

“EVEN THE GOVERNMENTS are interested in this kind of products”

With over than 25 years of experience, Ultra-Controlo is the main supplier of vacuum in Portugal. Having started from being the exclusive representative of important international factories – especially Rietschle –, currently, it is also an important manufacturer of medical oxygen plants worldwide, vacuum plants and compressed air plants with application in hospitals. Moreover, it has been implementing, with great success, the concept of total oil-free networks of compressed air in Portuguese hospitals. It is the first Portuguese manufacturer of medical gas plants certified according the European Directive 93/42/CEE for medical devices. The grand objective of the CEO of the company, Sabino de Pompeia, with whom the magazine *Pontos de Vista* has chatted with, is to replicate the Portuguese model in other countries.

And why replicating? The advantages are more than many. The first is related, naturally, with matters of public health. In light of the monograph of European Pharmacopoeia, the medical air is considered a drug and the quality of the air delivered to the hospital network belongs to the Hospital Pharmaceutical.

The equipment which produces medical air must be, therefore, oil-free to guarantee the total security and dominion of the quality of the air administrated to the patient. In this perspective, the oil-free air plants offer a safer alternative than the air plants with oiled compressors. In the opinion of the Engineer Sabino de Pompeia, these ones will come to an end, someday.

“Increasingly, the hospitals administrations notice the advantages of having equipment of this nature, they are aware of this fact. Our products have a huge maturity and lifecycles of decades. Also, they are associated to great hospitals”, he claims.

ULTRA CONTROLO is the manufacturer leader in the Portuguese market and counts with more than 500 medical gas plants in Portugal, only since the year 2000. Throughout these 25 years of experience, his main partners and installers have been GASIN (AirProducts), LINDE and SUCH.

“THESE MACHINES ARE MADE TO LAST VERY LONG TIME AND WITH LOWER COST OF OPERATION”

In addition to the quality of the air administrated, it is important to mention that this equipment is prepared to work in continuous regime while most of the oil-free piston compressors, on the contrary of the compressors of ULTRA CONTROLO, have been conceived for industrial use and intermittent functioning, not being, therefore, prepared for a continuous functioning. Well, obviously it is prudent to guarantee a constant debit of air for not to risk, for instance, that pneumatic tools, when used, lose the necessary strength comparing to the normal operation which results in a weak supplying of medical air, something that might be fatal for the patient.

It is also worth mentioning that, beyond the synonym of quality and reliability, these equipment are characterised for the durability. “These machines are made to last many years and with a lower cost of operation. Ultra Controlo has capitalised a lot for the Government in this area with the implementation of equipment and top technology. Hospitals do not spend one euro more than what they could spend to have the systems working. Any other plant of the



Sabino de Pompeia

competition has the durability of 10 or 15 years and then they have to be replaced. When the Government invests in one of these equipments, he invests just once, because he does not have to reinvest for the next 40 years. Thus, even Governments are interested in these kind of products so they communicate with the hospital units themselves”, explains Sabino de Pompeia.

This has been, therefore, the speech of entrance in new markets. “When I am entering in other countries, I speak to the local Ministry of Health because the State is the main interested in implementing equipments that offer higher security, exceed the requirements demanded by the international law in this area, that are prepared for lifecycles of decades in which they will not have a new expense acquiring a new equipment for the next 30 to 40 years, and also that are conceived to spare energy and other expenses of maintenance. I am convinced that, in Portugal, we will be able to reduce a few millions of euros in the expense that the Government has with medical gases. We are working in this direction and we have already taken the first lights to the current Assistant Secretary of State of the Ministry of Health and also to the Infarmed. Right now, I am working in Saudi Arabia as well with the local authorities with the objective of reducing tens of millions dollars to the Saudi Government”, he

mentions.

“WE ARE MORE FOCUSED IN EMERGENT COUNTRIES”

It was only in 2011 that the internationalization started being prepared at ULTRA-CONTROLO with a website in 4 languages. “With the precious support of AICEP that believed in us and with the business plan sharply designed, we have, currently, active projects in 52 countries. Whenever we go to a Fair, there are always companies interested in distributing our products, especially due to our top products. Regarding the markets of exportation, they are about 20. This month, the first cargo was sent to Indonesia and, next month, it will be sent the first cargo to Brazil. We are more focused in emergent countries, not only in Africa, but also in South America and Middle East, where we figured that the health sector one in which the governments are investing. In what regards Angola, we made the FILDA last year so, by then, I was able to visit several hospitals and to understand as well that they are still very debilitated in that area. Therefore, there is still much to be done. We are making history with the implementation of high-technology devices which do not exist there and also with the concern of instituting good practices”, states with pride the CEO of ULTRA-CONTROLO. Angola is the country where the

company sells more nowadays, fruit of the persistence and the excellent performance of the distributor. However, it was not easy to penetrate this market. “In 2002/2003 a project of construction of 195 hospitals in Angola was mentioned and that potential naturally caught my attention, even if the project has not evolved. About three years ago, a friend of mine created its own company in Angola and decided to work with our brands. Our cooperation has resulted in us being competitors in around 80% of medical gases plants projects in Angola, with our plants”, he refers.

“A FEW YEARS FROM NOW, WE WILL BE ONE OF THE BRANDS LEADERS OF MARKET IN COUNTRIES WHERE WE ARE FOCUSED”

Sabino de Pompeia takes this interview to leave us an advice: “it would be important that hospitals or public decision-makers in that sector, before buying a plant, thought well about what they are acquiring because I have visited several hospitals and have seen equipments that costs fortunes all inoperable. I have been at a hospital, in Angola, where the oxygen production plant was inoperable and to be replaced. In the set, there was an oxygen compressor which had only 1800 hours of use, which means that it had not reached yet the number of hours for the first intervention of maintenance at 2000 hours and it was already to waste. That compressor only costs 44 thousand dollars and, for me, it is completely new!! Therefore, opting for a Portuguese manufacturer as ULTRA CONTROLO, with the prestige we have, with the references of what we have made here and of what we are doing around the world... We speak the same language and we can form good technicians of maintenance at the hospitals of Angola – I think the country would only benefit with all of that”.

In what concerns the expectations for the near future, “We had the happiness and the skill of closing a license construction agreement of oil-free compressors in Portugal, so we are the first Portuguese manufacturer of oil-free air compressors with our own brand ULTRACECO. We can export our brand to the whole world. The expectations for the future of ULTRA CONTROLO are, indeed, very good. We have our industrial manufacturing division of compressors, Scroll Division, and the



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manufacturing division of medical devices, Medical Gas Systems, where we integrate as well the compressors we manufacture. It does not seem like it, but this combination has become perfect for

us not to rely on others. Our distributors are very satisfied. Continuing like this, in a few years from now, we will be one of the brands leaders of market in countries where we are focused on”, he concludes.



Portuguese Manufacturer of Medical Gas Plants

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