EURO MANCHETTEN & COMPENSATOREN

RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT: ANSWERS TO COMPLEX QUESTIONS

ALAIN DIRVEN
Research & Development

Our company's strength really lies in the solutions we offer for matters that others can't solve technically and where standard solutions won't provide any real results. More and more, customers come to us with complex questions because we've made a name for ourselves with the solutions we find. Our response to this increasing interest was to set up our own R&D department.

With these, somewhat trickier questions, Alain Dirven is the man who will delve deep into the issue. The exceptional thing we've noticed is that often these questions aren't only coming from the customer. Questions from production employees or the management board are also more than welcome, Dirven will investigate.

QUESTIONS FROM CUSTOMERS

Our sales engineers will usually be the go-to people to answer questions from our customers. They are equipped with the necessary experience and are therefore more than capable of indicating if a flexible connector can handle a certain temperature, vibration or chemical load. If further investigation is required or if new use conditions are being suggested, we bring in Dirven.

RAISING THE BAR HIGH

"The type of questions that we receive really varies," explains Dirven. "Many of the questions I get are specifically about different aspects of material technology. Besides that, they relate to safety, sustainability and durability," he concludes. "Companies like to raise the bar high when it comes to how they operate. My role is to make sure that clients are provided with flexible connectors for the lowest possible price that are resistant to any vibrations, temperatures or chemical products that the flexible connectors of the company have to deal with. With this, I also take into account the maintenance interval."

BLUEPRINTS DONE WHILE YOU WAIT

Dirven also develops products upon the request of our clients. "A large installation company asked us if we could help with the energy efficiency of a building. This is where our expertise in air ducts comes in handy," says Dirven. "Transitions with many dead ends and air leaks are unfavourable for the flow of air and energy efficiency. A lot of energy goes to waste. More effort is required for the ventilation to supply enough fresh and conditioned air in the different areas. This why we developed flexible connectors that are 100% airtight," he continues. Dirven aims to obtain the Luka-system certificate Class C.

SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR LAWS AND RULES

Furthermore, Dirven helps clients to meet the law and regulations in the field of construction and climate techniques. "Sometimes it's near impossible for a company that is building an entirely new factory to know whether or not each part complies with all the regulations. In this case, our reaction is always: flexible connectors are our expertise, we make sure that this part meets each and every requirement for your product. For many companies this is not an unnecessary luxury, because the laws in the field of, for example, food safety, have become more strict and complex."

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DEVELOPING IDEAS FROM THE MANAGING BOARD

Our director Walter van Loon is another person that makes sure Dirven is never just sitting around. “He is a man that always sees opportunities in things and is full of innovative ideas. He’s the man I go to for any help in finding out whether or not something is technically or commercially viable. For example, I’m currently investigating if it’s both commercially and technically viable to launch a new type of filter.”

“Replacing a filter takes time, which costs money. For this reason, you want the surface of the filter to be as large as possible so that it doesn’t have to be replaced as often. There are different techniques to enlarge the surface by folding it, this way you’ll have more filter in the space.”

Walter has discovered a new way of folding that costs a little more time than the conventional folding technique. This does mean, however, that the filter will be pricier. But in return for that, you have a filter that is more durable and will need a replacement or cleaning a lot less often. “Right now, I’m looking into whether or not there is a demand for this type of filter. Our sales department supports us by presenting this to our customers,” says Dirven. “We also showcase prototypes at trade shows and test what the reactions are.”

FASTER AND CHEAPER PRODUCTION

Besides all that, Dirven supports the production department if they come across any issues. “For some flexible connectors, we make use of a rubber seal that has to be secured in something. This is done manually and takes a lot of strength and effort. For this reason, I investigated whether we can use a different material other than rubber that can be secured inside the flexible connector more easily. Of course, the flexible connector should also perform just as well, if not better. We’ve come to a point by now that this worked out very well and we no longer use rubber for this flexible connector.”

THE SECRET BEHIND THE SUCCESS

So, what material should we use instead? Dirven is hesitant to share too many details, as he doesn’t want to make it too easy for others to copy everything he worked for and investigated. This researcher is full of interesting stories of which he cannot share too many details. Another example would be the earthquake-proof flexible connector that, amongst others, has been developed for the gas extraction area in the Dutch city Groningen. But perhaps we’ll tell you more about this in our next newsletter…

WE’RE ALWAYS HERE TO HELP

Would you like to inquire about anything in the field of flexible connectors, expansion joints or piping technology? Could you use some help with that? Or would you like to carry out a test and would like to know if we could help you? The best way to find answers is to contact us via info@euromanchetten.nl or tel. +31 (0)416 286 240.