



10 minutes with...



FILIFE PEDROSA

Vice-President of Sales and Marketing, Amtrol-Alfa

Thanks for talking to gasworld today, Filipe. What have we interrupted in your schedule?

I was just reviewing a draft of the latest product catalogue covering our new Type IV low-pressure LPG cylinders.

Another product-launch? The innovation pipeline is certainly full at Amtrol-Alfa, Filipe.

Yes. This new product is a real breakthrough. With a polymeric liner in a thermoplastic fibre-wrap, this will revolutionise LPG cylinders with a tremendous weight reduction and recyclability.

How will that benefit the industry?

The ergonomic and handling properties for end-users leads to more safety. And LPG distributors can differentiate their product offer. Furthermore, transporting less weight means energy efficiency and logistics cost savings.

What is the driver of innovation at Amtrol-Alfa?

Very simply: our customers. I can think of no project that did not incorporate the input of our customers. They are the reason that we develop our products.

Can you be more specific there Filipe?

Well, when we developed the Comet Type III cylinder with a polymeric outer jacket, we made sure that it could become a marketing tool for our customers to communicate with their customers. Refrigerant gases distributors can brand their products with a distinctive look. The creativity that some of our customers use is almost art!

Talking about refrigerants, what innovations have you introduced there recently?

Well, a customer of ours, who is a major R1234yf distributor, wanted the ergonomic benefits of our premium COMET and XLITE ranges at a price point closer to our traditional welded steel cylinders. So, we introduced the NGS range. The stylised plastic handle added to the steel cylinder offers visual differentiation and great value.

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Did that work? What was the reaction?

It was a success that made our customer stand out in the market. Nobody wants to fall into the 'commodity hole' so anything that we can do to help the gas companies, LPG traders and refrigerants distributors differentiate themselves works well. Now that we are part of Worthington Industries' global cylinder business, we have a deeper pool of resources and experience that we can leverage to our customers' benefit.

Beyond LPG and refrigerants, do you produce cylinders for other gases?

Beyond the LPG and refrigerants, which represent a relevant part of the business, we also manufacture Balloon Time helium balloon kits, Type III high pressure cylinders and traditional chemical gases cylinders. We produce welded-seam steel cylinders for ammonia, sulfur dioxide, chlorine and other gaseous chemicals.

How do the traditional steel cylinders differ, between those product ranges?

A big difference between the ranges is the test pressure. LPG is usually rated at 30 bar and modern refrigerants cylinders can go up to 48 bar or even higher in some construction standards. The technical standards that we follow for the different product groups are also different. Although the products look similar, there is not so much chance to switch service between LPG and refrigerants cylinders: it's not common practice in the industry. Also, the inside cleanliness level of the cylinder may vary taking into consideration the application, which is, as an example, a very important attribute for refrigerants.

Does your manufacturing also differ from your competitors?

Coming back to the point of innovation, even our most traditional range of welded steel cylinders is manufactured with advanced equipment and well controlled processes, supported by more than 50 years' experience in the industry.

Obrigado – thank you, Filipe. I hope that you enjoyed talking with gasworld today.

De nada – you are welcome. It is always a pleasure. 