



INTERVIEW



PATRICK ARNAUD
MANAGER OF ABRASIVES
ACTIVITY, WHEELABRATOR
ALLEVARD

W NEWS : *How do you explain Wheelabrator Allevard's leading position?*

P.A. : *First of all I should like to say that being recognised as the leader in your profession is both a great honour and a great responsibility.*

A great honour, of course, because it is the fruit of many years of work listening to our customers and supplying them with a product, a service, assistance and a price that they cannot find anywhere else. It is obvious to all the teams that have been involved in this adventure that the customer's judgement is the most accurate and reliable barometer for measuring the company's success.

It's a great responsibility too, as we need to be aware that the position we occupy and the recognition we have won go hand in hand with duties that could be expressed in the motto of the Olympic Games, but that we could sum up more simply in the single word "respect". The customer is the focus of our concerns and will continue to be so. We owe it to him, and we accept the responsibility.

Some people, even in the world of abrasives, thought that industry was done with the "old-fashioned" model based on quality of service and product. I believe quite the opposite, that what we must do is always to move further in that direction.

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>>> W ABRASIVES, YOUR KEY SUCCESS FACTOR

PREMIUM

A CUSTOMISED, HIGH QUALITY APPROACH

To satisfy increasing demands from its customers in blasting and granite cutting applications, W Abrasives is adopting a new approach: Premium combines a high-quality product and customised technical assistance.

The combination of higher-performance Premium Products and a Premium Service to guarantee their optimum use is a first. It means that the technical aspects of blasting or cutting applications can be adapted perfectly to meet users' expectations. In fact they create their own reference, optimising each essential parameter.

This close collaboration with our customers, combined with our new operating methods, ensures effective, simple solutions while improving the results obtained in terms of quality and cost.

The Premium offering is deployed by qualified sales teams backed up by skilled experts and receiving technical support from the test and training centers. They also use exclusive methods and resources for measuring the

efficiency of the blasting and granite cutting processes used.

The Premium approach is today one of the bases of the W Abrasives philosophy, which involves:

- developing the best product/service offer liable to meet the specific requirements of a certain type of user,
- establishing a solid partnership with each customer and involving them in the proposed progress plan,
- formalising the service provided, quantifying and demonstrating its benefits.

PREMIUM : SUCCESS IN 7 STAGES

- 1. Checking and upgrading equipment.**
- 2. Process optimisation plan.**
Definition of quality, productivity and cost targets.
- 3. Simulation of the proposed solution at a Test Center.**
Validation of the expected results with the user, parameter adjustment.
- 4. Launching of the industrial test phase.**
Monitoring at each stage by a technical expert.
- 5. Training on site.**
Everyone involved in the blasting and granite cutting process.
- 6. Monthly evaluation.**
Performance and progress made.
- 7. Assessment of industrial test.**
Confirmation of expected benefits, extension of the Premium approach to other installations, etc.

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W NEWS

>>> INTERVIEW PATRICK ARNAUD

W NEWS: *You have changed your corporate identity and branding. What are the advantages of this for your customers?*

P.A. : *The company's identity via its name, logo and trademarks reflects the clarity that we owe to our customers. A customer needs to know what he is buying, how he is buying it, who he is buying it from and, to a certain extent, who he is trusting.*

You could compare this to a passenger who has bought an air ticket and understandably wants to know which airline is going to carry him and in what conditions.

Wheelabrator Allevard continues to be the company's emblem. We wanted to keep this name at corporate level as the company's history has been built up around it since 1960.

“W Abrasives reflects our strong determination to move forward”

Abrasives activity will be identified world-wide under the trademark W Abrasives. The "W" in front of the simple word "Abrasives" is an allusion to our origins. Under this name our customers will find four logos corresponding to four different services that represent the quintessence of our know-how:

- On site Solutions
- Test Center Solutions
- E-Solutions
- Training Solutions

Why Solutions? Simply because we owe it to our customers to provide them with an answer to their requirements and under these four headings they will easily find what they wish to pass on to their teams.

W NEWS: *How does W Abrasives differ from its competitors?*

P.A. : *A first point that may surprise you, but which is absolutely fundamental, is that Wheelabrator Allevard has and always has had a deep respect for its profession and for the men and women who are part of it, whether they belong to the competition or to any other entity connected with abrasives.*

W Abrasives reflects our strong determination to move forward – a determination found at all levels and in a wide range of sectors.

