

Russia, a bRic of Norit's success



Norit team in Russia

Over the course of the last several years, Russia went through a lot of positive changes. The developments in the economy, banking sector and everyday life, which one would expect to take decades, occurred in Russia much faster. However, a lot of effort and commitment is still necessary to build a modern economy and country.

In order to meet the requirements of this rapidly growing economy, Norit established a representative office in Moscow in 1999. Initially, the Moscow office concentrated on the beer market, where Norit's state-of-the-art components and solutions have been highly regarded and demanded by breweries. As the beer market showed double-digit growth at that time, Norit's modern solutions in the field of quality control and CO₂ recovery systems, blending, de-aeration, carbonization, and turnkey solutions for building cold blocks of breweries (the part of a brewery between the brewing and filling department) based on the proven in-house valve technology were well received by Russian brewers.

As growth continued in Russia, and the need for modern technologies expanded, customers discovered other 'jewels' in the Norit product portfolio including, membranes, ultrafiltration (UF) water treatment plants and wastewater treatment plants. Ronny Konink, Area Sales Manager of Norit Membrane Technology, explains, "In 2003, the first contracts were signed during an important trade mission where leading Dutch companies were invited to celebrate the 300th anniversary of St. Petersburg. Especially in steel production and power plants Norit's UF

water treatment technology has an excellent reputation. Our two largest references so far are a UF water treatment plant with a capacity of 270 m³/h supplying boiler-feed water at the Zainskaya Power Plant and another one in a Power Plant in Siberia with a capacity of 700m³/h, which will be started up in fall 2007."

"Since 2003, a number of power plants (like Mosonegro #16 and Orel Power Plants) and steel plants (like Magnitogorsk) have standardized on Norit UF membranes," Konink continues. "For these applications Norit worked closely with well-known Russian partners and OEM's, who really know the customers and understand their process requirements. These partners are also capable - after some extensive training at our Dutch based Knowhow Center - to standardize our membranes in their solutions. Given the excellent relationship with the brewing and beverage industries, a number of turnkey wastewater treatment plants were delivered, including Obolon Brewery and Cargill, both in the Ukraine. Our Membrane BioReactor (MBR) has an especially great future in Russia and in the surrounding former CIS countries, due to the shortage of water in a number of larger cities, and the increasing cost for the discharge of wastewater."



Norit Haffmans: CO₂ is not just for beer

Norit Haffmans is known throughout the world as a CO₂ partner for the brewing industry. Over the course of several years, intensive research and development work and the fact that many of its systems are successfully used in a wide range of breweries have enabled the company to build up a very large store of knowledge and experience in this sector.

One of our satisfied customers is Unicer in Portugal. During a CO₂ audit, as part of a joint project in one of Unicer's breweries (in Santarem near Lisbon), Norit Haffmans looked in detail at the whole CO₂ management system. This audit led to recommendations as to how to improve the quality of the reclaimed CO₂ and to proposals as to how even more CO₂ could be reclaimed. Excess CO₂ that is currently produced by the brewery in Santarem will be used for soft drink production in another Unicer plant situated two kilometres away.

For Unicer in Santarem, the advantages of this method of operation consist of savings in many areas and the resolution of numerous problems. For this reason, the company now has plans for other Unicer plants to collaborate with Norit Haffmans.

In Vila Real, a mountainous region of Portugal close to the Spanish border, high-quality mineral water has been produced at various locations for many years. Since Unicer acquired two mineral springs, the company has been working on an ongoing process of improving quality. There are very strict rules in force as to the quality of mineral water, specifying which types of treatment are permitted to allow the words „mineral water“ to be placed on the label.

In the case of carbonated mineral water, the CO₂ quality is of particular importance. This was sufficient reason for Unicer to request Norit Haffmans' help in the process of improving quality. Of course, the composition of the gas differs from that used for beer fermentation, but Norit Haffmans was able to quickly find a satisfactory solution to this problem.

Norit Haffmans analyzed the CO₂ gas using a gas chromatograph. The results of these measurements served as the starting point for a proposal concerning the method of treating the CO₂ gas that is pumped up from the springs along with the water. The aim of the treatment is to be able to reunite the CO₂ with the mineral water.

The system designed for Unicer was delivered and commissioned in the third quarter. Due to the extremely positive experiences Norit Haffmans has had with a number of similar projects for mineral water producers, favorable feedback from Unicer is expected.

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