

Soulliere on Steel

In May 2007, ThyssenKrupp Steel USA, LLC announced it would build a state-of-the-art, \$3.7 billion steel and stainless processing facility north of Mobile, Alabama, creating thousands of jobs. Bob Soulliere, President and CEO of ThyssenKrupp Steel USA, recently spoke about the decision to choose Alabama, the challenges of the global steel market and the qualities that make great leaders.

So why the South for this facility?

It was a strategic decision. ThyssenKrupp Steel intends to be a global player by expanding our presence into NAFTA. This facility will be technologically advanced and produce the premium products that ThyssenKrupp Steel is known for in Europe. There is a growing need in NAFTA for these products. Industry in the U.S. is trending south, so locating our facility here puts us closer to our customers and our material supply chain in Brazil. Alabama has a strong workforce, competitive energy costs, and extremely professional and supportive leadership at the state, local and federal levels. We've never second-guessed our decision to call Alabama home.

How important is the automotive industry?

The automotive industry will be an important part of our customer base and we expect it will represent 30 to 40 percent of our business.

Our portfolio will include a lot more than just automotive steel, so our products will appeal to a number of different industries.

How does ThyssenKrupp plan to compete?

We will compete by doing a number of core things very well. ThyssenKrupp Steel has a long standing reputation for quality, technological innovation and building long term relationships with our customers to assist them in making new and better products. We work in partnership with our customers.

What traits do you look for in your management team?

We look for people who've proven they can think for themselves and are the best in their fields. We're in start-up and have the opportunity to create something very special. Building a successful corporate culture with the right mission, vision and values is just as important as building an advanced facility or product. We look for team members who are adaptive, creative and think critically.

This mill is unique.

It's been 40 years since a mill of this size and capacity was built in North America. The technology we're installing is the best

available. Because this is a Greenfield project, we have the opportunity to map out efficient flows from beginning to end. We are looking at every aspect to determine the absolute best and most efficient way of doing things.

How will you define success for ThyssenKrupp Steel USA?

By whether or not we've accomplished what we've set out to do. Are we building partnerships with our customers and helping them create innovative new products? Have we created a new definition for quality? Have we created an internal culture and environment that fosters creativity and growth with our team members?

Our goals aren't small. We want to be stewards of the environment. We want people to aspire to work here.

What role does Burr & Forman play in your organization?

We believe in the importance of partnerships. Just as we look to build partnerships with our customers, we want to build them with our suppliers as well. Burr & Forman gives us a depth of local knowledge beyond pure legal advice that we find extremely valuable.

They have a deep bench and bring to the partnership a specific expertise and talent that serves us very well.

At Burr & Forman, we're proud to represent ThyssenKrupp in their North American venture.

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