“All these actions reflect our determination to forge ahead”

When we speak of respect for the environment, it reflects a priority in our investment programmes. When we speak of respect for our staff, it reflects a major concern to have the same level of safety in our plants, regardless of the countries in which they are situated. When we speak of process control, we are referring to our worldwide Six Sigma procedure, with the Himalaya project that is now mobilising 300 colleagues in the production units. When we speak of customers' expectations, we are developing our more efficient Premium products that offer real savings in terms of abrasive cost.

All these actions reflect our determination to forge ahead, with real long-term guidelines for the benefit of the customer.

W NEWS: *What projects will enable Wheelabrator Allevard to face the future with confidence?*

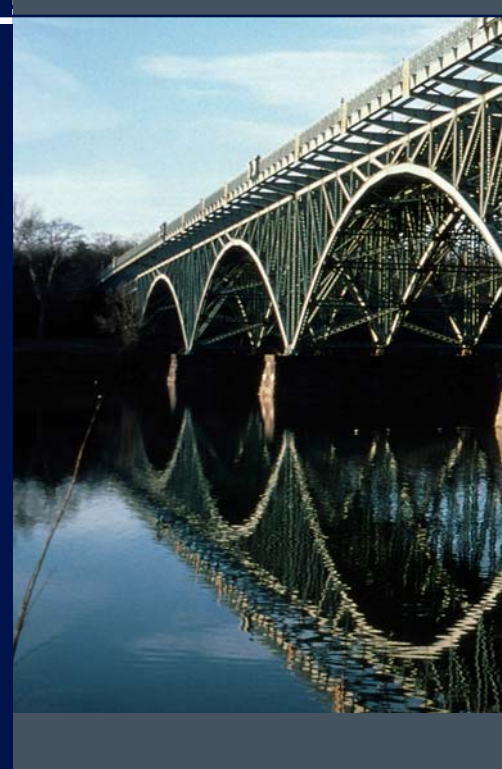
P.A. : *I am certain to forget something and be criticised for doing so...*

Doubling the capacity of our plants in Thailand, Brazil and South Africa... these are just a few projects we have implemented in recent years. At present, we are building a plant at Kurgan in the Urals, increasing capacity at Le Cheylas in France from 180 000 tonnes to 220 000 tonnes a year, transferring the Spanish entity to an entirely new site in 2009, increasing production in Slovenia and the Czech Republic by 50% and creating a new Research Center in the Czech Republic to supplement the facilities that already exist in France and Japan.

“Wheelabrator Allevard cannot be summed up simply by a list of figures”

Commercial activity has obviously not been forgotten, with the creation of specific organisations in Russia, China, Mexico and Poland and our offering being extended worldwide via W Abrasives. And WA Sales University will provide improved training for our salespeople.

Finally, let's not forget something very close to our hearts, namely our project to help children in New Delhi. This is something of which we are all proud, as Wheelabrator Allevard cannot be summed up simply by a list of figures. It is a company with 1600 employees from 30 different nationalities that intends to play its role as a citizen of the world.



W ABR



W Abrasives®
test center solutions

TEST CENTER SOLUTIONS, TESTING IN REAL CONDITIONS

The W Abrasives test centers situated in France, the Czech Republic, Japan and Brazil are the embodiment of the Wheelabrator Allevard Group's know-how and expertise in blasting operations.

The test centers, which are genuine industrial workshops, are equipped with all types of blasting machine. They can thus reproduce all blasting processes, experiment with any change in abrasive or test a machine setting before any modification is made to the equipment or processes used in a customer's works.

The flexibility of the equipment and precise control of the operating mixes used mean that any type of modification can be studied, including the choice of most appropriate abrasive, throw distances and angles, exposure and change in position of parts, abrasive flow rate and speed, blasting times, etc.

The tests are performed on parts sent





W ABRASIVES

FOUR EXCLUSIVE SERVICES

by the customer, with the process being adjusted so that it faithfully reproduces the actual reference blasting conditions. It is then possible to experiment with and evaluate new solutions planned with the end-user following an audit carried out at his site.

In all cases, the results are analysed in detail. The various solutions proposed can then be compared objectively, especially with regard to the cleanliness, roughness and appearance of the blasted surfaces or the efficiency of the blasting operations in relation to process productivity.

Abrasive consumption is also assessed using the WAAT (WA Abrasive Tester), the industry's only system capable of measuring the working life of abrasives in conditions that are representative of their actual use, irrespective of the type of process.



W Abrasives®
on site solutions

**ON-SITE SOLUTIONS,
CUSTOMISED TECHNICAL
ASSISTANCE**

W Abrasives' round steel shot and grit can only give optimum performance if it is used in perfectly adjusted and monitored installations.

