our employees for their dedication and commitment through a very challenging time; our customers for their understanding and support; our channel partners, vendor partners, and all our business associates for their resilience in dealing with this unprecedented challenge.

These difficult times bring out the real character of organisations,

and we have demonstrated both commitment and compassion to take care of our entire stakeholder ecosystem. We have received appreciation letters from customers for providing critical support to sustain their production, especially essential service providers such as hospitals, pharma etc. We have comprehended and addressed supplier challenges on a case-by-case basis through a vendor survey; supported communities including our own contractors' workforce and most importantly, supported our employees in remaining productive and pepped up through "work from home" assistance, virtual learning and various engagement activities online. A big thank you to everyone involved! Finally, I would also like to express my sincere appreciation to all my fellow Board members for their time, dedication, and guidance.

Moving into 2020-21, capacity building and expansion is expected to remain muted, already being seen in our Q1 performance. Our focus would be to capitalise opportunities in Services, Operation & Maintenance contracts, energy efficiency applications, waste heat recovery projects - all of which will help lower the cost of operations for our customers. We also foresee continued demand for our chemical business and also from certain essential consumer-facing industries, like pharma, food and beverage and chemicals. However, for the current year, cash is king; we will focus all our efforts on cashflow, order booking and cost reduction.



Some of you are curious to know whether we will move outside our domain of expertise – energy, environment and chemicals. The answer is no – very simply because this itself is a huge canvas, on which we are playing a small role as of today. We would like to build on our long term brand promise of “Conserving Resources, Preserving the Future” and enhance our footprint including specialty chemicals, which has been growing at 16-19% CAGR over the past three years and through the pandemic. We will continue our focus on our international markets, particularly South East Asia. We would like to enhance our smart, intelligent products and services through digitisation, remote monitoring and data analysis, to be a value add to our customers. We also remain focused on growing the share of our Build, Own, Operate & Maintenance business (TOESL) that is likely to witness growth. Our benchmark created in modularisation of engineering solutions that help customers minimise onsite construction work, should propel business growth - a recent success being another set of boilers, though smaller in capacity, supplied to the Middle East, in modules.

At Thermax Foundation (TF), we continue to fund the School Project through Akanksha Foundation as also the alumni of Akanksha and Teach For India schools so that kids are ably supported and counselled to make a career choice and complete Grade 12, many going onto college. Thermax has initiated a few projects for communities around some of

When one is at the helm of an organisation, it is very difficult to “let go”; but Unny hasn’t just let go, but nurtured and supported Ashish with a lot of grace, openness and dignity.

our manufacturing facilities, based on a detailed evaluation study and subsequently identifying the most pertinent challenges in the area. TF continues to support migrant workers and other victims of the pandemic through funding and supply of essentials.



This is a milestone year for our organisation, as Unny retires at the end of August, handing over the mantle to Ashish, after tirelessly and selflessly serving this organisation for 28 years.

Unny has been an extremely trusted, honest, seasoned leader of this organisation, leaving an indelible mark on our wonderful employees, customers, TCAs, vendor partners, the analyst community, media, industry bodies such as CII and Thermax Foundation – all our stakeholders. We have been able to charter a new trajectory for Thermax, envisioning globalisation, growing our green portfolio and most importantly, sustaining the rich culture and values of this institution instilled by my grandfather, father, Anu and all of you. Unny, it has been a pleasure working with you – have learnt a lot from you – you’ve been a great partner, guide, philosopher and friend.

I have been reading blogs from employees; it is heart-warming to witness the positive influence you have created on their lives, both professionally and personally. I am sure you will continue to guide many more organisations and individuals to realise their ambitions in the next phase of your life.

When one is at the helm of an organisation, it is very difficult to “let go”; but Unny hasn’t just let go, but nurtured and supported Ashish with a lot of grace, openness and dignity. He has stayed on for an extra two months to enable Ashish to feel comfortable as he passes on the baton.

On behalf of the Board, our family and all our employees, we thank you for your invaluable contribution, your wife Madhu for being your rock through thick and thin; and your son Siddharth, who has been a tremendous support. Wish you and your family great health and the very best life has to offer.

I also want to extend, once again, a very warm welcome to Ashish, who has done a tremendous job in these past 4.5 months. We look forward to welcoming you and your family to Pune in September.

Warmly,  
Meher



## Up Close

**M.S. Unnikrishnan reminisces his 28 years of association with Thermax, right from his experience as a graduate trainee, his second stint, to reaching the helm as the MD & CEO and plans for his next phase of life in a conversation with Swastika Mukherjee**

## Be in the ecosystem

**T**he journey of M.S. Unnikrishnan or 'Unny' as he is fondly called is synonymous to the adage, 'A leader is one who knows the way, goes the way and shows the way'. As Unny superannuates this August end concluding his 28 years with Thermax, Fireside is privileged to reminisce his course from a passionate young GET to a leader, a people's person and an industry stalwart.

### 1982

Joined Thermax as a Graduate Engineer Trainee



We went back in time by asking Unny about his memory of Thermax when he joined in 1982. "Thermax was a family owned and managed private limited company. We were the first batch of trainee engineers inducted into the company, an extremely progressive initiative by Thermax for its time and size then. Since the programme was still shaping up, we started by assisting the production team on the shop floor in shifts, and I remember my first assignment was assembling the base frame for a trava-grate." While the learning was phenomenal, the fresh out of college and enthusiastic youngsters were eager to move out of shop floor jobs and explore the various functions of

the business. Unny opted to be the voice of his team and spoke up to the Director Manufacturing, Mr. K.K. Kabraji about their concern. "I still vividly remember the venue of the meeting – our greenhouse – made of scrapped metal pipes with creepers growing all over that were watered just before meetings to provide natural air conditioning. After hearing us out, Mr. Kabraji explained that there were two ways to teach swimming - either the conventional way of theories and practice in shallow zones or else push the person in the deepest part of the pool; they will either learn swimming in a jiffy or drown. He added that he was glad all of us stayed afloat, though he wouldn't have let us drown," Unny recalls. From this point, Unny's formal induction programme commenced where he worked across factories, marketing, selling, service and project management, followed by a residential management programme, concluded with the renowned Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) test to gauge one's personality and accordingly choose the right professional fitment. "Though I was found suitable for manufacturing, marketing and materials, I was given marketing role in the coveted Energy division (today's TBWES), reporting to Mr. Ravinder Advani and Mr. A.K. Jain." With six months left to complete his trainee programme, he took up the challenge set forth by the division's director, Mr. T.D. Mohanchandran to clinch a deal independently before completing his trainee period. "I got the first order for a waste heat recovery system, where I worked right from designing, proposal preparation, including typing, negotiation, discussion with the customer and consultants." He proudly recalled entering the office, flaunting an advance cheque of Rs. 3.5 lakh, with



# which will make you flourish

a few days left to complete his training period.

.....

**Trivia: Unny had an offer to join the Indian Navy as an officer in his pre-final year of engineering through campus selection**

## 1987

Left Thermax as a Senior Executive, Energy division



During his tenure outside Thermax, Unny grew up the ranks very quickly, and at a young age of 30, he was heading the engineering business of EID Parry, part of Murugappa Group, a leading Indian conglomerate. In his tryst to become a self-made man, Unny moved to the Middle East and joined the Terrazo Group to fulfil his material ambitions of owning a house, holiday home and club membership. Speaking of this phase, he quotes, "My ten years of stint outside Thermax has played a critical role in shaping me into what I am today. I acquired financial acumen, established greenfield plants, ran the HR function, established contemporary people processes and most importantly, turned around loss-making businesses."

