

# CEMENT PERFORMANCE REVIEW

QUARTER 3 2008

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## WHAT HAPPENS NEXT???

In a departure from the normal format for this newsletter, where I normally review the progress that **CPI** has made in the recent quarter, I thought it might be more appropriate to look to the short term future during what are extremely difficult times both for the global economy and especially in the cement industry. This is for a number of reasons—firstly I am sure that both plant based and corporate readers are under immense pressure to deliver cost reductions as sales have massively reduced and what we have been doing is the least of your worries!! Secondly, I am sure that many of you are budgeting for 2009 at present and, whilst I am sure using consultants in these times of difficulties might be the last thing you consider, **CPI** can assist you in reducing your costs.

By optimizing your plant, even if it results in campaign running, will result in an improved bottom line with fuel and power costs reduced. Optimising alternative fuels programmes will also keep fuel costs to a minimum. Reducing variability will reduce material costs. Regardless of market conditions the plant should be optimized to translate technical excellence into profit.

Training is another area that is often an

easy target when times are hard, but we would suggest that this is exactly the right time to train. Many times our clients want to train their employees when the plant is sold out but find that they cannot make people available.

As a final comment a word about headcount reduction. Here in the UK we are hearing of kilns being mothballed, redundancies from plants and new capacity projects being delayed. I am sure this is being mirrored in other parts of the world. All too often the most experienced people to go are those who are closest to retirement age through voluntary redundancies. These are the very people that have the most knowledge and experience of the plant and we would recommend that before people leave some programme is put in place to attempt to transfer knowledge to those that are left behind on the plant.

Having been a Plant Manager I can understand the pressures on operations at present to cut costs, however **CPI** can provide you with support in these hard times to deliver the savings and prepare for the future when the current difficulties have blown over.

Mark Mutter—Technical Marketing Director



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## CEMENT TECHNOLOGY FOR EXECUTIVES

In October 2008 **CPI** will deliver its Cement Technology Course for Executives to a group of 12 Directors from the Titan Cement Company.

The purpose of the course is to emphasise the technical aspects of the cement manufacturing process which have the biggest impact upon bottom line,

and the technical options that which cement plant operators can develop their plants during periods of expansion.

As with all of the **CPI** courses, there will be a blend of classroom lectures, course exercises and in this case a business based game for the participants to test

their technical knowledge and how this can be implemented in the context of the cement industry.

The course will be delivered by Murray Hislop and Brian Boon, who have both extensive experience of plant operations, corporate environments as well as the wider cement business.

## CASTLE CEMENT CONTINUED

As mentioned in our previous newsletters, **CPI** has been working with Castle Cement in the UK to provide training modules for kiln burners and other technical staff. The first of these courses was at the Ketton plant, and within the last quarter a similar module was

completed at the Padeswood plant. **CPI** also has plans to complete the module at the third Castle site, Ribblesdale, in January. This will ensure that all of the kiln burners in the group have passed through the same training programme. Some of the comments

from Padeswood are below:

"Excellent, knowledgeable and presented the information very well"

"The course has given me confidence with operating the kiln".

## RIVER CEMENT

As the River plant in Festus, Missouri approaches completion, **CPI** were asked to return to the site (having already assisted in the selection of the operators for the new plant) to provide a number of training sessions for the

operators. As the operators had already received some theory training from the equipment suppliers, the focus was the practical aspects of pyro-processing, explaining some of the situations that the operators may

encounter and how to deal with them. The training was completed by Principal Engineer Alan Lorimer. Plant Manager Scott Conroy said "Alan is a very good trainer and I think people see him as a good mix of theory and practical applications"

## CPI DEVELOPMENTS

Within the next quarter, **CPI** will be launching its newly designed website. The new looks site will have a updated design (the site has been in the same format for 5 years now!) and should assist visitors in navigating around the site more easily. We will also have more references to

the work that we have done and the services that we can offer you. We are also working on some more “fun” interactive tools, similar to the variability calculator that many of you have used. These tools will allow you to review the performance of your plant against the **CPI** stan-

dards. Also, we have fixed the date for the **CPI** annual training conference at Gatwick. The course will be a little earlier next year—running from the 11th to the 14th May— this is due to the IEEE conference in the USA being later than usual. Anticipated price for your budgets is around £2600 including hotel costs.

## MIDDLE EAST MARKETING

During the last quarter Mark Mutter, **CPI** Technical Marketing Director visited a number of plants in the Middle East on a marketing trip. This is one part of the world that has felt less of the impact of the current global financial difficulties due to the construction boom and

the high price of crude oil. However there is still a drive for efficiency in this part of the world as new capacity has come on stream and profit should be maximized during periods of high sales.

A number of projects that were discussed for

**CPI** to work with various companies were:

Technical support in setting up a microscopy lab

Optimization of two cement mills to meet customer demands

Optimization of pyro-line to increase output to 20% above guarantee levels

## PROJECTS AND COMMISSIONING

One of the services which **CPI** is not often associated with by its customers is commissioning of projects. Whilst many of you will be aware of **CPI** involvement in Projects in Colombia and the USA at the design stage, we are also able to offer

commissioning support for our clients. We have a strong and experienced team of kiln burners and process engineers to work with the clients team and equipment suppliers to ensure a smooth and rapid start-up of plant. We have mechanical and electrical

engineers for no load testing acceptance. We can also provide a complete commissioning planning service including the preparation to the performance guarantee tests, an essential part to any commissioning process.

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