

---

# Reps Look East And West For Growth

Two rep firms have cast their sights overseas — one looking east, the other west — as they seek to take advantage of future opportunities for their respective firms.



*Some members of the Sherry Team at Sherry International Changzhou Seminar in December 2005. Left to right: Brian Zhang, motor engineer and technical support; Jennifer Du, chief mechanical engineer and products sourcing; Wennie Gao, administrative manager and accountant; Stuart Glasby, president of Glasby & Sons, Inc.; Leilei Wang, president of Sherry International, Inc.; Nancy Huang, commercial and sales manager, Sherry International Beijing branch; William Zhang, director of Sherry International Changzhou branch; and Engene He, Sherry Motion motor engineer and sales, Shanghai branch.*

---

• Applied Process Equipment, Phoenix, Arizona, has signed with TEFSA Group, a premier European belt filter press/filter press manufacturer in Barcelona, Spain, to be their exclusive United States/Canadian distributor/agent.

• H.S. Glasby & Sons, Inc., West Chester, Pennsylvania, has forged a relationship with Sherry International to be their representative for Chinese manufactured high-tech products in the United States. At the same time, the rep firm has agreed to be a U.S. company's representative in China for their line of products.

Considering Applied Process Equipment's venture first, here's how Richard Sinclair, the agency's president and MANA's District 8 director, explained what has ensued: "To take advantage of the opportunity in today's emerging wastewater treatment markets, it is crucial that equipment suppliers establish industry partnerships to strengthen their competitive positions. The TEFSA filtration product line positions us as a one-stop resource for packaged de-watering systems, including all ancillary pumps, UV devices, clarification equipment, tanks, mixers and controls, to meet our customer's needs for cost-effective procurement."

"TEFSA products are engineered to deliver lifecycle economy with long life, low maintenance and simple, automatic operation," added Rob Wise, vice president of sales & marketing for TEFSA-USA. "We are very excited to bring TEFSA's European technology to the United States and Canada.

According to Sinclair, "I've got

to look back several years as I consider the decision we've recently made with the company in Barcelona. At that time, I was interviewed for a line and not selected by a major manufacturer. If they selected me as a rep, I would have never reached the point where we took this next step.

---

### Right Place at the Right Time

"In the normal course of conducting business, I had become aware of this firm in Barcelona through a pump company in Pennsylvania. The Pennsylvania firm had established contact in Europe and was going to market their products in the United States. I agreed to be their western rep. That pump company was purchased, however, and the purchaser no longer wanted to be involved and pulled the plug. I contacted the folks in Barcelona only seeking to rep them in the western third of the United States.

"I'll have to admit that I had a U.S. rep mentality going into this. After traveling to Spain to visit them and spending a week there, I knew that working with them was exactly the right thing to do. They commented to us (my wife and me) that we were unlike any other Americans they had met. They saw we were willing to take the time to get to know them and to build a relationship.

"At the end of meeting for a week, their feeling was they would prefer not to have us as a western rep; rather, they wanted us to be their exclusive U.S. reps. I guess it was a case of being careful what you wish for."

If Sinclair got his wish granted, he describes that wish as a "large



*Leilei Wang, Jerry Leth and Stuart Glasby in front of the MANA's booth at the 2005 Hannover Fair.*

---

and wonderful business opportunity. I became the United States national sales manager for a company that at the time had absolutely no U.S. market penetration. We've moved forward from there."

Part of his moving forward was to form a separate company to handle this new side of the business. "This move accomplished a couple of things for us. Many European companies don't have a U.S. identity. We accomplished that with the new company. It also provided a clear-cut definition from our normal agency activities and provided us with

***"They saw we were willing to take the time to get to know them and to build a relationship."***

***“For an agency to succeed, it must do much more than just sell products — you’ve got to bring something else to the table.”***

opportunities to grow the new venture.” To man the new company, Sinclair hired Rob Wise.

To grow his new venture, Sinclair maintains he is totally rep-oriented. “One of the many benefits I have in being in this business for 15 years and being a member of MANA and AIM/R is that I know reps across the nation. As a result, it’s been an easy process for me to locate reps. What we’re going to do is to function as the national sales office (also covering Canada) and work with our rep-based sales force. I know how to write contracts that reps will want to work under and I know how to work with reps.”

