

About Mark S. Plum

Director, East West Associates

Mr. Plum currently holds the position of Director of East West Associates Inc. In this role Mr. Plum is responsible for business development, client relationship, project execution, with a focus on USA companies and firms who either have operating units in China or plan to enter the China market.

Mark is responsible for driving EWA commercial and risk management projects in Mexico, Central Eastern Europe, China and Southeast Asia. Additionally, Mr. Plum is responsible for the execution of market development and entry-focused projects.

Before joining East West Associates, Mr. Plum has held a variety of senior level positions with USA multinational corporations, with his last position as President of Briggs & Stratton Asia (NYSE: BGG), based in Shanghai, China for 11 years concluding in 2013. This position included P/L responsibility comprised of multiple manufacturing facilities in Chongqing, China, Subic Bay, Philippines and Osaka, Japan, and distribution operations, sales offices and warehouses in China, South Korea, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Myanmar, Singapore, and Taiwan.

In 2002 Mr. Plum was instrumental in establishing Briggs & Stratton engine manufacturing facility in Chongqing, China, and a design center, laboratory, and application test center in Shanghai.

Mr. Plum established a 200 dealer network throughout China to service end products powered by Briggs & Stratton engines. In addition, during Mr. Plums tenure as President of Briggs & Stratton Asia he developed a complete line of Outdoor Power Equipment (OPE) (lawn mowers, tillers, generators, and water pumps branded Briggs & Stratton and sold through a Briggs & Stratton dealer network). Additionally, 120 Original Equipment Manufacturers (OEM's) were developed with application engineering and design center services provided by Briggs & Stratton to improve their products, grow their business and subsequently, Briggs & Stratton OEM engine business.

In 2005 Mr. Plum led a team to establish a manufacturing and distribution center in Subic Bay, Philippines. This facility was designed to work in conjunction with the Briggs & Stratton engine manufacturing facility in Chongqing, China to design, develop, and manufacturer water pumps for all markets in Asia outside of China and to provide products to South East Asian markets in a much shorter 3 day shipping window.

During this tenure as President of Briggs & Stratton Asia, annual operating income year on year growth exceeded 10 percent per year for the 11 years growing the business from startup to 120 million USD and over 600 employees. Mr. Plum was awarded several Headquarter awards while President of Briggs & Stratton Asia.

Mr. Plum had previously held a variety positions with American Standard (Trane Air Conditioning Division) in Thailand commencing in 1991 and relocating to China in 1995, concluding with Vice President of Sales and Marketing. During this period Mr. Plum established a 50/50 Joint Venture with United Kingdom-based Jardine Matheson in Bangkok, Thailand to design, manufacture, sell, and service residential air conditioners within the Indo-Chinese markets. The products produced in this Bangkok facility were developed and designed specifically for these markets with extensive consumer research.

In 1994, Mr. Plum established Trane's first Representative office in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam after the USA embargo was lifted to market, sell, and service commercial air conditioning products to the growing global 5 star Hotel market developing within Vietnam. In addition in 2003 when Mr. Plum Briggs established Briggs & Stratton China manufacturing facility an engine was developed designed exclusively for the "Long Tail water taxi market aimed at the Mekong Delta in Southern Vietnam. A sales force, after sales service capability and application/engineering/ test center was established to support this growing and unique market.

Mr. Plum has a Masters of International Management from Thunderbird School of International Management, Phoenix, Arizona.

About Bernd Schmitt, EWA Automotive Specialist

Senior Consultant with East West Associates

Bernd Schmitt is a Senior Consultant with East West Associates (“EWA”) based in Mexico. His consulting expertise encompasses a wide range of competencies including:

- Interim Management during organization restructure,
- Risk management activities to facilitate delivery performance compliance,
- Process improvement (restructuring internal and external material flow),
- Start-up support to non-Mexican companies and new facilities,
- Development of national supplier base,
- Support to expansion plans,
- Cost structure analysis,
- Enforcement of inventory control,
- Optimization of production planning and supply chain structure,
- Improvement of national and international transport schemes, and
- Project implementation support

Prior to engaging in consulting, Bernd had extensive experience in a variety of roles and industries. Most recently he served as Managing Director of Fischer Tubtech, S.A. de C.V. in Mexico with full responsibility for leading a production plant including the business plan, P&L, quality, headcount and investment. His accomplishments there included implementation of 2 fully automatic high-bay warehouses for tooling and indirect material, expansion from 2 to 5 500 to 2400-ton hydroforming presses from, 150% Increase of cash flow by inventory reductions of 90% WIP inventory and 60% overall. He also caused 100% delivery performance improvement to customers, implementation of 3D Laser cutting technology and achievement of IATF 16949 certification in 2018 and recertification in the following years. Before that Bernd was Managing Director GSTMultibox de Mexico where he executed the start-up of Mexican operations. He increased sales volume by 200% while providing support to customer supply chain optimization. While building up a local base for returnable packaging administration he led the implementation of maintenance and cleaning services for returnable packaging for more than 5000 packaging units.

Earlier, Bernd was Interim Managing Director of Sorg Plastik de Mexico responsible for turning around a potential bankruptcy. His activities included reorganization of their production, logistic and quality departments, policing OEM customer deliveries, risk management in their logistic area, rebuilding the supplier base, and re-negotiation of payment terms with customers to bring cash flow back to positive.

Prior Mexico experience includes serving as:

- Purchasing Manager and Member of NA Purchasing Organization of Faurecia Interior Systems de Mexico where he enforced SQA programs, restructured direct and MRO purchasing, supported a startup Cut& Sew facility and achieved overall purchase savings of 3 to 4% yearly.
- Purchase & Warehouse Manager/ Member of Global Purchasing Organization of SKF de México involved in implementation of consignment Cut & sew for high volume consumables leading to 18% savings and Six Sigma Team member.
- Supply Chain Manager of Bosal México responsible for 35% of inventory reduction through optimization of material planning, controlling and inventory planning, redesign of the supply chain system, implementation of an MRP system and Optimization of production workflow
- Supply Chain Consultant for Grupo Spicer, achievement of 30% savings on internal logistic cost between Mexican plants and restructure of purchasing, traffic, warehouse and inventory control

Bernd's earlier career was with ROTH-TECHNIK AUSTRIA in both Germany and Mexico a leading supplier of exhaust gas treatment systems applied to all forms of transportation. His career started as a Warehouse Coordinator in Germany, then he became a Material and Production Planner implementing the startup of deliveries to Mexican OEM's and culminated in his being assigned to Mexico to help building up the Mexican Facility with responsibility for startup of their Purchasing, Traffic, Warehouse, Logistic, and Production Planning and Controlling departments, starting national deliveries to Mexican OEM within 6 months.

Language fluencies are German (native tongue), Spanish and English. His education includes a Business Management degree from the University of Applied Sciences, Karlsruhe, Germany, a degree in Company Organization from the REFA Group, Darmstadt Germany, and a Degree in Wholesale and Foreign Trade from the Commercial College, HLA in Gernsbach, Germany.