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Largest European Furnace Builders

Largest European Furnace Builders. In researching the largest European new furnace builders in terms of annual sales we ran across a number of obstacles-none of which were a surprise to us. The largest of these challenges was the fact that most of these companies are privately owned and sales figures are not publicly available. This was further complicated by the fact that while some of the companies on our list do have overall company sales figures available, this would include areas completely outside of new furnace manufacturing which are not of interest to us. Tenova is a good example of this-an enormous company which dwarfs many of the others on our list but at the end of the day a number of their products are more related to steel making than what we would consider to be typical heat treating. So what we were left with are publicly available sales figures for a couple of companies on our list with the “honor” system being applied to most of the others. By this we mean that 2/3’s of the companies on our list shared their rough sales figures with the stipulation that they not be published. While we can’t verify these numbers we would say that they all generally fit with what we know about each company in terms of number of employees, presence in the marketplace and size of their facilities. Besides which if you can’t trust somebody in the heat treating industry who can you trust?

Another challenge is what constitutes a European furnace builder? Some of these organizations have facilities around the world, some of which generate more in sales outside of Europe than in Europe. We took the path of least resistance and decided if the head office was in Europe this constitutes a European furnace builder.

And what about Turkey? Sistem Teknik is a large, very impressive furnace builder in Turkey but Turkey is of course a country which straddles Europe and Asia so which is it? We decided that since the company is on the Asian end of the bridge that we would not consider them in our list but having said that we do want to mention them because of the high opinion we have of the company and the fact that sales wise they certainly would belong amongst the ten largest.

Originally we had planned on listing just the ten largest builders but this struck us as unfair as there is such little difference in sales figures between some of the companies that we decided to go with a list of most of the significant players. This lead to another point what is a furnace builder? We decided on companies dedicated to traditional heat treating furnaces such as carburizing, vacuum heat treatment and nitriding as opposed to low temperature ovens as an example.

And last but not least it is disclaimer time. For the reasons mentioned above we do not for one second claim that this list is 100% accurate but in our conceit we are confident that it is pretty darn close. We would like to thank all those who were kind enough to share information with us and we very much appreciate the trust they placed in us to be discrete. Without further ado.

- 1. Ipsen (Germany)** <http://www.ipsenusa.com/> It should come as no surprise that the largest European furnace builder and possibly the largest builder in the world is Kleve, Germany based Ipsen. With over 20,000 furnaces installed over the years and manufacturing locations around the world the company has the ability and experience to offer virtually all types of furnaces including Vacuum, Batch IQ's, Vacuum Carburizing and pushers.
- 2. Aichelin Heat Treatment Systems (Austria)** <http://www.aichelin.com/en/index.php> Aichelin which has been around since 1868 concentrates on atmosphere furnaces including pushers, batch, mesh belt, pit furnaces and roller hearths to mention a few. The company has a US operation and is very strong in areas such as China and Brazil. Also part of the group is SAFED (Switzerland) which became part of the organization in 2007, Ema Indutec which was acquired in 2007 and Noxmat (Germany) combustion systems.
- 3. SECO/WARWICK (Poland)** <https://www.secowarwick.com/> One of the fastest growing companies on our list is SECO/WARWICK who in the past ten years have tripled sales to just over 116 million Euros in 2015. With over 1,000 employees the company manufacturers on most continents and is strong in virtually every style of heat treat furnace.
- 4. ALD Vacuum Systems (Germany)** <http://web.ald-vt.de/cms/> Located in Hanau, Germany ALD Vacuum Systems is part of the AMG Group which operates in a number of different industries including commercial heat treating. Being part of such a large diverse organization gave us many headaches when it came to trying to determine the actual sales of the furnace building division however we are reasonably confident that this is where the company should be ranked. Best known for their vacuum carburizing furnaces.
- 5. Tenova (Italy)** <http://www.tenova.com/> The heat treating portion of Tenova is the MTH, Metal Technology Holding division which has approximately 320 employees and consists of BMI in France, Schmetz, Mahler and IVA in Germany, and Huisen in China. Between each of these companies MTH is able to offer furnaces for most applications.
- 6. CIEFFE Industrial Furnaces (Italy)** <http://www.cieffe-forni.com/en/contacts/> Between CIEFFE, CIEFFE Shanghai and the service group the organization had sales in 2015 of a little over 40 million Euro. This is a company which we believe has built pretty well every style of furnace out there.
- 7. ECM (France)** <http://www.ecm-furnaces.com/> A privately held company ECM is best known for their vacuum carburizing systems, so much so that after CI Hayes many years ago I would consider ECM to be one of the true pioneers of this technology.
- 8. TAV Vacuum Furnaces (Italy)** <http://www.tav-vacuumfurnaces.com/> Founded in 1984 TAV has built and installed over 600 high end vacuum furnaces in over 45 countries.
- 9. SOLO Swiss Group (Switzerland)** <http://www.soloswiss.com/> This is a much larger company than we thought with locations in Switzerland, France and China with 120 employees producing atmosphere furnaces, batch furnaces, bell-type furnaces, continuous furnaces and mesh belt furnaces. Founded in 1945 the company claims to have installed over 20,000 furnaces.

10. ROHDE Schutzgasöfen GmbH (Germany) <http://www.rohdetherm.de/en/> Since 1983 the firm has installed over 400 new furnaces and over 200 salt reclamation systems. Typical furnaces included vacuum nitriding units and large pit carburizing furnaces including possibly the world's largest. In recent years the company has become more international.

11. Rubig (Austria) <http://www.rubig.com/index.cfm?seite=home&sprache=EN> Rubig is a long established company doing commercial heat treating and also providing Ion Nitriding and vacuum furnaces. Probably the best known name when it comes to Ion Nitriders.

12. KGO GmbH (Germany) <http://www.kgo-gmbh.com/> While KGO was formed in 1998 the history of the company goes all the way back to the 1940's. The company offers a number of products including state of the art fully automated Gas Nitriding Furnaces and Vacuum Tempering units. We have seen examples of their products all over the world including Brazil, USA, Germany and Sweden to name a few.

13. Remix (Poland) <http://www.remiksa.pl/?lang=en&aktualnosc=54> The company offers atmosphere furnaces and is a licensee for USA furnace builder AFC-Holcroft. Sales in 2015 were just under 9 million Euros.

14. Codere (Switzerland) <http://www.codere.ch/en> CODERE SA has more than 30 years of experience in the construction of industrial furnaces for the process of heat treatment of ferrous and non-ferrous metals. On average Codere sells between 15-20 installations per year to various industries and one area they have seen drastic growth is in salt quenching process. At present Codere has installations in four continents and see growth in the future in the ASEAN area, China and Mexico.

15. PVA TePla AG (Germany) <http://www.pvatepla.com/en/home> The Industrial Systems Division of PVA TePla specializes in the development, construction and marketing of vacuum heat treatment furnaces for processing high-quality materials at high temperatures and has sold over 1,000 systems over the years. Our problem in ranking this company is that a great number of their systems are outside of what we would consider "mainstream" heat treating. A good company with a good name.

16. Systherms(Germany) <http://www.systherms.de/unternehmen-ystherms.en.382.hcmsl?mpl> Based in Germany we have had only limited dealings with this company. They have provided over 250 furnaces over the years including vacuum and atmosphere.