



RAVI CHANDRAMOULI

Automobile Industry has Positive Impact on Indian Foundry

Ravi Chandramouli is an alumnus of IIT Madras, having graduated in Metallurgy in 1977 and Post Graduation in Metal Casting in 1979.

After working in Iron and Steel Foundries in the Methods Dept., he joined an MNC manufacturing Foundry Chemicals and Fluxes. Before foray into Metallurgical Consumables, his Company was manufacturing Aluminium and Magnesium Alloy Castings, for which he holds joint patents with ISRO.

Chandramouli travels extensively, lectures frequently at both technical and non technical forum on technical issues concerning Foundry and non technical concerning MSME Sector.

Ravi Chandramouli is presently a National Council member of The Institute of Indian Foundrymen and is also the immediate past Chairman of the IIF Southern Region. He was also the past Secretary of Federation of Andhra Pradesh Small Industries Association (FAPSIA).

Chandramouli is the Managing Director of Quality Technologies Pvt. Ltd. and it was promoted nearly 30 years back and is currently the largest manufacturers of Metallurgical consumables in South India. The company manufactures more than 100 types of products and supplies them to more than 500

customers all over the country. Quality Technologies is a professionally managed company with a current turnover of USD 1.5 Million. The company has got Branch Offices and Godowns at Coimbatore and Vadodara both of which are important foundry centers in India. The company employees are around 60 persons. The company manufactures products for the Aluminium Pressure Die-casting Industry, Aluminium Extrusion Industry, Steel Foundries, and Iron Foundries. Because of the Technical background of Chandramouli, the company also manufactures customized and special products exclusively required by some customers.

*“Since the automobiles of the future will be more technology intensive (more electronics, more computerization, advanced high performance materials ... Etc.), we will witness a paradigm shift in the dimensional tolerances of castings as well as mechanical and thermal properties of the castings. We would also witness more dependence on automation, robotics, and lesser dependence on Conventional labour. Foundries of the future will be much more Capital intensive.” In an exclusive interview with **Editorial Assistant, Trupti Jagtap of ‘Metalworld’, Ravi Chandramouli** has expressed his views about technology development to make future foundries more Capital Intensive. Excerpts*

Indian automobile industry is growing rapidly. How will it impact Foundry sector?

- The growth of the Indian automobile industry will have a positive impact on the Indian foundry industry. The demand for castings both iron and aluminium will increase substantially. Since the automobiles of the future will be more technology intensive (more electronics, more computerization, advanced high performance materials ... Etc.), we will

witness a paradigm shift in the dimensional tolerances of castings as well as mechanical and thermal properties of the castings. We would also witness more dependence on automation, robotics, and lesser dependence on Conventional labour. Foundries of the future will be much more Capital intensive. Innovation would be essential to succeed in the Competitive market - because availability of critical raw materials and pricing would be the same across all foundries.



Do you see any impact of the pollution control majors taken by the Government on the foundry sector?

- The pollution control measures taken up by the government will definitely have a positive impact on the foundry sector. However, it would become more imperative for foundries themselves to control the pollution because otherwise even before the government acts, the communities in the vicinity of the foundries would be the first aggrieved parties to take up the role of regulator. It is therefore essential that in the years to come foundries should have an enlightened self interest to control pollution if their foundry business has to be sustainable.

Which countries and markets will you focus in the coming years?

- We would focus upon middle- east countries, Asean countries, and Africa.

What is the present status of the foundry industry in the southern region?

- The foundry industry in southern region is mainly clustered around Belgaum, Chennai, Coimbatore and Shimoga. Iron foundries who predominantly supply to the automotive industry are facing competitive pressures and low order position. Iron foundries supplying to the machine tool industry are also going through tough times. The outlook for the iron foundries supplying to the tractor segment is expected to improve because of the excessively good monsoons.

Valve and pump manufacturing steel foundries are also facing difficult times because of low oil prices and curtailment in

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expansion plans of the oil companies' world - wide. Steel foundries supplying to the cement industry are also operating at low capacity utilisation. The only silver lining seems to be steel foundries supplying to the infrastructure sector who are better than many of the other segments.

Aluminium pressure die-casting foundries supplying to the auto segment are also facing price pressures. The pressure die-casting foundries supplying to the white goods sector are better off.

Overall across all foundry segments there is a shortage of skilled Manpower, because the industry is not able to pay on par with the sector or the services sector or the other manufacturing sectors. Shortage of foundry sand, power charges, and fluctuating raw

material prices are the main bug bears of this industry.

What support do you expect from the government for the growth of foundry sector in the southern region?

- The government should clear all the major and pending Mining, Power, and Infrastructure projects at the earliest to energise the economy. The government should also recognise the importance of foundry industry in the overall manufacturing economy and setup an exclusive ministry to deal with issues concerning this business - similar to textiles, heavy industry, chemicals and fertilizers sector... etc., Similarly an additional import duty should also be levied on castings being imported into the country from countries like china who substantially subsidise their exports to other countries.

What are your views on technological upgradation in foundry industry?

How is IIF catering to this?

- Technological up-gradation is must. Upgrade or perish. The IIF is very actively involved in facilitating the up-gradation of the foundry industry through annual foundry exhibition, technical Lectures, seminars, foundry journal ... etc.

How do you see the future prospect of foundry Nationally as well as Globally?

- The future is bright provided we are willing to change and adopt new technologies, new processes, and work towards a sustainable Ecosystem.