

## Duqueine: a new global Tier-1

Within just a few years, Duqueine Company has transformed itself from an SME to a global supplier. Its new facility in Mexico extends its presence out of Europe. It will help the Duqueine Group to follow its established customers and to gain new ones. JEC Composites Magazine interviewed Mr. Gilles Duqueine, President of the Duqueine Group, about the development of his company and his vision for the future.

### interview

GILLES DUQUEINE,  
PRESIDENT,  
DUQUEINE GROUP

you're talking about creating an industrial production business for composites. In the 1980s, the processes and applications for structural composites (mainly carbon/epoxy) were just getting off the ground. Back then, it was all a blank slate. This particular pairing (carbon/epoxy), which represented a revolutionary technological advance, enabled all sorts of new applications and developments to be conceived with just a bit of imagination and creativity. It was in this context that we



Our global strategy is to become a benchmark manufacturer of composites

started up our craft-scale activity through the design and manufacturing – a world's first – of a Formula 3 open-wheel car carbon shell. Alongside this shell manufacturing activity, we have progressively and fairly regularly developed and produced new applications: parts for industry, for sports & leisure and for aerospace (first of all Tier 3, then Tier 2 and now Tier 1). Twenty-nine years later, Duqueine has become a group employing more than 600 people on four sites (two in Lyon, one in Nantes and

**JEC Composites Magazine:** You have, I believe, carved out a fairly original career path and transformed a modest SME into a Tier 1 composites supplier. What have been the key moments along the way?

**GILLES DUQUEINE :** I don't know if you can call it particularly original, when

### About Duqueine Group

A tier-one supplier in the composite industry, the Duqueine group specializes in the design and manufacturing of composite parts and subassemblies for the aviation, industry and sports & leisure sectors.

The group has five different sites:

- Duqueine Rhône-Alpes (Massieux, France – headquarters, and Reyrieux, France)

- Duqueine Atlantique (Nantes, France)
- Duqueine Romania (Timisoara, Romania)
- Duqueine Mexico (Quérétaro, Mexico – in operation since end 2010).

Production sites with all the necessary means to meet the requirements of major global groups, including a total workforce of 600 and upwards of 28,000 m<sup>2</sup> in R&D and production facilities.

In the last financial year the Duqueine Group posted a turnover

of €45 million. Our business is the design and manufacturing of composite parts and subassemblies in three sectors of activity: industry (large radio telescope dishes for Thales), sports & leisure (bicycle wheels and Hans devices for racing drivers) and aerospace (ducting, Business and First-Class seat shells and, recently, three large A350 work packages: fuselage frames, window frames and engine air intake panels).

**JCM:** You have just opened, or will soon be opening, a production site in Queretaro, Mexico. What will be manufactured there? Was this choice dictated mainly by economic criteria (dollar zone) or was it strategic (geographical proximity to Boeing, Bombardier and Embraer)?

**G. D. :** Indeed we are in the process of launching Duqueine Mexico. This will be an independent site for the design and production of composite parts and subassemblies dedicated exclusively to the markets of the Americas. This choice has been mainly guided by our desire to spread the risks of too high a dependency on

a single market or a single client.

**JCM:** What is your medium to long-term strategy? You're involved in the aerospace, industry, and sports & leisure sectors. Would you like to expand into other areas? Wind power or wave power for example?

**G. D. :** Of course. When it comes to industry, it is these days necessary, indeed absolutely crucial, to keep abreast of the technical and economic changes, trends and opportunities. Our strategy is always based on the values upon which Duqueine was built: creativity and reactivity.

**JCM:** Is this likely to translate into other sites being opened abroad through acquisition or organic growth? In Asia, North Africa or the Middle East maybe, in order to follow the OEMs?

**G. D. :** Our global strategy is to become a benchmark manufacturer of composites. The first phase concerning our market positioning and reputation in the sector is currently in full flow. This leaves the second phase, which concerns our engineering and production capacities. We have not yet

of €45 million. ■

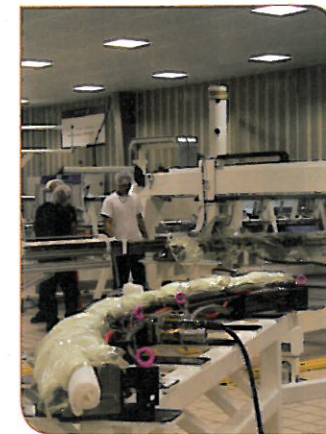
For several years, thanks to major investment in testing and R&D facilities, the group has been able, well upstream, to work jointly with its customers' technical teams and thereby provide them with innovative and efficient solutions. Between 2008 and 2009, its engineering design & methods offices grew from a capacity of 30 engineers to almost 80.

Duqueine is expert in the technologies of prepregs, RTM, MFP

achieved critical mass. This phase still requires further organic and external growth steps.

**JCM:** What is your point of view with regard to the developments in composite technologies, in particular thermoplastics?

**G. D. :** Structural composites are still in their infancy. Whether in terms of the matrices (thermoset or thermoplastic) or in terms of the production processes (autoclave or out-of-autoclave prepregs, RTM, infusion, presses, etc.), there is no hard and fast truth or proof. It is therefore vital to exercise the fullest possible control from A to Z in order to propose the right mix (product/process/market) and maintain technology watch for any new materials or processes.



Production line of Airbus A350XWB composite fuselage frames

More information:  
[www.duqueine.fr](http://www.duqueine.fr)



Duqueine's facilities expand to international

(an exclusive Prepreg Bundle Compression technology invented and patented by the Duqueine group), thermoplastics, infusion moulding and moulds.

The group's main customers include: Adidas, Aerolia, Airbus, Dassault Aviation, EADS Sogerma, Eurocopter, Framatome, Mavic, Messier Bugatti, Premium Aerotec, Salomon, Schlumberger, SICMA Aeroseat (Groupe Zodiac), Spirit Aerosystems, Techspace-Aero Eolines (Groupe Safran) and Thalès Alenia Space. ■