

A CENTURY OF EXCEPTIONAL ENGINEERING



From its beginnings in jet ejectors, CR Ocean Engineering now stands as a definitive voice in the maritime scrubbing market. Ahead of centenary celebrations this year, Company President, Nick Confuorto, shared his view on the organisation's marine sector success. Tony White reports.

CR Ocean Engineering (CROE) represents a natural evolution in a wide spectrum of activities. The company's activities span a host of maritime scrubbing projects that have seen its expertise entrusted to leading shipping lines across the world. Yet its origins are firmly planted in New York under a different guise and in a different era, as President, Nick Confuorto, explained.

"The Croll Reynolds Company commenced operations in 1917 and has been in continuous operation since," he revealed. "Croll

Reynolds' primary activity is the design of jet ejectors for installation in process plants. The company is still focussed on jet ejectors under a third generation of ownership"

While the enterprise progressed in earnest, its formative decades and the advent of new technologies and economic imperatives paved the way for a wider application of its technical talent.

"During the course of the 1960s, the company's engineers developed jet venturi fume scrubber systems targeting the control

of industrial air pollutants," Mr Confuorto continued. "Although under separate ownership and management from the start, CR Ocean Engineering is an outgrowth of that endeavour, targeting the marine rather than the industrial sector."

Inspiring cleaner waters

The matter of environmentalism at sea has never been of greater importance than it is today. CROE has proven a vital player in defining that change.

CROE is headquartered in New Jersey, although its origins were in New York, where a centenary celebration in November promises to commemorate every step taken by the firm over its long and storied lifespan.

"Our modern-day headquarters are in Parsippany, New Jersey, with a research and development facility in Teterboro, New Jersey, that is outfitted with sophisticated

testing systems," Mr Confuorto expanded. "As for manufacturing, that is handled at the global level, enabling us to stay close to our clients wherever they operate.

"Through relationships across the globe, we have not only established a strong manufacturing footprint representing the latest technologies, but also a robust sales network to which we owe a great deal of the success that we now enjoy."

New avenues are opening

Mr Confuorto's expertise in maritime scrubbing is well regarded among his contemporaries, and his appointment as President of CROE enabled the business to maximise its capabilities in the industry. It also opened numerous new doors, with the cruise industry in particular proving to be a strong advocate of its systems and technologies. That said, the current cruise boom sweeping the world's waters is but a fraction of the company's current market scope.

"The maritime market is, by its nature, difficult to predict," Mr Confuorto reflected. "However, the cruise market represents a major segment of our installed base. The container ship industry, which we once assumed would be a primary revenue pillar, has become more of what one might call a back-seat player in that respect; we hope to see them back in the market soon. Furthermore, shifting priorities in the maritime market today mean that the focus has shifted for CROE altogether.

"Whereas this was once primarily a retrofitting market, the balance is now sliding to favour newbuilds," Mr Confuorto remarked. "Our strategy is to sustain the flexibility needed to pursue all avenues as the market evolves. Experience has taught us that clients will gauge their own strategies by the availability of technology, ▽



President,
Nick Confuorto



contracts, fuel and resources. We will make our advanced technology available and the fuel cost differential will provide the driver for our business.”

The differentiators

CROE offers closed loop, open loop and hybrid scrubber systems that are universally sought after by vessel owners from every maritime sector. The market is competitive however, and CROE has responded with numerous stratagems.

“CROE’s focus is entirely on marine scrubber technologies, so we don’t have the same spread of interest demonstrated by many of our competitors. That focus gives us a tremendous edge,” Mr Confuorto explained. “Our products incorporate simplicity in design, effective use of space and ease of installation, together with high performance and reliability in long-term use.

“Even as competitors come and go, we expect the scrubber market to expand as the economic and performance elements of these systems become critical to environmentally conscious ship owners and operators, who recognise the challenge presented by the new regulations and understand the solutions scrubbing systems guarantee them. Of course, as engineers we rely on a robust network of suppliers that we have cultivated over our century of existence, whose acumen ensures that we will continue to provide the great service for which we are known.”



As opportunities grow, so too does the scope of CROE’s activities. The company’s international approach ensures that fresh prospects exist not only in the expansion or inauguration of facilities, but also in welcoming fresh engineering minds into the fold to increase the firm’s pool of talent.

“The only major challenge that we face today is convincing our customers that a ‘wait and see’ approach to the fuels question is not the answer,” Mr Confuorto asserted. “Although we are optimistic about the development of our market, we understand that many fuel suppliers have displayed an unsettling degree of ambiguity regarding the availability of various fuel grades.

Regardless of the bunkering options available in 2020, we are confident that our equipment will play a critical role in future of the maritime industry.

“We offer an immediate solution that ensures that ships are primed and ready to continue operating beyond this vital international deadline. With that in mind, and with the firm belief that scrubbers represent the best option, we will galvanise 100 years of organic growth with more of the same, aligning ourselves with the needs of the industry at a global scale and taking pride in presenting a solution that actively improves the environment and therefore the legacy that we leave behind to future generations.”

