RELENTLESS EFFORTS

Onn Wah Precision delivers precisely what customers ordered
SME / 20
By Do Khanh Vy, Lee Xin Yi, Peh Yi Feng Sebastian and HEN Lam Keng

WHEN Lam Kong Yee’s father first established the manufacturing business under the name of Onn Wah Engineering Works Pte Ltd in 1961, he had only four workers and a few machines. Over the years, as the business grew and the second generation took over, the company was rebranded Onn Wah Precision Engineering. From a small business that focused on contract-based general and job projects, Onn Wah is now a holding company consisting of four entities and over 250 employees.

Onn Wah specialises in high-end aerospace and semiconductor industry work. It serves the oil and gas, petrochemicals and supply chain management sectors and has built a reputation for maintaining the highest standards of precision and quality. Onn Wah’s capability to create products using precise computer programmed machining tools using computer numerical control (CNC) machines, as well as to engage in forging and heat treatment processes, enables it to maintain a high level of flexibility and dynamism. Onn Wah also treats its employees as family members.

Customer satisfaction

Onn Wah is dedicated to meeting customers’ needs by offering high-quality, complex products at competitive prices. To remain productive, innovative and competitive, Onn Wah has established in-house training programmes to keep its technicians up-to-date with the rapidly changing technological landscape. In addition, Onn Wah encourages exchange of knowledge through pairing new hires with experienced engineers. It also engages various engineers and consultants to impart technological knowledge about best practices to its staff members. At the same time, the company continues to maintain the legacy of the Chinese market has intensified competition, Onn Wah remains confident that the expertise it has amassed over the years in this niche area will continue to support the business.

Onn Wah’s continuous hard work and relentless effort to meet custom- ers’ needs was recognised when the company was awarded the Silver award in 2016 by the Singapore National Productivity Board for its commitment to excellence in productivity.

With more than 250 technicians and engineers from Singapore, Malaysia, China and India, Onn Wah believes that people are its most indispensable resources. Given the nature of “high mix-low volume”, employees frequently deal with differentiated and demanding orders. Therefore, Onn Wah looks for employees who “enjoy challenges and derive satisfaction from solving them.”

The company’s continuous hard work and commitment to its employees has enabled Onn Wah’s employees to embrace change and be resilient.

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While the emergence of the Chinese market has intensified competition, Onn Wah remains confident that the expertise it has amassed over the years in this niche area will continue to support the business.

Onn Wah recognises that trends are changing and decided to focus on establishing a niche by providing “high mix-low volume” products. Onn Wah’s assembly line features many copyrighted and patented products that vary in application, size and production processes.

Lam Keng Yee (left), managing director, and Lam Kong Wah, technical manager director, of Onn Wah Precision Engineering. The company believes that a good corporate culture attracts and retains talent. Hence, its vision is to build a great workplace culture and treat employees as family members.

Priorities

Onn Wah’s priorities are to expand overseas and conduct more research and development to stay relevant. It has been exporting its products to China, Europe, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan, Thailand, the United States and Vietnam through overseas distributors. Working across geographies has enabled Onn Wah’s employees to embrace challenges, to be resilient and culturally sensitive. As a result, the company has seen improvements in service response time and product quality.

To innovate, Onn Wah plans to tap government initiatives such as “Industry 4.0” and “Smart Nation” to pursue more research and development capabilities. This will enable it to enter new partnerships and strategic alliances with like-minded SMEs in Singapore, reducing the over-reliance on its core businesses and venturing overseas.

Lam Kong Yee and Lam Kong Wah believe that Onn Wah’s employees’ efforts are the key to the company’s success.

The writer is a student at NUS Business School.

Precisely what customers ordered

Onn Wah Precision Engineering remains confident that the expertise it has amassed over the years in its niche area will continue to support the business. However, it is not resting on its laurels as it seeks to expand overseas and conduct more research and development to stay relevant.

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