Aurelio Banda named President of Beckhoff North America

Beginning January 1, 2015, a change in management took place at Beckhoff Automation LLC: Aurelio Banda, previously Vice President of Sales and Marketing for Beckhoff USA, took over for Graham Harris as President in a planned transition. Harris, who headed the North American subsidiary since 2003 and steered the company to considerable business development success, has taken on a regional management position at Beckhoff USA following his tenure as president.

History of success for Beckhoff North America
Graham Harris led the continuous expansion efforts of Beckhoff USA for more than a decade. The company, which started in 1999 with only two employees in a small office in Plymouth, Minnesota, today has grown to 126 employees* in the US and Canada and operates six regional offices to optimally support the different sales regions. Over the years, the North American subsidiary experienced growth averaging over 20 percent per year, from revenue of $5 million USD in 2003 to $60 million by the end of the 2014 financial year.

"I thank Graham Harris for this great record of success and his commitment to the business relationships with end user customers and machine manufacturers in North America," said Managing Director, Hans Beckhoff in a laudatory speech reflecting on Harris' time as president.

"The main reason for our successful growth in recent years has been our innovative technology, which enables us to attract new customers. PC- and EtherCAT-based control technology offers impressive speed and accuracy, ease of use, as well as simplified engineering and troubleshooting," noted Graham Harris. "The cost advantages of PC-based control can be measured not only in direct costs, but also in indirect costs relating to savings in commissioning and changeover times, faster time to market, and more. Our dedicated team of sales and support engineers has been instrumental in firmly establishing PC-based control technology in the market over the years. Our product support is so well received that it has been nominated several times among the best support offered in the industry by customers. Last, but certainly not least, our success is based on strategic marketing: while Beckhoff was barely known in North America in the late 1990s, this changed when we started a strategic marketing campaign involving press work, a wide range of promotional activities, and participation in a range of industrial trade shows. Holding numerous educational seminars also helped establish Beckhoff in the North American automation market."

Graham Harris summarizes his time as President with the following words: "After 11 eventful years as President of Beckhoff North America, I have transitioned into a regional management role in the southeast US. I look forward to continuing the promotion of the industry's most advanced automation technology in my new role, in collaboration with a team of highly-skilled experts and innovative customers."

Aurelio Banda, who had already served as Beckhoff North America’s Vice President of Sales and Marketing for some time, now presides over all business operations from the headquarters of Beckhoff Automation LLC in Savage, Minnesota. "As a renowned specialist in the field of automation, Aurelio Banda has all the talent required to continue the positive business development we have become accustomed to, as the new President of Beckhoff North America," noted Hans Beckhoff.

Strategies for a strong future
"I am honored to have been chosen to take over the management of the Beckhoff North America subsidiary, and I see more bright developments in our future," said new President Aurelio Banda. "Having reached revenue of..."
$60 million, a comprehensive sales network is an ideal basis for initiating the next stage of development for Beckhoff in North America. In the past, we have expanded into many areas and, starting from a few key industries, have established ourselves in a wide range of applications and markets. Our focus has been on machine automation solutions for packaging, machine tools/CNC, metalworking, plastics, material handling, and assembly. A key aspect of our customer service is long-term, ongoing collaboration, as exemplified by Canadian company, Husky Injection Molding Systems (see page 40). We will not lose sight of these key markets in the future, and will continue to develop industry-specific hardware and software solutions, but we also intend to enter new markets and continue our dynamic growth. Entertainment engineering is a prime example, as stage and show technology is a particularly high-performing market segment for Beckhoff North America. Many of the world’s largest and best known companies in the entertainment industry are already among our customers, because our technology perfectly matches the needs of the industry.”

“Since its foundation, Beckhoff has been systematically driving the convergence of automation technology (AT) and IT standards, which has proved to be a highly successful strategy for customers opting for PC-based control technology,” said the new President. “With the integration of programming standards originating from computer science in the TwinCAT 3 automation software platform and support for OPC UA as a communication standard for Industry 4.0 and the ‘Internet of Things’, this development is currently becoming even more dynamic. For our North American customers, this results in unique competitive advantages.”

*As of March 2015

Further information:
www.beckhoffautomation.com