W Abrasives' technical experts make regular visits to customers' sites to offer advice in this area. By analysing customers' equipment and checking their blasting techniques and granite-cutting processes, they help them to obtain and maintain the best possible results.

The on-site technical support proposed by W Abrasives and the use of superior quality products provide undeniable value added. This assistance from specialists can be adjusted to suit the specific needs of each customer and can take several forms:

- Auditing blasting installations and gangsaws, so that precise recommendations can be formulated for improving performance.
- Solving isolated problems (quality level, productivity, wear or malfunctions, etc.).

- Assistance and advice at each stage of defining and implementing a new piece of equipment or blasting process.



W Abrasives®
e-solutions

**E-SOLUTIONS,
REMOTE ELECTRONIC
ASSISTANCE MEDIA**

45 years' experience in the field of blasting has enabled W Abrasives to build up a considerable corpus of information. The results of over 5000 tests concerning all areas of activity are currently managed by the group on an exclusive basis.

Applied in the form of databases and software, this information is already used on a daily basis by the technical and commercial teams during their audit, monitoring and consultancy assignments.

These media are now deployed worldwide via the Internet, enabling customers to benefit from W Abrasives' know-how, experience and innovations in real time and in an instructive manner.



W Abrasives®
training solutions

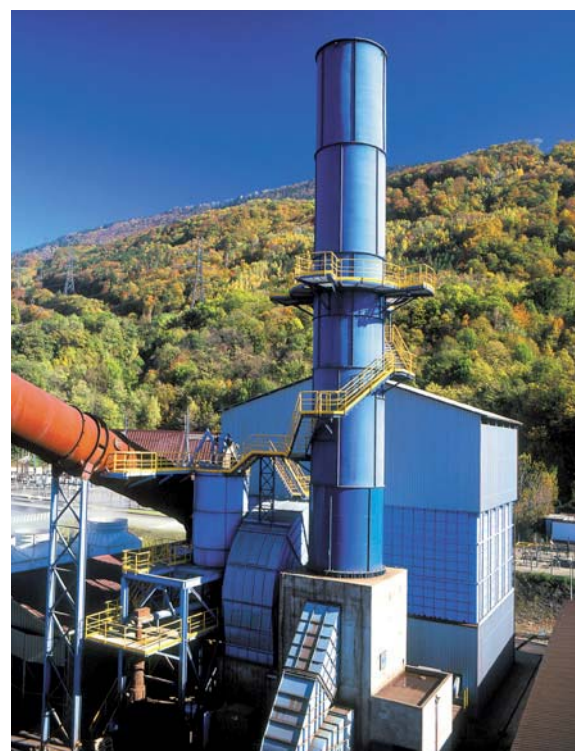
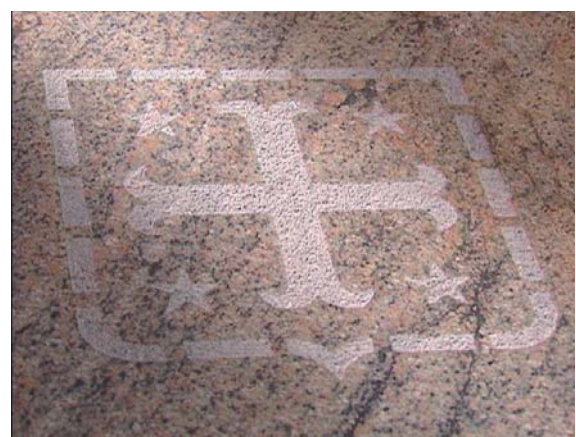
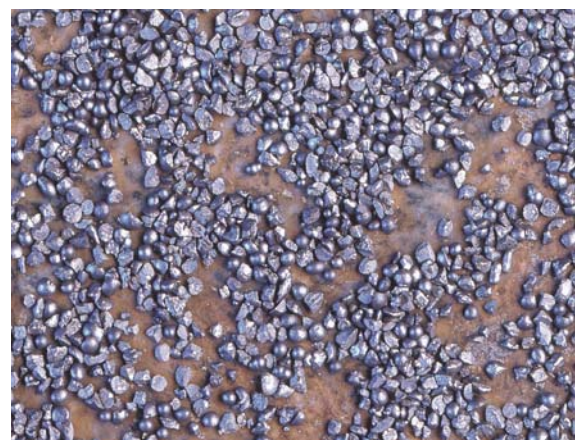
**TRAINING SOLUTIONS,
CUSTOMISED
TRAINING**

W Abrasives' training courses are essential components of the assistance offered to customers, and unique in the field of blasting and granite cutting. Their main aim is to ensure economic savings and improvements in quality.