He adds, "Being connected to Anu, Meher and Pheroze during my stint outside, rejoining Thermax seemed like returning home. Nothing had

## 1997 - 2000

Re-joined Thermax as the General Manager and SBU-Head, Waste Management division (today's WWS)



changed over the decade – the rich culture and simplicity of the owners, except that Thermax had grown into a much bigger professionally managed listed company." Unny joined the Waste Management division, turning it around from a loss-making business into a profitable one, and the rest is history. "Thermax managers had technical expertise and excellent interpersonal skills but needed financial acumen, a value add that I could bring, thanks to my learnings outside," he says.

.....

**Trivia: Our director, Valentin von. Massow calls him 'Unnypedia' for his knowledge in every subject**

While Thermax has achieved several financial and business milestones during Unny's stint, he considers the company being ranked third among the top ten places to work in 2004 as his biggest achievement. The ranking was given by Business Today-Mercer study of the 'Best Companies to Work For' in India where Thermax was the only capital goods company in the list, just after he handed over the reins of the HR function. He recalls, "We

participated again in a CII survey in 2011 where we were among only two companies that scored 600+ points, a stringent criteria to qualify as one of the best places to work. To me, this was a great moment of satisfaction as it reinforced my success in sustaining the culture even after years of taking over as the MD of the company."

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**Trivia: Unny's pet peeves are when someone tells a lie and when things are not in their place**

Reflecting on his leadership phase, Unny summarises, "The journey of 13 years has been tough and amid an unpredictable business environment. No sooner did we commence our ambitious plans of becoming a global conglomerate with the first manufacturing facility outside India in China and a factory away from the home state of Maharashtra at Savli (in Gujarat), than the world economy went into a turmoil with the 2008 global economic crisis. Within no time, we had to change

## 2000 - 2007

Joined Executive Council to spearhead multiple businesses, Human Resource, Supply Chain, project 'Evergreen' and established the Corporate Sourcing Group





gears from acceleration to survival. Most of my tenure has seen a slowdown in the capital goods

## 2007

Appointed as the Managing Director & CEO of Thermax



## 2011

Received the Distinguished Alumni Status from his *alma mater*, VNIT, Nagpur

Chaired the National Committee for Capital Goods and Engineering

## 2012

Awarded the 'Asia Innovator Award' at Asia Business Leaders Awards (ABLA) instituted by CNBC at Bangkok

Conferred the India Business Leader Award by CNBC TV18 India



industry, but I am happy that we could hold the fort and sustain our profitability through the 51 financial quarters that I headed the company. Today, we are in an excellent position and a conglomerate in the making with 14 manufacturing edifices, debt-free balance sheet and a formidable leadership pipeline at various levels. We have taken innovation to newer heights by deriving technology from science. We have empowered businesses with full accountability of their P&L and work with a global mindset." He feels that the icing on the cake could have been hanging up his boots after staging Thermax as a larger India multinational with a much larger share of international business but is confident of seeing it happen in the years to come.

We took this opportunity to know the secret ingredients of his famous turnaround recipe that he explained with a simple analogy. "A struggling business is more like a kid's room that is always in a mess, and the easier option appears to be tidying it ourselves. Instead, if we continuously coax, nudge and guide them, they will start cleaning, and eventually, it will become a habit. As leaders, we need to influence our team members and build the trust that you are leading them in the right direction. If we communicate effectively and translate our passion, they will never let us down. Instead of using a scalpel at the slightest hint of blood on the balance sheet, it's essential to harness the collective positivity of people and channelise their strengths towards winning. Once the business starts progressing on the right track, we can reevaluate people skills and align them with the next stage of growth." Unny believes that no leader wants to run a loss-making business and tarnish their self-esteem. It's just that they are at a loss with finding the right direction.

## 2013

Defence Technology Absorption Award by Defence Research and Development Organisation

## 2013 and 2014

Co-chaired FICCI National Committee on Capital Goods

## 2013 and 2015

All-Asia Executive Team Best CEOs Ranking by Institutional Investor

## 2014

Ranked 9<sup>th</sup> Best CEO in India by Grant Thornton



**Trivia: Unny's favourite dialogue, "Tighten your belt till you bleed" and prides in calling himself a 'Mallu Marwari'**

Remembering his growing up years, Unny reflects, "My value system has been instilled in me by my father, a government officer, upright and religious. I recollect an instance when a local influential political leader came home, asking him for unethical obligations and without any hesitation, my father turned him away. He had to face the wrath by being transferred overnight as a punishment. I was only ten years old. That's when he imparted the most valuable life lesson - if you believe you are right, don't bend your back and be ready to face the consequences." Unny attributes his empathy towards people and the community to the inspiration drawn from his mother's generous nature. He says, "I have grown up seeing my mother distribute a substantial portion of our farm yield among the deprived villagers in the vicinity. This

BML Munjal Award for  
'Business Excellence for  
Learning and Development  
in Private Sector  
(Manufacturing)' Category



Recognised as an 'Eminent Mechanical Engineer' by the Institution of Engineers

Awarded with Fellowship by  
the Indian National Academy  
of Engineering (FNAE)

Recognised at the First  
Edition of CNBC-Awaaz  
CEO Awards



experience invoked my compassion and concern towards people at a very early age. I tend to consider the humane aspect first, even while taking tough decisions.”

Unny is more of a friend to his son, Siddharth who inherits the genes of his brilliant parents and is currently pursuing his MBA from the reputed Indian School of Business (ISB). It was interesting to learn that while Unny is busy managing the balance sheet of our company, his wife Madhu whom he calls as the CEO of his home, is adept in managing his personal investments and finances, given her academic brilliance as a gold medallist and a promising career in banking that she readily gave up to go the family way.

As a person, Unny loves to socialise, having a wide friend circle and considers himself extremely easy-going and fun-loving, a fact endorsed by his team members sharing fond memories of him dancing and singing at company get-togethers.

**Trivia: Unny's favourite song is 'Chookar Mere Mann Ko' and favourite movie - 'Three Idiots'**

On a concluding note, we were keen to know his message to the millennials aspiring to become a leader like him. "The starting point is to have faith in your capabilities and believe that you can become a leader. You cannot be perfect in everything; explore your strengths, nurture, cultivate and grow them. Be in the ecosystem which will make you flourish and bring out the best in you. Ignore your negatives and focus on your strengths. There is no substitute for hard work." He also believes that his key mantra of success has been his passion for everything that he does. "I have

Chairman, Capital Goods  
Sector Skill Council  
(part of the National Skill  
Development Corporation)

## Chaired the BRICS Skill Council for a Year

Chairman of the National  
Committee for Industrial  
Relations, CII

Co-Chairperson of the Apex Council formed by the Department of Science and Technology, for selecting and mentoring the 'Prime Minister's Doctoral Research Fellows in Science and Technology'

taken up extremely challenging and diverse roles and in each one of them, I have put my best foot forth. It also involved a lot of learning which could only happen through humility. We need to be able to learn from individuals across age, strata and experiences.” Unny is looking forward to continue his learning curve even post-retirement where he is exploring new roles such as mentoring startups, joining company boards as a director and his major passion - teaching.

Fireside wishes Unny loads of success in his new endeavours! We hope you continue to inspire many lives and build many more leaders.

