

Not a dogmatic cooperation

THE TWO DUTCH BAKERY MACHINE MANUFACTURERS, RADEMAKER AND CAPWAY HAVE ENTERED INTO A “PREFERRED PARTNERSHIP” – ‘A COOPERATION, BUT NOT A FORCED MARRIAGE’. HILDEGARD M. KEIL, EDITOR-IN-CHIEF OF BAKING+BISCUIT INTERNATIONAL TALKED TO **GERARD MUERMANS**, COMMERCIAL DIRECTOR AT RADEMAKER AND **HANS VAN DIJK**, CEO AT CAPWAY, ABOUT HOW THE PARTNERSHIP WILL WORK

+ bbi: Gentlemen, you have announced a cooperation between Capway and Rademaker. What does this entail – cooperation, shareholding, a merger?

+ Gerard Muermans: It is a preferred partnership. There is no shareholding or merger. We arrived at the conclusion that both companies are similar in terms of quality and service and the further development of our products. They also complement each other very well and have proved this in the past with several projects.

+ bbi: As far as I know, Capway specializes in handling, Rademaker focuses on pastry lines. However, Capway has designed laminating lines with Rijkaart and Rademaker has also offered handling equipment. In certain ways, you have been competitors. Has this changed?

+ Hans van Dijk: Each company will, in future, focus on its core business without making an issue out of it. If a customer wants to order a small Rijkaart plant, he will get exactly that. If a customer is interested in handling equipment by Rademaker, it will be supplied. To us, the customer is king. The service and spare parts' business will remain untouched. The objective of our cooperation is not the elimination of competition but rather the optimization of our offers. Both companies pass on know-how that is also available to the partner company; we will have a lot more potential for optimization of entire lines than a loose cooperation would provide where the partners only partially open up or where the subsidiaries of companies are obliged to cooperate. The mutual basis of trust and knowledge for an optimal cooperation is available, but it is not forced.

+ Muermans: In particular, in large turnkey projects, problems with the interfaces can occur because although the partner cooperates he knows next to nothing about the work of the other company. We are not faced with this problem and so we can concentrate our efforts on our respective core business.



++ Hans van Dijk (left, CEO of Capway) and **Gerard Muermans** (Commercial Director at Rademaker)

+ bbi: Would you please define this?

+ Muermans: Rademaker stands for any type of sheeting line including laminating and pastry equipment or for the production of bread and rolls including all fillings and finishing technology. Capway, on the other hand, is responsible for conveying, handling, slashing, moulding and lid management, depanning, chilling and proofing.

+ bbi: This means that raw material logistics, mixing, ovens and the packaging required for a complete production process are still missing. Where will these components come from? Rademaker has just sold its

oven technology and Capway is busy only in the specialist field of vertical ovens.

+ van Dijk: Ovens are the heart of the bakery. The decision in favor of a particular oven has a lot to do with customer preference and passion. Many companies have a preferred oven “ideology”. Parallel to that, individual technologies or manufacturers dominate on a regional or national level. This is why the customer often chooses the oven supplier as well as the company providing the mixers as well. Of course, we also have our preferences for oven partners; but a preferred selection does not make sense. This is the same with mixers. The product ranges of the few manufacturers are very similar and the customers know them all.

+ bbi: You said that your companies will complement each other. What does this mean in practice?

+ van Dijk: Rademaker's roots are in the fine bakery ware business while our tradition is more the production of bread and rolls. In the meantime, the markets have grown together; new ones have emerged. The experience each of us has gained will, in future, be utilized mutually.

+ bbi: Can you explain this in more detail? What will the partners Rademaker and Capway offer precisely?

+ Muermans: How much time do you have? Just kidding! We offer lines for the production of bread and rolls, pizza, baguettes, pastry, croissants, flat bread, biscuits, cookies, crackers, muffins and donuts – however without the fat frying plant – Chinese dumplings, tortillas, breading, stacked potato chips and probably much more that does not seem to be popping into my mind right now.

+ bbi: What will the fields of your scheduled cooperation embrace: development, manufacturing, service, project business?

+ van Dijk: All of them, but less in manufacturing because both companies have well established production facilities. Of course, we will talk to each other when we are about to design a new product and consider the ideas of the Rademaker people and vice versa. It is the interfaces that are causing problems and we now have the chance to eliminate these problems during the development stages. Naturally, we will work together in the project business. It was the starting point of our discussions that have been taking place since the beginning of this year and which finally arrived at this partnership.

+ Muermans: We will also cooperate in the service field. If a problem occurs in a joint line, we will inform each other and coordinate the service work. This is also in the interests of the customer. Nobody wants to see service personnel regularly in the bakery production.

+ bbi: Let's talk about the customer benefits. Cooperation is certainly a topic but are there other reasons why your partnership will be beneficial to your clients?

+ van Dijk: It is a global trend that the lines are operated by as few personnel as possible. This means that the lines have to be designed, built and controlled accordingly. This is an example of the benefits; the customer will ▶

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receive intense cooperation. The aim is to make the lines more efficient and to optimize the costs; this is not limited to the investment costs but also to the costs of operation.

+ Muermans: In croissant production, there is now a prevailing trend towards prolonged resting and proofing times. Both our companies have different experiences in this field which will be beneficial for the customer. Another joint issue is the layout of lines with high hourly capacities and thus large quantities to be handled by the system. We have already implemented an on-line monitoring of the entire line via cameras.

+ bbi: What about representation in different markets? Do you plan a closer cooperation in this respect as well?

+ van Dijk: This is one important subject on our agenda and currently under discussion. The way that we are established on the markets is quite different. Rademaker has many of its own subsidiaries and we only have two in the US and the UK. We also have joint and individual foreign representatives. We will come up with an individual solution for each market that is tailor-made to the respective needs and requirements.

+ bbi: In the turnkey business, the demand for service increases in terms of customized product development, start-up of the line and training of the employees. Will you cooperate in these fields as well?

+ Muermans: The need for this type of support is rising mainly on the so called emerging market. The industrial production of baked goods is mostly unknown in these countries. Both companies have a large pool of experience and manpower. We will of course utilize this on a mutual base.

+ bbi: Capway is mainly an industrial supplier while Rademaker is industrial but also semi-industrial. Will Rademaker become an industrial supplier as well?

+ Muermans: There are some companies amongst our customers that are just taking the first steps towards an automation of their production lines but still want to keep the manual work for some of the production steps. Of course we will continue to develop and manufacture equipment for this type of customer. Alternately, these companies often encounter the problem of not being able to hire suitable employees which forces them to replace manual work by machines. The robotics products by Capway may be the right solution in this field. They replace work without turning the equipment into a mono line.

+ van Dijk: The use of robots in the production of baked goods is still in its infancy. However, interesting opportunities are already emerging. We will jointly look into these matters and see how we can implement them.

+ bbi: Gentlemen, thank you for the interview. +++

++ figure 1
Sheeting line by Rademaker

++ figure 2
Robocap by Capway

