

# Consistency and continuity mark 20-year collaboration

Earlier this year Heye International celebrated the 20th anniversary of its supplier partnership with leading sustainable, innovative packaging solutions provider, Orora Limited in Australia.

Anniversary celebrations took place on 7–8 February at Orora's glass manufacturing plant in Gawler, South Australia, where employees of both Orora and Heye reflected on a partnership established in 2002, and looked to future collaborations. The two companies cemented their friendship and commitment with a joint donation to a local charity project.

Throughout the past two decades, Heye has provided continuity of supply and technical support for Orora, a fact confirmed by a large new order placed with the German equipment manufacturer just before Christmas 2022.

## Start as you mean to go on

In 2002, Orora entrusted Heye to design and install the first furnace and two production lines when it established its Gawler glass manufacturing plant. The plant was built to supply the rapidly developing wine industry in the nearby Barossa Valley and other prestigious wine regions across Australia.

This was a new plant, so Heye also helped train glass operators and delivered technical support once the plant was up and running. Such support has continued to this day according to Orora Technology and Business Development Manager, Andrew Barreau: "Having a responsive world-class technical partner like Heye makes a big difference to our operations. Our plant operates 24/7, so it is critical to have consistent and reliable support, which our partnership with Heye delivers. Together we have developed some clever remote solutions and this collaborative approach to innovative solutions is key to our long and successful partnership."



Heye will supply the first SpeedLine IS machines to Orora.

When the glass plant was commissioned in May 2002, the 450-tonne furnace fed two 16-section double gob IS machines, which produced a yield of over 90% and sales soon exceeded the initial target of 200

million wine and champagne bottles a year. As a result, Orora added a second furnace two years later. Again, Heye supplied furnace, feeder, two 16-section 6<sup>1</sup>/<sub>4</sub>in DG IS machines (blow-blow process) and cold end equipment. ▶



Orora's glass manufacturing plant in Gawler, South Australia.



The on-site celebrations on the occasion of the 20th anniversary between Orora and Heye (L to R): Knut Prasuhn (Heye), Greg Savage (Orora), Martin Petersson (Ardagh Group), Hans-Peter Müller (Heye) and Andrew Barreau (Orora).

The wine industry has sustainability at its core and has been pioneering lightweight wine bottles. Orora used this opportunity to diversify its glass offering and, in 2010, asked Heye to supply another furnace equipped, for the first time, with NNPB [narrow neck press and blow] technology on its IS machines to supply the beer market as well as ultra-lightweight wine bottles.

The two 20-section NNPB

machines were supplied with a triple gob conversion kit giving the plant the flexibility to run double or triple gob production. As Heye is the inventor of the NNPB production process, it was clearly the best supplier for the job. NNPB is now applied throughout the plant, with commercial wine brands benefiting from 75cl bottles weighing as little as 330g.

By 2020, all lines had been

converted from 16-section to 20-section. Heye supplied compact 20-section IS machines which were built to fit within the footprint of the original 16-section machines. This dramatically reduced the civil engineering required to fulfil the project. The latest order, received in December 2022, will see Heye install the first SpeedLine IS machines at Orora's Australian operation.

From the very beginning, Heye supported Orora with a comprehensive Technical Assistance Agreement that has been renewed and extended over the years. This includes training of Orora team members in Australia and Germany, production and yield-support, furnace inspection, job- and colour-change support, mould design/lightweighting and a host of other areas to boost the efficiency of the customer's operations.

During the pandemic, the company supported Gawler as it rebuilt the G2 furnace first completed in 2004. Currently Gawler has a capacity of around a billion bottles a year from its three furnaces and six production lines, depending on product mix and colour schedules.

### Built on demand, efficiency and trust

A combination of market demand and opportunities for operational efficiencies have kept the relationship expanding throughout its 20-year history. By 2022, the flexibility built into the lines supplied by Heye had helped the glass business to expand into new product ranges to mitigate the impacts of lower wine volumes.

The plant's expansion and Heye's innovative technology have made it increasingly efficient. For example, the early furnaces had to change colour quite often to react to market demands. With three furnaces, Orora became more flexible



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and generated more stability.

The development of personal contacts between the experts in all departments enhances communications and reduces bureaucracy. There are no bottlenecks caused by enquiries having to channel through a single account manager.

“To realise such complex projects and keep a strong relationship in place requires trust between the partners,

exemplified by the continuity and the level of professional excellence both parties show,” stated Heye International’s CEO, Hans-Peter Müller. “This is the kind of relationship we want to build with all our customers. Glass is a capital-intensive business so glassmakers seek partners like Heye who will be with them for the long haul and provide fresh solutions for the challenges they face.”



A Heye IS machine in operation at the Gawler plant.

**Win-win situation**

The ongoing collaboration has been a win-win-situation for both parties and has helped Orora prove to be a reliable partner for the wine, beer, spirits and olive oil industries in Australia.

Looking to the future, Orora continues to work with Heye to pursue the glass industry’s evolution, and the partnership will assist Orora in achieving its interim Climate change target of reducing Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by FY35 from an FY19 baseline.

“We are actively seeking to improve flexibility around run lengths, further lightweighting and sustainability around low CO<sub>2</sub> glass manufacturing,” confirmed Mr Barreau. “We are confident that Heye will play a key role in helping us address these challenges.” ●

**Further Information:**

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