Celebrating 40 years in the making

For 40 years, Prentec has provided innovative solutions to treat affected water worldwide. The company's experience and world-class in-house fabrication coupled with their expertise, continues to ensure a consistent supply of treated water that is as pure, as it is life-giving.

As the company celebrates this significant milestone in business, John Buchanan, who founded the company in 1974, discusses Prentec's business in the early years: “My objectives when I started the company were completely different to those of the company today. The name Prentec came from “process engineering technology” and I decided that I was going form a company that would sell process engineering technology into water and waste water and that’s how Prentec started in business in 1974”.

“For the first two years in business, I focused on selling process engineering and technology. It came about that the equipment that I wanted to use was not readily available. I therefore started designing clarifiers and aerators and sub-contracted out the manufacturing of this equipment”.

“By 1980 I realised that we would need to have our own manufacturing facility, as the business was expanding at a rapid rate. It was in 1981 that I purchased the 9 000m² of land in Chloorkop, Kempton Park and we started to build this complex, with the first bay being built in 1983. In 1985 we started building the office block and factory, which was officially opened in 1989. This was followed by the second bay in 1992 and the third bay in 2009” says Buchanan.

Milestones

Commenting on the milestones in the company’s history, Buchanan mentions: “the opening of this our complex in Chloorkop is a significant milestone, as we could then provide a total turnkey design and construction facility to our clients, that would include civils, mechanicals, electrical, etc. At that time we were the only company who could provide this complete service offering”.

Managing director of Prentec, Stewart Buchanan, remembers as a young 9 year old boy, he watched his mentor in life start his dream. “My father John had the courage, the attitude, self-discipline values and most importantly the passion that was needed to turn this dream into reality...” says Buchanan.
One of the first clients in Prentec’s business was Eskom, under Prentec contract no. 002. “We constructed a water softening plant for one of Eskom’s power stations in Newcastle. Forty years later, Eskom continues to be a client to our company. We are proud to say that the projects throughout our 40 year history have contributed locally to South Africa’s water and waste water infrastructure” says Stewart Buchanan.

A vision of innovation

“Prentec’s vision, going forward is to continuously evolve, develop and innovate new technologies that will be more efficient and cost effective to run and overall reduce operating costs. This is what we want to develop on an on-going basis” says Stewart Buchanan.

Speaking at the event, process director, Adrian Viljoen said “for the past forty years Prentec has been serving the needs of our clients. What sets us apart is the fundamental way in which we address these needs. We have the capacity to deliver process plant manufactured items right from concept, through the design, manufacture, installation and commissioning and O&M. We can configure custom solutions, which is crucially important in today’s ever changing environment. We are continuously developing our products to meet these needs”.

It is through these endeavours that the company has created a large number of jobs and are continuously training and developing people through formal and informal training programmes.

Commenting on some of the company’s latest innovations, Viljoen says “We have moved strongly into UF and RO. We are leaders in applying these to sea water desalination, mine water reclamation and other industrial water renovations and reuse. We are on the brink of commercialising our freeze desalination technology. This promises to address many of the brine problems associated with desalination”.

“Prentec’s management team are extremely proud the significant accomplishments made over the past 40 years, which have all contributed to making Prentec the leading South African company that it stands for today - a provider of world class process engineering solutions from concept to completion. Today we are celebrating 40 year old partnerships with our loyal clients, suppliers and partners who are an integral part of our achievements and successes”, says Stewart Buchanan in closing.

About Prentec

Prentec has led the way as South Africa’ premier provider of water, sewage and industrial effluent treatment technology. Combined with their modern manufacturing facility, equipped to provide process plant and equipment fabrication in both carbon and stainless steel, Prentec has been delivering intelligent turnkey solutions to the water industry since 1974.

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