**Trivia: Unny's favourite quote is "Fate is what you will be left with if you don't make your destiny!"**



## Round up

# Thermax's outsourced utility delivery services extended to the chemical industry

**T**hermax Onsite Energy Solutions Limited (TOESL) recently signed an agreement with Songwon Specialty Chemicals India Private Limited for supplying 'green' steam at its plant in Ankleshwar, Gujarat. Through this partnership, TOESL has commissioned an 8 ton biomass boiler along with a water treatment plant of 6 m<sup>3</sup>/hr capacity for the boiler plant.

Songwon, headquartered in South Korea, is the second largest producer of polymer stabilisers in the world and a key global player in the specialty chemicals business.

Under the agreement, TOESL guarantees committed delivery of quality steam for ten years, leveraging agro-waste biomass fuels sourced through the vast biomass supply chain developed by the company.

With this steam supply agreement, TOESL has proliferated its presence in the chemical industry



**8 ton biomass boiler supplying 'green' steam**

for providing outsourced utility delivery services under the Build-Own-Operate business model.



**360 TR capacity vapour absorption chiller**

## ROSS helped to solve Adam Afrique's operational issue in a vapour absorption chiller

**A**dam Afrique is a well-known producer of soaps in the west African country, Ivory Coast. In 2018, Thermax commissioned a double-effect steam fired vapour absorption chiller of 360 TR capacity at their plant. To ensure uninterrupted operation and predictive maintenance, the chiller is connected to Thermax's cloud-based remote monitoring technology, ROSS (Remote Online Service Support).

In April, an operational issue was observed in the chiller at the plant through ROSS. Thermax's service engineer was able to monitor and control the performance of the unit in real time. After identifying the issue, the plant operator was instructed to perform a vacuum test. The test confirmed a leakage in the chiller, and immediate measures to resolve the issues were communicated remotely.

Adam Afrique has appreciated Thermax's capability of providing remote service through ROSS and its experience of working with Thermax. Further, the company has decided to opt for Thermax chillers for its plant's expansion.

# Thermax celebrates National Technology Day, the 'new' normal way



**F**or the first time, Technology Day celebrations on May 11, took place entirely on the virtual platform. While employees missed the thrill of competing face to face, cheering the winners and interacting with our leaders in person, the e-event dissolved limitations of physical boundaries, leading to unprecedented participation from over 1000 employees across geographies.

The 12<sup>th</sup> edition of the Technology Day included presentations from teams across all divisions and regions on trending topics such as use of IoT, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and business sustainability post COVID. This was followed by a panel discussion

moderated by Dr. R.R. Sonde, R&D chief at Thermax on the topic, 'Is this India's chance to bounce back as a technology powerhouse post coronavirus outbreak, and if so, how can Thermax play a lead role in this transition?' Executive Council members, Hemant Mohgaonkar, B C Mahesh, Pravin Karve, Sharad Gangal and Prosenjit Sengupta, and Peter Overgaard, CEO, Danstoker Group were the panellists.

The chief guest of the event was Dr. Taslimarif Saiyyed, CEO and Director, Center for Cellular and Molecular Platforms (C-CAMP). He spoke about various ongoing cutting edge innovations in life sciences being pursued by his company.



Innovation means doing something smarter, better, cheaper, efficient and effective than before.”

- Meher Pudumjee

"Thermax is capable of influencing and ushering India and many countries into a different future."

- Ashish Bhandari

"Globalisation is a way of life and cannot be reversed, so the world has to move on."

- Hemant Mohgaonkar

**"To have an innovative mindset, one has to develop it over time, and it has no shortcuts."**

- Dr. Taslimarif Saiyyed

||||| "This entire episode has left all of us introspecting on the right way to lead both personal and professional lives."

- B C Mahesh

"Thermax has a strong innovative culture that can take the company to greater heights."

- Unny

***"Data analytics, information security, automation, etc., are going to be crucial as we go forward."***

- Pheroze Pudumjee

"European countries' biggest source of import is from China, and considering the current scenario, they need a reliable alternative."

- Peter Overgaard

"Thermax has the potential of providing green and clean technologies to diverse markets."

- Prosenjit Sengupta

"There is a need for putting reforms in place by authorities to attract companies that are moving out of China."

- Pravin Karve

♥♥ ***"The current situation is not an incremental change; it is a radical and a tectonic change. We can see the change, right from business and commerce to social behaviour."*** ♥♥

- Sharad Gangal

Various engaging activities such as treasure hunt and online quiz contest were conducted, prior to the event. Laxmikant Joshi (Enviro division) received the first prize in the treasure hunt competition, while Vaibhav Kumar (Heating division) won the first prize in the online quiz contest.

Asutosh M (Cooling division) and Babu P (Cooling division) secured first position in the webinar presentations.



# Introducing balanced scorecard

In continuation to the ongoing efforts for building and growing a strong channel network, Thermax's Channel Business Group (CBG) launched its Channel Segmentation programme based on the balanced scorecard framework on 20<sup>th</sup> August 2019.

The programme scores the performance of Thermax Channel Associates (TCAs) on critical parameters, across four key strategic areas – business, customer, people and process.

During the year, scores were rewarded to the channel partners on each of these parameters every quarter, apprising them about the hits and misses. The CBG team communicated corrective measures to the channel partners for filling gaps, enabling them to move up their categories (platinum, gold and silver); while growing their top line, bottom line and scaling up their organisational effectiveness. The final scores of FY2019-20 are a weighted average of scoring across all quarters.

The CBG team acknowledged the top 10 channel partners who have shown exemplary performance by putting in their best foot forward and excelled in each parameter.



## Top 10 TCAs for FY '20:

1. Thermodynamic Services – Upgraded to Platinum TCA for FY2020-21
2. Energy Corporates – Upgraded to Gold TCA for FY2020-21
3. Nikhil Technochem Pvt. Ltd.
4. Kamco Engineering Pvt. Ltd.
5. Cinzac Sales & Services Pvt. Ltd.
6. Icotec Asia
7. Prerana Engineering & Consultants Pvt. Ltd. (WBS)
8. Trivium Power Engineers (P) Ltd.
9. Greenergy Solutions Pvt. Ltd.
10. Uniway Engineers Pvt. Ltd.

"We thank our channel partners for wholeheartedly driving this initiative and striving towards enhancing their overall capabilities and operational excellence. We believe that this programme will augment the cherished collaboration that we share with our TCAs by giving it a strategic and objective driven dimension," said Hiten Grover, CBG Head.



Modularised boilers weighing 550 tonnes

## Plug and play boilers set sail for the Middle East

**T**BWES (Thermax Babcock & Wilcox Energy Solutions) recently shipped two units of plug and play boilers to the Middle East. Each boiler weighs 550 tonnes, and the dimensions are 25.5 meter (L) X 13.2 meter (W) X 13.9 meter (H). The highly modularised units will reduce site work substantially and align with Thermax's commitment to providing customer centric and value based solutions.

# Thanks for creating history

**T**hermax Board of Directors appreciated the TBWES project team for successfully completing the DORC (Dangote Oil Refinery Company) export order, a global benchmark in modularisation of utility boilers and precision engineering. The core team members involved were awarded recognition plaques during the Board meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> February 2020.



