

Bray continues to provide superior quality

Bray International, Inc. is recognized throughout the world for their commitment to high quality product lines and personalized customer service. Their extensive product portfolio includes high quality brand names such as Bray Controls, Flow-Tek, Tri Lok, and Ritepro. Valve World Americas had the opportunity to interview Dr. Brindesh Dhruva, Vice President of Global Technology at Bray International.

By Sarah Schroer & Sarah Bradley



Dr. Brindesh Dhruva, Vice President of Global Technology, Bray International.

"I find Bray to be a remarkable company," said Dhruva. "Since its founding in 1986 it has grown with tremendous success, not only geographically, not only in terms of the manufacturing capacity, but in the breadth of the products and technology that it offers as well as the industries that it serves."

Bray's co-founders, Craig Brown and Frank Raymond, grew the company from the ground up with the goal of establishing Bray as the High Performance Company stoked by their entrepreneurial vision. Beginning with their very first valve prototypes, they soon made a name for themselves with their resilient seated butterfly valves, quickly developing the reputation of superior quality with personalized customer service. After gaining much success within the first years, Bray expanded internationally to the U.K., Canada, Mexico, and Continental Europe. The success continued through the 1990's with rapid expansion into Australia, China, and Hong Kong and with the addition of new products on the actuation side. Bray's product portfolio continued to grow with the acquisition of the Bray/McCannalok product line in 1996, Flow-Tek in 1999, and Ritepro in 2000, to include high performance butterfly valves, ball valves, and check valves. "That's the type of success with a customer-centric approach that Bray began with," shares Dhruva. "There has always been a tremendous focus on customer needs and solutions. It's in the company's DNA, from its founding fathers."

Customer-driven product development

Bray has always emphasized strong customer relationships as a top priority – creating new relationships and fostering existing ones. It is this understanding of customer needs that drives Bray product development. "We have a very detailed

product development process," explained Dhruva. "The Voice of the Customer is fully incorporated during the initial stages of our product development efforts. One of the first things we do is to reach out to our customers. We also involve our global organizations to better understand project opportunities. Most of our good ideas come from our Customers, or those that have the first line of contact with our Customers." From heavy oil challenges faced in Canada to the mining challenges faced in Australia, Bray's global footprint allows us the closeness to our Customers to fully understand their challenges.

"Our global objectives focus very heavily on having, maintaining, and increasing those relationships. We put a lot of effort into customer relationship management to ensure that there is not only strong communication on the sales side, but also to ensure enough influence into our product development efforts as well. Our sales organization and our customers should feel very involved in everything we are doing, including the products that we develop."

Bray also has the capability for rapid response engineering and customization for specific applications of existing products. "As we continue to grow into industries that require high-tier and customized products," says Dhruva, "Bray can leverage a very systematic approach to product development and R&D, while maintaining the agility in our organization to address specific application challenges that our customers face."

Expansive product portfolio for applications across industries

"Our product portfolio has tremendous breadth and depth. It includes butterfly



valves, control and actuation systems, speciality slurry valves, ball valves, check valves, and now knife gates as well," says Dhruva. "The market base that we serve is increasingly diverse. We continue to expand into key industries and key geographical areas. We will continue to see a growing demand of our products, from the LNG market to refineries and in many applications such as cryogenic, high temperature, and slurries."

Indeed, Bray has unique capabilities to design and manufacture actuators, pneumatic and electric, with related control accessories and bus systems, as well as valves. Also, all Bray factories are ISO approved, and their products are designed and manufactured to CE/PED, SIL, ANSI, JIS, DIN/Pas1085, ISO, API, NSF, ASME, and other relevant standards for special requirements for cryogenic, fugitive emissions, water, nuclear, sanitary, and many other applications.

"We are ever mindful that our Customers face the day-to-day challenges of operating in extreme conditions while maintaining very high safety and environmental standards. As such, we put particular attention on product reliability. Bray products go through extensive validation testing – not only demonstrating the robustness of our designs but also putting our products through proper manufacturing validation, which demonstrates our ability to consistently produce a high quality, highly reliable product. The manufacturing validation requirement ties into Bray's commitment to fulfil each customer's requirements on a continual basis."

Dhruva also shares the importance of good market introduction of a new product as a result of very careful planning and execution. "This means engaging our customers and engaging our field organizations. A good product launch helps a new product rapidly establish itself among its target users and gain customer



products to the global flow control market



satisfaction and enhance our own company's position with our customers. Good market introduction of a product is not accidental; it requires careful planning and systematic execution."

Worldwide reach keeps Bray on top of the competition

Part of the Bray influence in the world marketplace is their commitment to customer service and product excellence. Bray is based in Houston, Texas, and maintains a strong manufacturing presence there, in addition to its manufacturing facilities around the globe. Brazil, China, India, and Europe are all an integral part of Bray's manufacturing process. Wherever Bray products are needed, they are provided with the same quality that began with its co-founders and continues with its team of dedicated people around the world. Bray's customer commitment is shown through

their network of distributors and company sales offices, each of which is dedicated to the philosophy of customer service. As a global partner in flow control, Bray is dedicated to the needs of its customers.

Attendance at industry events is another way Bray stays on top of trends. "I think that the Valve World conferences provide wonderful opportunities to glimpse at key industry trends from innovation to application challenges," says Dhruva. "Bray certainly is present in many of the industry events. I do think that the valve industry is somewhat conservative when it comes to embracing innovation from outside our industry, but that is something Bray puts a lot of emphasis on. Many of our technical teams, including myself, are from other industries. This perspective complements the vast experience that the many long-term Bray employees already have, quite well, and we all keep it on the forefront – to bring new, innovative solutions to the challenges our customers face."



Bray's continuing path towards growth and success

Dhruva also shared his thoughts on the future of the valve industry and the importance for Bray to continue to have a strong presence when it comes to the

products that they offer, such as their triple offset valves, their severe service ball valves, and the products used in cryogenic applications, the oil and gas market, and the power and nuclear market.

"Bray will continue to play a bigger and bigger role in terms of innovative solutions, not just product innovation," says Dhruva. "We have very strong commitment to R&D for the development of new products and solutions that need to meet the increasingly challenging environments that our customers face. I believe Bray puts an emphasis on this – more than other companies of our size – because of our legacy and the people that we have attracted to our organization who bring new ideas and innovation to an already strong organization."



BRAY INTERNATIONAL AT A GLANCE

Locations: Africa, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe, Latin America, and the USA

Product List: Butterfly valves, ball valves, check valves, knife gate, actuators, accessories, and commercial valves & actuators

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