#### **Missionary Work**

He adds that while this new direction for himself and his agency might cause apprehension in others, that’s not the case for him. “Frankly, I’m very excited about the prospect of doing something so new. I knew going in that there would be the traditional amount of missionary work that we’d have to put forth. I expected that and I knew it would be time-consuming. That’s why Rob is on board.”

*Agency Sales* is going to follow the development of Richard Sinclair and his new company in a future issue of the magazine. But for the present, Sinclair offers

some thoughts on the entrepreneurial spirit that any rep ought to possess if he is going to be successful.

Sinclair notes, “In general terms, I think reps constantly should be on the lookout for new ventures. At the same time, however, I’m convinced that there is a different depth of entrepreneurial spirit from rep to rep. Thankfully, I’ve grown up in a family with a history of small-business ownership. As a result, perhaps I might be more willing than others to take a chance on something new. If I see an opportunity that accompanies taking a few extra steps, and perhaps going a little further than someone else might, I’m willing to do it. In doing that, I always keep in mind the risk-reward ratio.

“At the same time I keep in mind the fact there are a lot of opportunities from outside the United States. And in my limited experience, I’m discovering that many medium-sized European companies are willing to accept the kind of approach we’re taking with TEFSA.

“All I’m saying here is that the rep had better keep his eyes and ears open to future opportunities.”

#### **Considering an Opportunity in China**

Another rep doing that very thing is Stuart Glasby. Instead of looking to Europe, however,

Glasby has sunk his roots in China. Since *Agency Sales* was last in touch with Glasby (October 2001), much has happened to the rep.

According to the rep, since that article the territory has shifted with “our customers wanting not only on-time delivery and excellent quality but adopting a ‘what can you do for me to cut our cost without cutting our quality’ philosophy. This philosophy forced me again to think out of the box. I explain that thinking on our web site: ‘For an agency to succeed, it must do much more than just sell products — you’ve got to bring something else to the table. That something else can be found in the broad spectrum of services we provide.’”

To expand that spectrum of services, Glasby followed through on a contact with a couple from China — Leilei and Weixing Wang. “They asked if I would be interested in representing a firm from China. When they asked, my reaction was one of mixed emotions. I had always thought of China as a threat to either my patriotism and/or livelihood. However, after my next trips into Wal-Mart, Home Depot, etc., all that changed. Corporate America all along had been making money by sourcing from China. I had been supporting China with my purchases for years. I had been shortchanging myself.

“Within six weeks, I not only

***“I had taken a step out of the box and offered my skills to represent my services to people halfway around the world.”***

---

had quotes and samples of products for one of my key customers, PennEngineering Motion Technologies (known as Pittman), but the great synergistic relationship we established grew exponentially. Sample approvals and full production lots for a variety of components developed over the next 15 months. I had taken a step out of the box and offered my skills to represent my services to people halfway around the world.”

---

### **Benefits of Networking**

A year ago, Glasby and Leilei Wang joined MANA at the Hannover Fair and targeted the Chinese manufacturers who were

in attendance with more than 6,000 exhibitors. “This was an opportunity for us to seek out new sources and conduct networking with people Leilei would never have had the opportunity to visit in China on one of her trips back home. With the usual visits to current suppliers and to family, there had been little opportunity to prospect, and this was an opportunity to meet businesspeople from her home country. We succeeded.”

He continues, “What is most interesting is that we not only took one major step up the rep ladder satisfying our customer’s needs, but during a meeting with Pittman, I suggested ‘thinking out of the box’ again and to see where China and Pittman would be in

years ahead. My question to Pittman was whether they would need representation in China for not only their interests, but also as their customer base migrates to Asia. They responded that they had already heard from some of their customer base who were thinking of going over there and wanted to know if Pittman would have a local presence there. The short of it is that a contract was signed with Pittman for us to serve as their representatives in Asia with staff in three cities in China.”

Just as we will revisit Applied Process Equipment, so too will *Agency Sales* follow up on the progress Glasby & Sons makes with its venture in the Far East. □

Copyright © 2006, Manufacturers’ Agents National Association

One Spectrum Pointe, Suite 150, Lake Forest, CA 92630-2283 • Phone: (949) 859-4040 • Toll-free: (877) 626-2776 • Fax: (949) 855-2973  
E-mail: MANA@MANAonline.org • Web site: www.MANAonline.org • All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.