*L to R: Sunil Baranwala, Tushar Mendiratta, Pravin Karve, Nandkumar Kulkarni, Ajay Hantodkar, Amit Suryavanshi, Vaibhav Dhamal, Nandkishor Rathod, Meher Pudumjee, Sonal Agarwal, Nitin Naik, Sudip Chowdhury, Vinayak Nikam, Mahavir Vasagade, Shekhar Kashalikar, Vikas Patil*



*Installation of a bag house*

## Curtailing emissions for a cement major

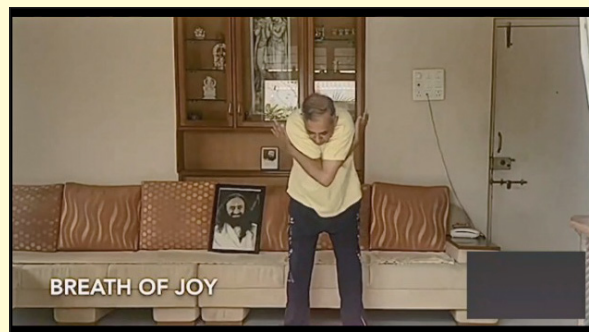
**A**ir Pollution Control business commissioned a bag house and an Electrostatic Precipitator (ESP) for a reputed company in Rajasthan, India. The bag house is installed for a pet coke mill handling gas volume of 2,16,000 Am<sup>3</sup>/hr whereas the ESP is installed after a clinker cooler, handling gas volume of 9,50,000 Am<sup>3</sup>/hr for one of the unit's production lines. The customer appreciated the team's effort and dedication towards efficiently supervising erection and commissioning of both the air pollution control systems, while adhering to high safety standards.



# Nurturing body and mind through yoga

To celebrate International Yoga Day, a virtual yoga session was organised through 'Tea Talks' platform on 22<sup>nd</sup> June as a part of Thermax's wellness initiative. Pravin Karve, CEO, TBWES, who is also a yoga expert, addressed the employees, highlighting the need for practising yoga on a regular basis to stay fit and healthy. During the session, Pravin said, "Our mind is going through so many emotions in a day, so it is important to do yoga to purify the mind. Yoga is nothing but giving a bath to your mind." Following his message, he demonstrated meditation, stretching exercises and *asanas* to improve flexibility, feel relaxed and positive. The show was anchored by Abhishek Bhawe from TBWES Marketing.

A desk yoga session was also conducted at Savli, Gujarat, by in-house trainer, Bikas Patra and all employees at the location participated from their respective workstations through a web meeting.



**A special session on International Day of Yoga 2020**

Tea Talks  
Monday, June 22  
5:00 PM - 6:00 PM

Share



*Virtual desk yoga session in Savli office*



## Reigniting SparX

Despite being physically distanced, the Chemical division found an innovative way to engage and stay connected with each other. In May, the team organised 'SparX', a platform for employees to showcase their talent and interests in extracurricular activities in front of their colleagues. For the first time, the event was conducted online and was open for the family members as well. All participants, including their families, thoroughly enjoyed the initiative.

# Thermax Foundation made way for Ranmasale villagers



River widening project undertaken at Ranmasale village near Solapur

Being a severely drought-stricken region, the Ranmasale village near Solapur has been suffering from water crisis, and the villagers have to stand in long queues during peak summer to get water from water tankers. Thermax Foundation (TF), along with the NGO,

Manavlok, initiated relief work in the village last year. In the first phase during May and June, TF arranged for water tankers twice a day to address their water crisis.

In the second phase of the project, widening and deepening of the village's stream were undertaken (3 km) in partnership with Manavlok, to ensure sustainable access to water. Following the outbreak of COVID, the work had to be stopped abruptly though fortunately, most of the digging work was done by then. The testimony from euphoric villagers after the first rain is an indication that the rainwater will now be stored and meet their agricultural activities adequately. After the COVID scenario improves, other plans for enhancing capability of villagers to ensure water conservation will also be undertaken. This is one of the few need-based initiatives of TF near factory locations to support the community in the vicinity.



THE EXPRESSION ADDA

In the month of May, Thermax launched a new initiative, Tea Talks – The Expression Adda.

It's a storytelling platform for employees to express and engage with their colleagues despite being distanced. Employees are invited to participate in a live event for speaking on topics close to their heart and of interest to larger audience. During the quarter, two talk shows have been organised on topics - teaching public speaking to the underprivileged kids by Akshay Raje, and advantages of yoga by Pravin Karve.

If you have some stories to share, please upload your nominations [here](#).

## Bringing on the heat

Heating division was facing the challenge of enhancing its sales team's technical knowledge to be able to partner with customers more confidently and effectively. One of the brainstorming sessions between the HR team and PU heads germinated a solution in the form of the 'Heat Techie Challenge'.

In this challenge, all participants receive a quiz link every week having five questions. Based on the consistency of participation, accuracy and speed of response, winners are decided and rewarded with cash prize every month.

The division has been driving the

challenge since January 2020 and it has become popular over time, diversifying from Heating to other divisions.

One of the participants, Pawankumar Lalwani said, "I would always wait for Monday morning to receive the quiz mail so that I could put my learnings to test and gauge my technical competence pertaining to the solutions that I proudly sell. The pattern of the questionnaire has made me dig deeper into the process heating subject."

"I perceive it as a wonderful initiative and a refresher which has provided a

platform for all sales professionals of Heating to come together and compete at same level for a common cause of excelling in the technical domain," said Geetesh Nirgudkar.





# Limelight

## Snehal sews face masks during the pandemic

Snehal Harkare, a member of the Maharashtra Girls Battalion of National Cadet Corps (NCC), was lauded by the Additional Director General of NCC for her support to the COVID-19 crisis. So far she has stitched 1,700 good quality, three-layered masks for distribution to the NCC employees under Pune NCC headquarter and plans to complete 3,000 masks in the coming days.

Snehal is the elder daughter of Shivaji Harkare from the WWS division. She is currently in the second year of her B.Com graduation course from Huzurpaga Women's College, Pune.



Snehal

## Ayan conferred the 'Shilpa Ratna' award

Ayan Paul, son of Shanti Paul from WWS division, was awarded the 'Shilpa Ratna' certificate by Sarbhabharatiya Sangeet-O- Sanskriti Parishad, Kolkata. Shilpa Ratna is a recognition given to the students who complete 11 years of course in the field of fine arts. This certificate qualifies the recipient for teaching theory and practical subjects in the domain of fine arts and also judge competitions.

Ayan was also recognised with the 'Shilpa Visharad' in Fine Arts in 2017. At present, he is in the final semester of B.A Hons. (English), at Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata.



Ayan

## Govind Gupta and Vilas Salunke achieve PMP certification

Two of our colleagues, Govind Gupta from Power division and Vilas Salunke from TBWES have recently received Project Management Professional (PMP) certification from the Project Management Institute (PMI).

PMP is a globally recognised certificate awarded for demonstrating proficient skills in project management. To achieve the certification, individuals have to submit a project sample, including all the technical and commercial details, apart from clearing the examination. PMP certification has an added value while dealing with overseas customers.



Vikas

Govind

## Death of a Salesman

### – Some thoughts on a new incarnation

***Taking cue from the movie, “The Death of a Salesman”, our ex-chairman, Late Mr. Rohinton Aga penned an article with the same title that delves into the typical sales and marketing fallacies, as also the need for a salesperson to transform from generating business to creating value. Even after decades, his perspectives continue to remain extremely contemporary and pertinent—another testimony to his visionary thinking well beyond his times.***

**M**any, many years ago I saw a magnificent movie called *Death of a Salesman*. It was a film version of the play by Arthur Miller. Many, many years later, as a matter of fact just a month ago, I happened to read the play. A well-known critic talks of a good play as an experience that shakes, exhausts and cleanses you. But reading this play was much more it was a mind-blowing experience. I am sure some of you have seen or read the play. If not, I strongly recommend it.

