

Cast Metal & Diecasting Times



Asmet
Source of Strength

A leading supplier of metallurgical consumables to the iron, steel and aluminium industries.

Fast and on demand delivery in Europe.



Our strong partnerships with leading world producers and our warehouse hubs in the UK, Spain, Germany and Belgium, enable us to provide our customers anywhere in Europe with the materials they need, fast and on demand.

Our product list includes:

Pig Iron
Ferro Alloys
Silicon Carbide
Magnesium Ferro Silicon

Specialised Inoculants
Foam & Ceramic Metal Filters
Magnesium & Inoculation Wire
Aluminium Master Alloys

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- Gifa 2011 exhibition preview, a guide to exhibitors
- Robots improve diecasting productivity
- World steel industry forecast
- Ultraseal International MD interview
- Inspection and instrumentation technology
- SRS Amsterdam and Mil-Ver Metals Company Profiles
- Rotary furnaces review
- Latest update from The Diecasting Society
- Ridsdale & Co in focus
- Workplace safety inspections at BMW diecasting plant
- Automated metals analysis
- Patternmaking for motorsports specialist
- Heat treatment outsourcing
- News, Product Information and The Equipment & Materials Purchasing Guide

Asmet name and vision in focus

The Asmet name was launched at the recent Gifa exhibition as part of a major rebranding exercise that reflects a company with a vision for the future.

Formerly known as A & S Metallurgical Resources Ltd, Asmet is a leading supplier of metallurgical consumables to the iron, steel and aluminium industries, with a heritage and reputation that goes back more than 20 years. The company has built its reputation on an extensive service from source to foundry, offering established and trusted expertise in product, logistics and technical support that does not stop at the delivery gate.

With more than 500 customers in 30 countries, Asmet's extensive product range includes pig iron, ferro alloys, silicon carbide, magnesium ferro silicon, inoculants, ceramic foam metal filters, magnesium/inoculant wires and aluminium master alloys.



The company recognises that in today's market, speed and reliability are the keys to success. Strong partnerships with leading international producers and warehouse hubs in the UK, Spain, Germany and Belgium enable Asmet to provide customers with the materials they need, fast and on demand.

Andrew Parker, Asmet's Operations Manager explains the reasons for the name change: "As we move forward into new markets and transform the way we supply metallurgical resources across Europe, we needed a universal name and the rebrand was vital to communicate our vision."

Customers and suppliers can also be assured that the ownership and all other company details (eg registration numbers, VAT numbers, bank details and contact information) remain the same and that the UK plays a major part in Asmet's future. "I am more hopeful than ever about the future of the UK cast metals sector, in particular new opportunities in the next generation of wind and nuclear power" Andrew Parker added. "We remain fully committed to servicing UK customers from our UK head office."

Story of evolution

A & S Trading was formed in the late 1980s by Ian Copestake and David Parker to supply UK iron foundries with cupola briquettes and silicon carbide and soon established a reputation with customers as a supplier that can be trusted to deliver.



Asmet's European hubs.

In the company's early days, David Parker was based in a small office in Ian Copestake's home garage and Ian was on the road with a mobile telephone the size of a brick! It was certainly an interesting time. "We both had young families and when your home is on the line with the bank, it certainly keeps you focused" David recalls. His wife, Ann was soon using her secretarial skills, looking after four children by day and typing invoices by night.

But the hard work paid off, the orders came flooding in and the young company went from strength to strength. Life was not without its problems, however, as Ian Copestake fondly remembers: "One sunny afternoon, I had to interrupt an important office phone call because a rogue sheep had wandered in off the Derbyshire hills!"

As the business grew, Phil McCarthy, Asmet's UK Sales Manager joined in 1991 and explains Asmet's philosophy: "We have always made regular personal visits to understand foundries' product and technical needs and customers know that our support and dedication does not stop at the delivery gate."

In 1993, A & S Metallurgical Resources was formed and moved to office premises in Sheffield. By the mid-1990s, the company had also become established as a leading supplier of pig iron and ferro alloys to the UK iron and steel industry.

Development of specialised products

In 1999, Asmet acquired Ertel Ore Ltd who specialised in post furnace metal treatments and process control. Following full integration in 2001, a range of branded specialised products was developed, including Barcast (barium inoculant), Bisast (bismuth inoculant), Castron (strontium) inoculant, Ertalloy magnesium ferro silicon, Reox preconditioner, Renod fluxing agent, Filtrex extruded ceramic metal filters and Foamex silicon carbide foam filters.

This company could offer customers a comprehensive range of products and technical expertise, in particular for the production of high quality SG castings.

Following the acquisition of Ertel Ore, the company also entered the aluminium sector, supplying a range of aluminium master alloys, including strontium aluminium modifiers, titanium boron aluminium refiners and magnesium aluminium.

Asmet has also extended its range of alloys to steel foundries, including calcium silicide, calcium silicide manganese, manganese metal, high purity low carbon ferro chrome, ferro silicon zirconium and treatment wires.

"UK steel foundries make highly specialised castings for the oil and gas, nuclear, mining and defence industries and need the best quality alloys available" says Phil McCarthy. "We continue to work hard to source alternative high quality materials for this sector."

