

A conversation with Ted Hagberg of Stellar Materials LLC

Stellar Materials has been busy developing its Thermbond brand, which continues to provide innovative and efficient refractory solutions to customers around the world. Ted Hagberg has helped form and grow the Thermbond brand. BIC Magazine recently visited with Hagberg to learn more about his involvement in Thermbond's unique refractory technology, which led to the company having a grasp on a worldwide market.

Q: What led to your position at Stellar Materials?

A: My involvement with Stellar Materials started when I worked for an exclusive distributor of the company. My first position was promoting the Thermbond brand throughout the Gulf Coast. When the distributorship relationship ended, Stellar hired me along with other key personnel to promote the Thermbond brand directly to end users. As the company continued to grow and gain market acceptance, I was given the opportunity to expand Thermbond's reach to a worldwide market. This led me to my current role as vice president of business development.

Q: What is the biggest news at Stellar Materials right now?

A: Stellar Materials is in a continual growth mode, both organically and through establishing strong international partnerships. Our most recent international expansion has been into the Asian market. Aside from that, we continue to grow our strong presence in Europe, the Middle East and South America, where we are promoting the value of our Thermbond brand and engineered refractory solutions.

Q: What is your biggest lesson learned?

A: Be a good listener! People love to talk and share what is important to them. I often hear sales people say they need to convince the customer to buy from them. I am not a believer in convincing. If I only focus on telling my story, how can I solve the customer's problem? I believe in listening. If you listen to what your customers say, you will have a much better appreciation of what is important to them. By understanding our customers' needs, we

can better educate them on possible refractory solutions and allow them to determine what is best for them.

Q: What has been the most pivotal moment of your career?

A: Being in the refractory business since August 1979, I've worked for large international companies as well as small, family-owned businesses. The pivotal moment for me was when I decided to leave an established refractory company and accept the challenge of building a business with an unproven and unknown refractory technology. I felt this unique technology would provide incredible value to the refining petrochemical market by eliminating lengthy thermal dry-outs and increasing productivity, so I took a chance with it.

Thermbond has proven to be a chance worth taking. Our brand continues to provide value and has become an established worldwide provider of refractory solutions within multiple industries.

Q: How do you maintain a good work/home life balance?



Ted Hagberg
Vice President
Business Development
Stellar Materials LLC

A: I keep a balance with all through my faith in God, the strength of my marriage and an incredible relationship with my two daughters. The combination of all three has allowed me to maintain a positive balance between my work and home life. Since joining Stellar Materials, it has been a blessing to work out of my home when I'm not traveling. This aspect of my job provides flexibility that would not be possible if I worked at a corporate office. My career at Thermbond has enhanced my ability to effectively manage my priorities. ●

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