Thanks to Arthur Miller, Willie Loman, the hero or the anti-hero, has become the archetypal salesman in modern literature — larger than life, pushy to a fault, his strength is his contacts, devious at times, gregarious, charming in his own way, and always very human. As he ages past 60, his anecdotes become more dated, his contacts fade, he lives in a make-believe glorious past that is out of touch with the present, his sales dwindle, and his commission earnings force him down to the brink of penury.

I have called this article “Death of a Salesman” because I believe that the archetypal salesman has to

metamorphose to a new incarnation where he graduates from generating business to adding value – adding value for the customer, adding value to the organization.



The first change in the mindset and a very seminal one at that — is the awareness that we are in business to collect orders but to generate profit. It may sound naive, almost juvenile, and yet this simple, basic truth is so often forgotten. I can recall tonnes of well-known organisations in our line of business who have fallen by the wayside because their sales and marketing group ignored this simple truth. In the thrust and heat of battle, deliveries are pruned, discounts given, payments relaxed, the scope of creativity generously enlarged, penalties agreed upon, that last 10% retained by performance guarantees are over. Anything, but get the order – at any cost. Certainly, there are times when strategy demands that one reduces margins and even price at less than full cost so as to recover a part of the overheads. But marginal pricing as a way of life is the surest road to ruin. I

recall, in our earlier days, a major order was an occasion for great rejoicing. Champagne bottles were uncorked, and the celebrations continued in oblivion. But 15 months later, the project ended with time over-runs and cost over-runs. The sales turnover had gone up, but profits were down, and the customer was anything but happy. The champagne had turned sour.

The second change in the mindset is the recognition that every enquiry, does not merit an offer. I realise this may be crass heresy in the theology of a sales engineer. I recall, in one of our divisions, every enquiry would be relentlessly pursued. A budgetary offer would follow, and the sales engineer would be hooked. A host of clarifications would be called for, designs suggested and modified, visits made to the plant and endless discussions minuted only to find that either a decision for going ahead with the project is yet to be taken, or a decision is taken, in principle, but the availability of funds is far into the future, or — and that is the unkindest cut of all — the customer and his consultant pick your brains to work out



an optimal solution and then make it a basis for a free-for-all tender, and a scarce, valuable, high-power resource would be grossly wasted – only 5% of the offers ended in an order. A few years later down the road, sadder and poorer, we have realised the wisdom of selective bidding.

One of the occupational hazards of being a salesman is a near congenital disability for assessing risks. Everything looks bright to the point of blurring reality. If you read the play, Willie Loman's dysfunction is living in a make-believe world out of touch with reality. In the real world, customers can be difficult, costs can escalate in a fixed price contract, duties and taxes can change without notice, consultants can be whimsical, a first-of-a-kind project suffers rough weather for a totally unanticipated process change, performance parameters and penalties require inputs from the customer which he is not in a position to provide — and so on. Unless all these risks are clearly spelt out, assessed and factored in, making offers and collecting orders is a mug's game.

The third wisdom that the salesman must imbibe is the wisdom of the product-mix. Let me give you an example: one of our divisions markets a standard product that sells between Rs. 2 lakhs and Rs. 6 lakhs, depending on capacity. It enjoys a contribution over materials, conversion costs and direct expenses of around 48% to cover overheads and profits. The same selling team markets another product for larger users (for a similar application) at between Rs. 15 lakhs and Rs. 30 lakhs with a contribution of only 20%. The first product with the large contribution has good market potential. Deliveries are quick and we have a fair amount of unutilized manufacturing capacity. The second product with a low contribution

***“The archetypal salesman has to metamorphose to a new incarnation where he graduates from generating business to adding value – adding value for the customer, adding value to the organization.”***

requires protracted deliveries and is overbooked so far as manufacturing capacity is concerned. What do you think happens? The salesman makes a beeline for the large-ticket item even though the contribution is poor, deliveries are long and manufacturing capacity is limited. In the salesman's lexicon, big is beautiful. In the salesman's vocabulary, the name of the game is sales turnover — larger, the better. And mind you, in our company, there is no sales commission for a sales engineer or a sales manager. How do you explain this single-minded focus on sales turnover? I can only guess that deep down in the salesman's psyche is a feeling that can only find fulfilment through collecting orders — cost, contribution, deliveries and customer satisfaction take second place.

Talking of the product-mix brings me to another important issue: given a portfolio of products, if sales turnover is not the single most important consideration, what should it be? To my mind, the single most important consideration is the choice of product or products in which we enjoy a competitive advantage by way of giving full expression to our core competence.



When you are selling a project as distinct from a standard flange to flange product, clear, unequivocal

terms of contract are crucial to the success of the project. This is where a sales engineer can add — or subtract — value. Let me share with you our own experience:

The first problem that clouds a project during execution is that, although the scope is broadly defined, the detailed specifications remain open, and continue to remain open well through the duration of the contract. This suits the customer because changes can be made without paying for the cost of the changes. But it hurts us as suppliers. The solution is to specify in the contract a time and/or event when the specification will be frozen. This is where the sales engineer must understand the dynamics of a project and make it part of the contract.

The second issue is the impact of change in the scope of work and/or changes in specifications. Ambiguity in this one single factor has been the ruin of many a project and many a sales engineer. It should be imperative to insist on a clause — that, while it gives the customer the right to change scope and specifications, it can only be done subject to the time and cost implications of the changes — and enforce it.

The third is the issue of statutory commitments. Having been badly bruised, I realise that a sales engineer must have a template to ensure that such issues are looked at in detail before an offer is made.

The fourth concerns guarantees and warranties. Guarantees cover the committed performance of a product or a system, while warranties ensure performance over a substantial period of time. Many sales engineers, in their eagerness to sign a contract, gloss over the financial implication of a guarantee or a warranty commitment. The immediate performance of a

***“If the same concern can be expressed to the internal customer as one does to the external customer, (hopefully) quality becomes a way of life throughout the organisation.”***

project requires the support of inputs from the customer — for example, in a boiler, the quality of fuel or the quality of water or the quality of power. But, more importantly, the sustained performance of a product or a system calls for a quality of maintenance, which, if not forthcoming, can foul a warranty commitment. And, we, as suppliers, become helpless victims. And all because, in our eagerness to collect an order, we did not specify the obligations of the customer.

And, finally, the terms of payment.

The salesperson has to internalise the truth that profit on paper is not enough.

Profits have to be realised and realised in cash. What is worse, if they are not realised, is that further business requires an infusion of funds for working capital and if this goes on and on, we can continue to show good profits but end up in a debt trap. Equally annoying is an unrealised profit that attracts an income-tax. 50% of the profits are paid in tax without the wherewithal to pay it.

It has been my experience for the last 35 years in business that just as such an average salesperson finds it difficult to distinguish order booking from profitability, he finds it difficult to comprehend the difference between profits and a funds flow. It is not that the concept is difficult to comprehend. We have had numerous programs on Finance for Sales Executives. It is something more deep-rooted — endemic to his life-style. Through the play, *Death of a Salesman*, a common refrain that keeps recurring is Willie Loman's inability to live within his means. Not that he is a spendthrift — it is just that he has no clue about what money means — his ways almost childlike. Except, it can harm the organisation, and hurt it grievously.