Hubs and direct sales in Europe

In 2006, Asmet formed a Spanish subsidiary to import basic pig iron direct to Bilbao and has since become an established supplier to the Spanish market. The same year, Janet Furness who is fluent in German, French and Spanish, was employed to develop direct sales to European customers.

"At a time of rising prices and increasing uncertainty, many foundries are looking for a second supplier" Janet explains "and Asmet is in a great position to offer proven alternative products to castings producers throughout Europe."

Over the last five years, Asmet has secured customers in Spain, Germany, France, the Czech Republic, Italy, Denmark, Sweden, Poland, Bulgaria and Romania. Building on this success, in 2010/2011, the company set up branches in Germany and Belgium to serve its growing European customer base.



From left to right: Doris Kyas, Purchasing Manager at Dieckerhoff, Germany, Janet Furness, European Sales at Asmet and Andrew Parker, Operations Manager at Asmet celebrate Asmet's launch at Gifa 2011.

International 'cross trade' sales

Over the last decade, Asmet has developed sales of specialised products direct from production to customers in Asia and the Middle East on a CIF destination port basis. Robert Parker, Purchasing, Logistics and International Sales at Asmet has considerable experience in international trade and can offer a single point of contact for all stages of the order process from enquiry through to delivery. "To be competitive, we have to ship direct to the end user's market and we have the expertise in international shipping, trade, banking and customs to ship our products anywhere in the world" Robert confirms.

Asmet's branded products are used by leading castings producers in India, Turkey, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, Japan, Pakistan and throughout the Middle East. "If customers are able to import and buy on a CIF basis, then they should have no hesitation in buying direct from Asmet" Robert adds.

Direct from source to foundry

Asmet has a long tradition of building close partnerships with leading world producers. The company believes it is important to distinguish itself from short-term traders and spot buyers in the market, however. Michael Parker, Asmet's Procurement and Production Manager explains:

"All of our quality assured products - including pig iron, ferro alloys and specialist materials - are sourced from the best producers across the world to meet the demands of modern casting production."

In the early 1990s, Asmet was among the first Western companies to source pig iron direct from Russia and in 1998, was also the first to partner with a South African producer of high purity SG pig iron. "Asmet works very closely with selected producers, including sub-contracted production of our specialist products" adds Michael Parker. "We make initial assessment visits and take trial samples before a supplier is approved. After this, independent assay tests are performed on shipments and we regularly visit producer plants to ensure quality standards are maintained."

A good example of Asmet's close partnership involves the company's brand of Filtrex extruded ceramic metal filters. In 2006, European customers needed another filter supplier and after trials with several producers, the best quality product was selected. Now, Asmet is a leading filter supplier with sales of millions of units every year.

Total logistics management

Within the last decade, Asmet has grown its supplier base to over 20 countries and has the logistical expertise to provide customers with a delivery service on which they can depend. In an

increasingly uncertain world, international trade and shipping of metallurgical products is not becoming any easier. However, due to its financial strength and strategy of holding reserve stocks, Asmet ensures that it always meet customers' long-term contract requirements.

"Some may see it as old-fashioned but by holding strategic reserve stocks, we can overcome problems caused by shipping delays and product shortages" Michael Parker confirms. "Even in 2008, as many supplier relationships encountered problems, Asmet delivered all of its contract requirements on time."

Technical expertise

A vital part of the challenge to foundry suppliers is not only to produce, source and secure a reliable supply of high quality products but also to offer technical innovation and consultancy, an area in which Asmet has always invested.

Asmet has acquired three portable ATAS units from NovaCast since 2003. ATAS is an Advanced Thermal Analysis System for improved metallurgical process control. In 2007, in recognition of the company's technical ability, Asmet was appointed NovaCast's UK agent.

Gaining approval for a new specialist product requires hard work and technical expertise, which Asmet can offer through close customer co-operation and supervised trials in the foundry. "We take everything we've learnt about the best products and process control to help customers reduce addition and scrap rates, improve machineability and increase efficiency" explains Asmet's Technical Sales Manager, Don Tittensor.

In recent years, this investment has paid off and Asmet has been involved in projects for foundry start-ups, in-mould process, wire treatment, process control software and the selection of specialised grades of alloys for steel foundries. The company's website features a number of case studies and testimonials to provide examples and inspiration.

Total quality management

In 1995, the company became ISO accredited by Lloyds Register Quality Assurance and is fully compliant with the latest ISO 9001:2008 standard.

"By choosing an approval body like LRQA, a UKAS accredited company and a world leader in quality management system approvals" Andrew Parker explains, "our customers know we have an independent third party approval of real merit and that we care about meeting quality requirements."

Vision

After 20 years of continuous change, Asmet is still looking to the future. Throughout the world, economies are being reset in favour of new ideas and more customers want to deal direct with companies like Asmet, who can offer an extensive service from source to foundry, with trusted expertise in product, logistics and technical support.

"Asmet is a forward thinking company which can now supply the European market through a single integrated network" says Andrew Parker. "As the world becomes a smaller place and the impact of REACH legislation comes into force, we believe this is a great value proposition. We want customers to know that regardless of where they are in the world, customers can forge ahead with their business and trust Asmet to deliver."

Reader Reply No.79



Asmet's stand at the recent Gifa 2011 exhibition.