W Abrasives offers customised modules where abrasives users learn to master their installations and optimise their performance in terms of quality and cost. Combining theoretical instruction and practical exercises, these courses deal with blasting operations using wheel machines or compressed air and can also include specific, more advanced sessions on shot-peening.

The courses concern:

- Production: machine settings and operation.>>

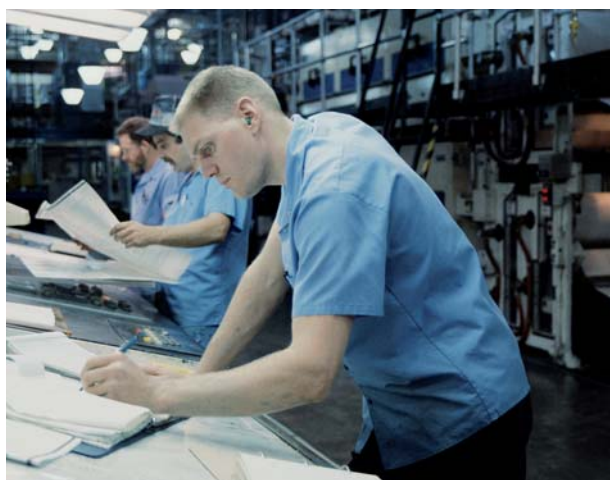
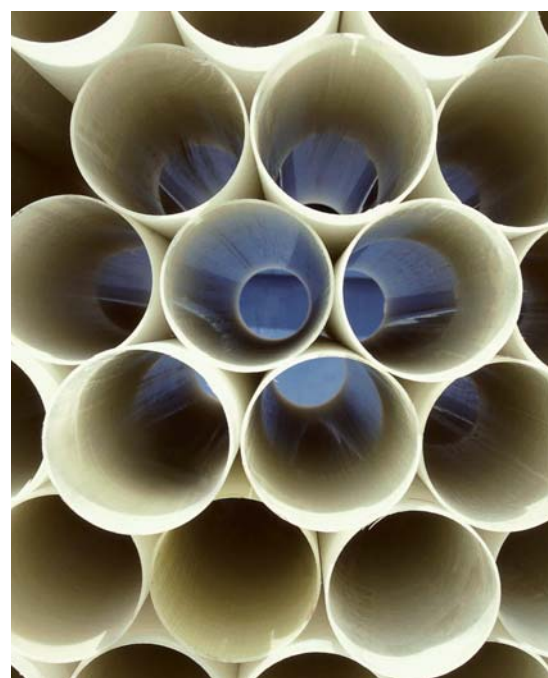
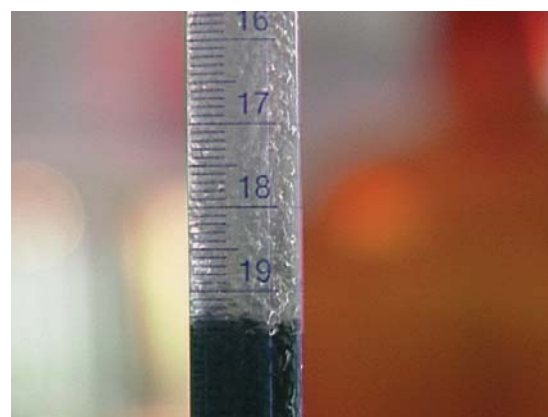


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- Maintenance: process stability and preventive measures.
- Quality assurance: monitoring of parameters and results, process control.
- Workshop managers: overall quality and profitability.

Courses are also offered in the field of granite cutting.

Organised in the form of seminars, these courses can take place at the test centers or at the customers' works in the context of customised sessions.



WASU

IN-HOUSE TRAINING WITH AN IMPACT ELSEWHERE

An essential part of Wheelabrator Allevard's image, the quality of its associated services relies mainly on the skills and motivation of the sales and technical assistance teams.

Though members of staff change and the shift in markets means that a new generation of salespeople has to be trained in the emerging countries, standards must remain the same.

The group has therefore set up its own university: Wheelabrator Allevard Sales University (WASU). This in-house training organisation aims to improve and disseminate the knowledge and know-how required by the company's teams throughout the world.

With excellence as its target, WASU provides ongoing vocational training, promotes the pooling of experience and encourages motivation in new salespeople.

It also aims to further research and development in new services and to evaluate achievement levels and progress.

As its "students" are scattered across the five continents, WASU relies heavily on the latest e-learning techniques.

With this in-house training organisation, Wheelabrator Allevard guarantees the same quality of service worldwide and ensures that its customers will receive optimum care and attention regardless of their geographical location.

TRAINING



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