On the other hand, we have a

business culture in our country where commitments for payment are realised more in the breach rather than in the observance. The only solution is to spell out clear terms of payment to ensure a strict discipline in the enforcement. There was a time when in our naivety, we accepted terms of payment 30 or 60 days after delivery.

A term of payment like this is open-ended and ends in providing employment to an array of debt-collectors. We changed the terms to documents through bank. It helped, but with our banking system being what it is, goods would reach the site before the documents. We now insist on payment prior to despatch. This is effective, except that in many cases the customers' program is delayed, and they find it convenient to pass on the delay to the manufacturer. The only foolproof solution is an inland letter of credit. We are trying hard to institutionalise this concept — but with limited success. Where do you think the resistance comes from? The salesman!

In project-related business, another bugbear is the retention of 5 or 10 per cent of the order until commissioning, handing over and, in some cases, until the warranty period is over. This becomes a *carte-blanche* for retention for an indefinite period of time because it is easy to find fault in some small innocuous component of the system. When you consider that 5 or 10 per

cent is all the profit one targets in a project, effectively, the retention ends in a no-profit or a loss. And, if the customer happens to be in the public sector, you can forget that last 10%. We have now made it an article of faith not to allow any retention. We would rather not accept the order.

I recall, when we made it mandatory not to permit retentions, the sales force was up in arms. We were warned that we may have to close down our business. I checked with the CEOs of our competing organisations. They all agreed with one voice that we should adhere to a reasonable code of conduct so far as terms of contract are concerned — it is a win-win for all. But, down below, at the level of the sales engineer, there is a fraternity across all the competing organisations which would subtly sabotage any effort at enforcing reasonable terms of contract. But we persevered. Our business has grown and grown without retentions.

*W. L.*

We have talked so far about the shift from order booking to profitability and profitability to realisation. Let us now consider the true role of a salesman — the role that really adds value for the customer.

It starts with the customer as the focal point — a customer, not as an entity with a bag full of banknotes, crying to be relieved; a customer, not as a nuisance to be checkmated with glib sales talk; but a Customer (with capital C), as a person who feels a need, is groping for an answer to fulfil that need and has turned to the salesman to share his anguish and receive advice and support that will end in a meaningful solution of his problem. The crucial, operative word in the whole dynamic of this situation is the word "need" — the customer's need. If you, as the salesman, can understand his



problem, reach out to his need, touch his vulnerability, he will be eating out of your hand.

Each quarter, as part of our Management Review, we look at Orders Lost. And in 80% of the cases, the reason given is "we were priced out". There are occasions when our pricing was inappropriate — this must become a source of learning and improvement. There are also occasions when we can be priced out because the competition is breaking into a market for strategic reasons. But these occasions are few and far between. The main reason why we lose an order is not that we were priced out — that is only an alibi, not a cause. *The root cause for losing an order is that we did not understand the customer's problem, did not reach out to his needs, did not touch all his vulnerability.*

Frankly, in capital equipment, where the life of a product is 15 to 20 years and beyond, the price of the product is a marginal issue — unless the salesman, makes it otherwise. There are far more important issues — reliability, availability, mean time between failure, maintenance downtime, operating comfort, operating costs, ease of maintenance, operator training, availability of spares and service — issues that impact substantially on the customer's costs and convenience, rather than price per se.

In the business of industrial boilers, we and our competitors make a cardinal mistake of focusing on fuel efficiency



to the exclusion of everything else. Certainly, fuel cost is a very important aspect. But as between a fuel efficiency of 80% and 84%, the net savings in fuel can be nullified many times over by one single breakdown of 24 hours. And, yet, you rarely find a salesman who builds his sales strategy on the virtues of reliability.

Understanding the uniqueness of the customer's need and addressing that need is the value that a salesman can add. And it is amazing what a wealth of opportunities this can unfold. And many of these, in time, have now become institutionalised. For example, the concept of "Just in Time" had its genesis in the customer's concern for carrying inventory. Leasing had its origins in the customer's incapacity to provide the initial capital.

Maintenance contracts relieve the customer's fear of unpredicted downtime. BOO (Build, Own and Operate) and BOT (Build, Own and Transfer) are innovative methods of

sharing the customer's burden of infrastructural investment. Management contracts provide an opportunity for the customer to put to good use an earlier investment with better expertise in management. The concept of life-cycle costs recognises that the initial capital coat may seem usurious— almost impossible— and, yet, can be justified by a discounted cash-flow and an imaginative source of financing. You can sell a 20-watt solar lamp at Rs. 10,000 with total justification using the life-cycle cost approach. So, the name of the game is understanding the unique need of the customer and working out a solution to meet that need.



Three years ago, we were inculcated into the mystique of TQM — Total Quality Management. Shorn off the Japanese bywords — Kaizen, Kanban, Pokoyoke — Total Quality simply implies a degree of excellence by which we satisfy the customer.

As a salesman, I am painfully aware that I am letting my customer down on many an occasion: poor quality of the equipment; delivery not in time; performance guarantees not being fulfilled. I feel aggrieved. I make a few noises. I take it up at the annual sales conference with engineering and manufacturing. Promises are made, but after the euphoria is over, it is business as usual. I feel helpless. After a time, I get reconciled to the inevitable. After all, I have my own targets to achieve. For my own sanity, I develop a thick skin around me. I distance myself from the customer. If delivery is delayed, I ask the customer to get in touch with the factory. If performance is a problem, I pass it on to service. The salesman's lament — does it not sound familiar? So true and with some justification.

***“There are times when strategy demands that one reduces margins and even price at less than full cost so as to recover a part of the overheads. But marginal pricing as a way of life is the surest road to ruin.”***

***“Marketing, on the other hand, looks at the requirements of tomorrow: increasing one's market share and expanding the overall size of the market.”***

How does one break this barrier? This is where the TQM approach comes in. The first wisdom is the recognition of the customer. But by “customer” we mean the person next in line — the external or internal customer. Each one within the organisation is a supplier and a customer. The “next in line” in the process is a customer. If the same concern can be expressed to the internal customer as one does to the external customer, (hopefully) quality becomes a way of life throughout the organisation. This is an extremely powerful concept. It breaks the traditional hierarchical mode of doing business.

The salesman's customer is the customer outside. He is, in turn, a customer to manufacturing or despatch or engineering as the case may be. Manufacturing must, therefore, address itself to giving total satisfaction to his “customer”, the salesman: a quality product, a committed delivery, a price that the market will bear and so on. This is all very well as a concept, but what does it mean in practical terms.

Three things:

- A direct networking shorn of departmental barriers.
- A quality of dialogue and feedback which becomes a basis for continuous improvement.
- An appraisal system that reinforces the “next in line” concept.

The second wisdom that we have imbibed through the TQM approach is a reverence for data — clean, unpolluted data. Gone are the days when glib statements would be made: most deliveries are delayed; or a certain product is defective; or level controllers do not work; or a make of safety valves is useless. The TQM discipline requires that all complaints — of the external or internal customer — are catalogued in an organised way.

As a result, we now have a wealth of data on which we can operate: how many units, what problems, with what frequency, generic or one of a kind, and so on.

