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**Interview with Yves Beret,
Worldwide Test Centers Manager of Winoa**

**Explore The Opportunities And Master
Your Blasting Process Through A Unique
Network Of Test Centers**



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Explore The Opportunities And Master Your Blasting Process Through A Unique Network Of Test Centers

MFN had the pleasure to talk to Yves Beret, Worldwide Test Centers Manager of Winoa.

(?) MFN: Mr. Beret, thank you for taking the time for this interview. Would you, first of all, introduce yourself to our readers?

(!) Y.B.: My name is Yves Beret and I have been working for the Winoa group for more than 27 years. I joined the company (named Wheelabrator Allevard at the time) in the position of quality laboratory manager. In 1996, I took responsibility for training, technical assistance and trials for Western Europe. I finally moved 4 years ago to my current position of Worldwide Test Centers Manager.

(?) MFN: Can you give us an overview of your test center capabilities in the Winoa group?

(!) Y.B.: Today we have a worldwide network of 5 test centers, located in France, Japan, Brazil, the Czech Republic and Austria (the last one being exclusively dedicated to air blasting operations). The centers have different

roles, the main one being to offer our customers the opportunity to test and evaluate the performance of our different blasting solutions on their own parts. The idea behind this is to team up with our customers so that together we can select the most suitable abrasive for their needs, based on concrete results and reliable blasting cost simulations. Of course, the representativeness of the trials is key to making our customers confident about the relevance of the results we obtain and the conclusions we draw from them. That's why we always pay careful attention to proposing a testing configuration that is as close as possible to the customer's real process. To do so, our test centers are equipped with a wide range of industrial blasting machines, for both wheel blasting (spinner hanger, conveyor, tumblast) and air blasting (both suction and pressure cabinets). This service is very much appreciated by our customers, as it allows them to fine-tune or enhance their blasting process by testing different solutions without taking the risk of



Yves Beret, Worldwide Test Centers Manager of Winoa

using a new product on their production line before they know what the results will be. As a consequence, our Test Centers are kept quite busy: last year, we carried out 230 trials for more than 190 customers.

(?) MFN: Can you describe the different steps of a customer trial?

(!) Y.B.: The first step is always to clearly define the customer's expectations (improved quality, lower blasting costs, specifications for a new blasting machine, adaptation of the blasting process to a new type of part...) in order to be sure we perfectly answer his



Assessment of a customer part during trial - Le Cheylas test center



Customer trial in the Czech test center

needs. Once this is done, we define the blasting conditions together in order to be as close as possible to its existing blasting process and make sure that the results observed during the trial will be transposable into his facilities. The trial itself, which could last from 1 day to even 1 week, is managed by a team of experienced technicians, and is preferably performed with the customer present. At the end of the trial, we provide a test report containing both technical information and total blasting cost simulations using WA COST technology. To make sure that this process is well adapted to our customers' needs and fully meets their requirements, we have put in place a satisfaction survey that helps us to match their expectations perfectly and, if necessary, adjust our service. In 2014, this survey showed that 100% of our customers involved in test center trials have been satisfied by this service, among which 86% have been very satisfied.

(?) MFN: You just told us that the main role of Winoa's Test Centers is to provide your customers with testing capabilities. Can you tell us more about the other roles played by your test centers?

(!) Y.B.: Our test centers are also officially certified to provide training in both wheel and air blasting processes. That means that throughout the year we provide different training sessions tailored to meet the needs of our customers and the technical capabilities of



Test Centers by Winoa: a worldwide network

the attendees, who may be production operators, line managers, members of the maintenance team, etc. The main goal of these training sessions is to share Winoa's knowledge with our customers in order for them to master their blasting operations more fully. We also train our own sales and technical teams in order to guarantee that they have a high level of skill to assist our customers in their everyday work. Another key role of our test centers is to develop new products. Actually, each new product developed by our French and Japanese R&D centers has to go through a full performance validation protocol in our test centers before any industrial trial is launched with a pilot customer, which

is a mandatory step before it can be officially marketed.

(?) MFN: Many thanks Mr Beret for this interview, which gives us a better view of your customer approach. Would you like to add anything for our readers?

(!) Y.B.: Thanks you too for this interview. It's true that assisting our customers in their technical choices is a part of our DNA and probably one of the reasons why Winoa is the world leader in the steel abrasives market and the preferred partner of the majority of steel abrasives users. As we are convinced that this approach brings mutual benefits for both Winoa and our



Customer trial in the Japanese test center



Training session in the Brazilian test center

« **The main goal of these training sessions is to share Winoa's knowledge with our customers in order for them to master their blasting operations more fully.** »

Yves Beret, Worldwide Test Centers Manager of Winoa

customers, we have recently decided to enlarge our Test Centers network. As a scoop for MFN readers, I can announce that we are going to open a brand new Test Center in the U.S., dedicated to our North American customers. Indeed, the North American market is very receptive to Winoa's technical value proposition, and we want to acknowledge this

fact by bringing to customers the best level of our services. We plan to locate this new Test Center at our Bedford manufacturing facility in Virginia. We plan to inaugurate it officially by the beginning of 2016. As for all our test centers, it will regroup a training room, a laboratory, a workshop with a full range of industrial blasting machines,

a large set of storage hoppers to handle the different types of abrasives, and all the necessary equipment to carry out customers' trials efficiently and rigorously. A special event will be organized with our main customers and partners to celebrate the official opening. We will of course keep MFN readers informed.

MFN would like to thank Yves Beret for the interview!

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