The third part of the process is the Review. Each division has a cross-functional team consisting of sales, commercial, design, materials, quality assurance, manufacturing, project execution, etc. We call it DART — Divisional Apex Review Team. It meets every day for half an hour to an hour to acknowledge complaints and take action. But, more importantly, it periodically analyses the data and selects Improvement Projects with different cross-functional teams who take the project through a rigorous 10-step exercise — from collecting more detailed data, through brain-storming, establishing the root cause, identifying probable solutions and testing and validating the solutions. The salesman is an important member of the DART and the Improvement Project teams — his feedback triggers improvements and his knowledge and insight in the field add value to the improvement process. He is no longer at the receiving end, helpless, battered and forlorn. He is an empowered member of a team that can change things.



And so, we come to the final metamorphosis that adds value: marketing as distinct from selling.

In our organisation, as indeed in many other organisations, selling and marketing were part of the same canvas: most of us would operate in the selling “mode”, but, from time to time, look at new opportunities. If we were lucky, a new opportunity might unfold. If not, we survived on the dog-eat-dog syndrome.

We have now made a distinction between selling and marketing as separate activities, each with its distinct area of focus. Selling covers generating and responding to enquiries, identifying the customer needs, coming out with optimal solutions to meet those needs, converting enquiries into orders, sponsoring the orders into execution, delivery and realisation in cash and always ensuring a fair return to the organisation in the process. If done well, this can be a more than full-time job.

Marketing, on the other hand, looks at the requirements of tomorrow: increasing one's market share and expanding the overall size of the market. Increasing one's market share is a function of understanding competition. One effective way of doing this is bench-marking. Bench-marking means you select a leader in the market whom you wish to emulate and surpass. You work out a detailed template: their philosophy of doing business, their strengths and weaknesses, their product and pricing strategies, their product attributes in detail, their sales network, their service network, the quality of their personnel: their vision, their commitment, their calibre, their training, their presentations, and so on. It is not easy, but it can be done. A series of Annual Reports, cleverly analysed can provide a wealth of information. Many merchant bankers do this as a matter of routine. Visiting their customers' installations of various vintages and



***“The root cause for losing an order is that we did not understand the customer’s problem, did not reach out to his needs, did not touch his vulnerability.”***

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talking to their operating personnel can give you valuable data on performance or changes in design or service support. Discussing with suppliers and subcontractors can provide some interesting insights on their approach to quality. Consultants in the same line of business can be a rich resource. Talking directly to a competitor at various levels within the organisation in an atmosphere of openness can be equally revealing. Just because he is a competitor is no reason why we cannot be on talking terms!

I honestly believe that any company that wants to improve its market share must go through the bench-mark route. Bench-marking can infuse a breath of fresh air. In India, this activity is blissfully absent – at least, in the capital goods industry.

The second function of marketing is to expand the size of the market. A market can grow because the economy is growing and the specific industry partakes of the growth in some macro parameters – in population, in income levels, in savings and investment, in opening up of the economy, and so on. But if one is planning a growth rate faster than the macro parameters indicate, then a distinct marketing input is called for: either coming out with a new product that serves the market more effectively than an existing product, or identifying a new need that an existing or a new product can minister to. In our own little world of energy and environment, we have pioneered absorption chilling, using heat for cooling – replacing power-guzzling compressors in a power-starved country. Or husk-fired boilers to replace fossil fuel (oil or coal) with

agro-waste which is renewable – once again with substantial growth in the market share.

Or, cogeneration where one uses the exhaust from a prime mover for process heating or process cooling; or the treatment of brackish water and making it potable; or pollution control with processes which would convert a pollutant to a commercially viable product – these are examples where a new market and a new opportunity unfolds.

A new market does not necessarily mean a new product. The same product with a new marketing approach can open a much larger market: Franchising and leasing are examples where the same product can serve a much bigger market.

Marketing requires a different focus from selling. Whether it is bench-marking or replacing an existing product with a new product or identifying new markets with a similar or a different product, calls for the same basic motivation: viz. an awareness of a customer need. But giving it a thrust and direction requires an understanding and a skill beyond selling: recognising the nuances of the economic scene, being in touch with the state-of-the-art technology, interfacing closely with R&D, having creative approach that never discounts a crazy possibility, being imbued with an entrepreneurial flair for making things happen – these are the attributes of a marketing man, as distinct from a salesman. The ultimate, of course, is a salesman who, in time, can grow into the marketing function. Marketing, as a function, also requires a separate infrastructure with its own

time-frame and milestones.

Together, and yet apart, sales, with its focus on the here and now, and marketing, with its perceptions of the future, can build a business culture that can go well beyond conventional marketing frontiers.

“Knowing a market and its needs and utilising one's resources to fulfil those needs in a reasonably optimal way and ending up with a surplus, is the normal role of business. But understanding the market in depth, stretching it to the fullest potential, creating new unfulfilled needs, putting all of one's talents and that of the entire team in clear focus, being obsessed in the process, and emerging as a leader – this is living a mission. This is the role and the heritage of a value-added society. It is exciting, it is rewarding, and it is never ending...”

This, in a nutshell, encapsulates the true nature of the salesman's calling.

Willie Loman is dead. Let him rest in peace.

**Rohinton Aga**  
Ex-Chairman, Thermax

## 2020 – A year of new relationships

**T**he comment I hear from most from my acquaintances on learning that I have joined Thermax during the COVID pandemic is, “working remotely for a new company must make it very difficult for you to settle in.” My first few months with Thermax, in contrast to what may be expected, have been anything but difficult. For this, I have Unny to thank more than anyone else. My first meeting with Unny was at Meher’s house where we spent 5 hours together and time just flew by. From that moment on, Unny has guided me through the ropes and helped me understand the company through his perspective. Unny loves Thermax in every sense of the word. His connect with people, his knowledge of the business, and his achievements – they all speak for themselves. Through all his incredible personality traits, his humbleness shines a bright light on the person that has been a steady hand at the helm of Thermax.

I, along with all Thermaxians, look forward to the opportunity for taking Thermax forward in the next leg of the company’s growth journey. As we walk down a new path, there is strength to be derived, along with a deep sense of responsibility, from the foundation that Unny bequeaths us. Even during the uncertain times



of 2020, Thermax has a very healthy treasury and a strong balance sheet, and more importantly, Thermax enjoys immense goodwill from its employees and its customers. Any incoming leader would consider himself (or herself) to be extremely fortunate to have this springboard available. I know that I will constantly reach out to Unny for a long time to come for his sound advice and direction.

This volume of “Fireside” will surely stand the test of time and years from now, COVID will likely be nothing more than a memory for many of us that have lived through this incredible year. For me, this has been a year full of change – a new city, a new job, a new team, a new company. Despite it all, I know that I will look back at this year fondly

because of the opportunity to form new relationships. Unny has been like an ideal elder brother as he has watched me stumble through my first few weeks, steadying me constantly with his sage advice. As Unny moves to a stage that encompasses all of India, I wish him the best and say goodbye with a promise that I will do everything I can to take his legacy forward.



– **Ashish Bhandari**  
(Joint Managing Director)





## Ensuring equitable growth for sustenance

‘**N**ature is healing,’ was a popular catchphrase during the initial lockdown period. Things changed and made us think that nature is so important for our day to day living. The Sun is brighter, air is fresher, rivers are flowing cleaner, birds are chirping and flying freely and the silence has become audible.

COVID-19 has thrown the whole world on the back foot by a few decades. The current pandemic has posed innumerable questions in front of us. This is the only opportune time to find out the answers and

prepare ourselves for the future. Who knows, there might be another worse pandemic waiting around the corner with an airborne virus. What will happen to our populous cities? If we don’t prepare for the most unexpected and don’t adapt to a sustainable lifestyle, we would be wiped off from this planet.

It would not be prudent to look at this pandemic in isolation. In the last few years, we have experienced a significant spike in natural calamities, may it be cloud bursts, floods, cyclones, earthquakes, wildfires or droughts. There has to be a link

in between all these. Whenever there is an anthropogenic interference in the environment, disaster strikes. We have exploited environment in all possible ways under the garb of development.

And after doing all this, our planners wish to make the rivers and roads beautiful by implementing disastrous projects like “river front development”. It is like taking our old unwell mother to a beauty parlor instead of a hospital.

This is the opportune time to revisit and review our concept of “development”. In 1951, the population in rural and urban India was 83% and 17%, respectively. By 2011, it was 69% and 31%, respectively. It happened mainly because of huge migration to cities due to our urban centric development model.

The rural India is deprived of good education, health facilities, job opportunities and basic infrastructures like good roads and 24X7 electricity. Whereas, in cities, we enjoy all of them. As a result, the rural Indian started migrating to cities. He could not afford a proper house in cities, so he settled in what we labelled as slums which are now the “hot spots” of COVID-19. This was not by his choice but due to circumstantial pressures. This also put humongous pressure on urban infrastructure like roads, water supply, solid waste management, etc., which is crumbling under it. The cities are saturated with problems like water pollution, air pollution, garbage, water shortage, traffic jams, etc.

The cities have already become obese and therefore, unsustainable. Now; it is not “growth” but “malignant growth” of the cities. Imagine 20 people staying in a two-bedroom flat, nobody will be either be happy or healthy. Unfortunately, our policymakers and urban planners failed to understand and implement this while planning for the cities. The malignant growth will continue until we find solutions to the urban problems that address the issue of migration.

So, the time has come to make villages healthier. The need of the hour is to reduce, stop and then reverse the migration to make our cities sustainable. The city planning needs to be shifted away from cities. We need inconvenient cities and convenient villages. Unless we shift our focus of development from urban India to rural India, India will not be happy, healthy and sustainable.

“No nation is built healthy to defeat a pandemic, Nation defeats a pandemic because it is healthy.”

This is the right time for all of us to understand the difference between health and obesity, growth and malignant growth.

You can't enjoy democracy without responsibility. So, unless we the citizens do not take the onus of sustainability on our shoulders, the world is not going to be sustainable.

Let all of us hope wisdom prevails.



– Sarang Yadwadkar  
(Environment Activist)



# Slice of Life

## Teacher's 'Jugaad' for online class using refrigerator tray wins praise

**S**chools and colleges across the country have resorted to online classes amid the coronavirus pandemic. The move to digital learning has also forced teachers to come up with innovative methods of conducting classes in the absence of a traditional classroom setup. An online teaching *jugaad* or creative hack is winning much praise and appreciation on social media.

Earlier this month, a Twitter user took to the microblogging platform to share a picture of a teacher using a transparent refrigerator tray for her online class. After balancing the tray on two containers, she put her smartphone on top of it and was photographed solving a problem on a piece of paper kept on the table below. The innovative hack, which removed the need for her to hold her phone in one hand and also allowed students to view the problem as she solved it, has been widely lauded on social media.

Source : NDTV



## From Mona Lisa to MJ, Kochi's Walls Covered in Graffiti With a Desi Twist

**T**ape your socks on because what you're about to see may just blow them off. As you walk around the cobbled streets of Fort Kochi, graffiti artwork will pop up from time to time and yes, they're guaranteed to make your day. From Mr Bean to Marilyn Monroe, from Mona Lisa to Michael Jackson, from James Bond to Che Guevara, everything has been given an Indian twist by anonymous artist(s).

Here are some captures of the graffiti work:



Kentucky's most famous man just frying some parottas in his summer-friendly mundu.



Appachi Mona Lisa just chillin' with a matka.



Bean-acharya speaketh some wisdom

Source : NDTV

# Thermaxians go green this World Environment Day

This year's World Environment Day celebration on 5<sup>th</sup> June focussed on the theme, 'Biodiversity – a concern that is both urgent and existential'. Over 300 employees across locations in India attended the event through webinars, given the prevailing lockdown. Highlights of the day this year was the launch of a learning module, 'Decarbonising Life', jointly by L&D and Corporate HSE teams for employees to measure and improve their carbon footprint. A calendar was released by Bill Shukla, head of Environment BU to observe days aligning with the Sustainable Development Goals throughout the year.

Employees participated in saplings plantation drive within the manufacturing facilities and customers sites and took a pledge to protect the environment, while adhering to physical distancing norms.

Online activities such as slogans, painting, video and quiz contests were conducted on interesting topics viz. 'Conserve biodiversity to preserve humanity' and 'COVID-19 versus biodiversity' that drew participation from close to 300 employees across regions.



## World Environment Day Slogan Contest



### Winner

‘चलो मिलकर करें संरक्षण जैविक विविधता का,  
करके हरण अपने बुरी आदतों का !!  
और मिलकर करें विकास विश्व में मानवता का,  
रखके ख्याल अपने पर्यावरण का!!’



- Ajay Gupta  
TBWES

## Slogan contest

1<sup>st</sup> prize: Ajay Gupta, TBWES

2<sup>nd</sup> prize: Trinath Boddeti, Absorption Cooling

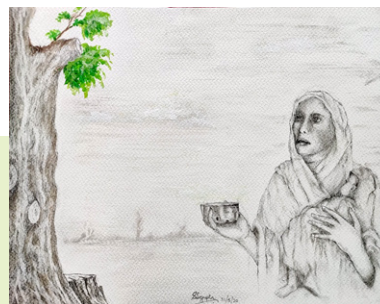
3<sup>rd</sup> prize: Mitul Patel, Chemical

## Drawing completion

1<sup>st</sup> prize: Suvra Sengupta, ▶  
Heating

2<sup>nd</sup> prize: Rohit Kumbhar, Power O&M

3<sup>rd</sup> prize: Dilip Singh, Power O&M and Anirban Chowdhary,  
Power MPP



## Video making contest

1<sup>st</sup> prize: Sachin Gardi, TBWES

2<sup>nd</sup> prize: Shrikant Phatkar, TBWES

3<sup>rd</sup> prize: Sanjay Gaikwad, Power SPP and Mohit, TCSL

## Quiz contest

1<sup>st</sup> prize: Mayuri Nikam, TBWES Services

2<sup>nd</sup> prize: Parthaswamy D, Chemical

3<sup>rd</sup> prize: Mohanavel V, Power MPP



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Thermax's solar business recently commissioned three solar PV plants for a reputed dairy company in India and a solar PV system for a pharmaceutical major in Vadodara, Gujarat.

The projects for the dairy company were executed on EPC basis at the customer's plant across three states - Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. Totalling to 682 kWp, a combination of rooftop and ground mounted, these installations will reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emission by 800 tonnes/annum.

The 503 kWp rooftop solar PV project installation in Gujarat was also executed on EPC basis. The solar PV system will not only reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emission by 600 tonnes/annum, but it will also help to save on customer's electricity cost substantially.

The execution and commissioning of these projects were carried with utmost safety and in line with COVID guidelines.

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