

# “The market forces us to unceasingly aspire to perfection and competitiveness”



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**Marek Kędzierzyński** is Commercial Director of REMIX S.A. with headquarters in Świebodzin, Poland. In this interview with heat processing he talks about the future of the energy industry, technological challenges and globalization.

## **What, in your opinion, will be the energy mix of the future?**

**Kędzierzyński:** I suspect that in the near future there will not be radical changes in the energy mix in Europe. The process of transition to a low-carbon economy is a long-term process, and energy security requires stable resources. Renewable energy sources will become increasingly important in the energy mix, but do not provide complete energy security. Despite the growth of renewables and energy efficiency improvements, a large role will still be played by fossil fuels.

## **Which regenerative energy source do you consider to have the greatest future?**

**Kędzierzyński:** In my opinion, there is no clear answer to this question. The rapid increase in energy demand in

developing countries will be a key factor in the market development process. Still most of the energy we get today is based on the old methods, i. e. oil, coal and natural gas. Modern power industry faces problems associated with increased consumption of energy, as well as its inefficient transmission network transmission. One may assume that due to one of the lowest production costs of energy and easy construction of new power globally, wind power could become the leading source. - and is already one of the fastest growing renewable energy technologies. The trend can also be applied to the energy consumer, focusing on micro-sources where citizens themselves can produce energy for their own use. Another option is a continental super grid of the high voltage direct current transmission line-HVDC, which will be able to easily and effectively transport renewable energy between countries.



## RÉSUMÉ

### Marek Kędzierzyński

Born on 16 September 1976

Current job: Member of the Board, Commercial Director of REMIX S.A., Świebodzin

Studies: Master of Mechanical Engineering

To reach the current position, Marek Kędzierzyński gained experience in almost all work levels. After graduation, he started working as a Mechanical Designer, then successively Project Engineer, Product Engineer, Sales Manager, Sales Director, and finally Member of the Board.



#### **What targets do you aim to achieve with your company?**

**Kędzierzyński:** What awaits me is preparing Remix for economic changes, such as those related to technological advancement, replacement of generations and economic fluctuations, which are not always favourable.

The overall aim is to create a company that is recognizable worldwide and associated with reliability, solidity and customer-friendly service; a company which is capable of actively setting the trends in its branch of trade due to its knowledge and experience.

I also do care not to exceed the thin line behind which our family-like company becomes a heartless corporation where a man is merely another tool.

#### **What economic and technological challenges do you think are approaching for you?**

**Kędzierzyński:** Through observation of world market situation and through active participation in the global market game, I became aware how much work remains ahead of myself and the company so as to keep on the course we have chosen.

For all of us here, current developments in Europe and impact of geopolitics on the condition of industry mean the time of enhanced effort and discipline as well as particular prudence in making decisions is incumbent upon us. On the other hand, the ever-increasing dynamics of change triggers the need to invest into R&D, which from an economic point of view is a risky business. Even an attempt to reconcile such depolarized attitudes constitutes a major challenge.

Another issue is functioning in the reality of limited energy resources, which will force all companies to restructure their internal procedures, while manufacturing companies will be forced to redefine their products and technologies so as to make them as energy efficient as possible. Energy efficiency, environmental friendliness and cost-reduction are currently among the most common customer requirements.

Energy efficiency in heat treatment technologies is nothing new, but remains a true challenge for the HT industry and will continue to be as such. Developing new materials featuring structure and properties that enable reduction of process temperature or making a HT process shorter, would contribute considerably to energy and cost economy.

#### **How does globalization affect your business?**

**Kędzierzyński:** Globalization processes have an effect also on us too, as a medium-size enterprise. It was necessary to change functioning of the company and to make a few key decisions in order to face current market challenges and enjoy a perspective of further growth. I believe that within the global economy there is also a place for small

and medium businesses, which now have an opportunity to expand into global markets. Entering into a network of co-operative ventures with large enterprises is a major facilitation in meeting market demands.

For years, our partners have been Mammut-Wetro Schmelztiegelwerk GmbH and AFG-Holcroft LLC; recently we have started a cooperation with Noxmat GmbH. At the same time we maintain our own identity, engineering solutions and the reputation we have made throughout the years.

**How important is a brand name for the success of products in the industrial sector?**

**Kędzierzyński:** The branch we deal with, i. e. industry, is a demanding opponent. In our case a marketing campaign following the latest trends is not enough to reach success. What counts here is a proven technology, reliability of equipment and skilled and dynamic personnel. These are decisive factors in creating reputation.

**To what extent does the shortage of skilled and trained staff affect you?**

**Kędzierzyński:** At present, we do not have problems with unskilled staff but I know that other companies have. Our team currently has about 150 people. They are specialists in heat treatment with rich professional experience and appropriate education. The team is assisted by the staff of our modern laboratory. They carry out research and development projects and support the basic manufacturing activities. I am surrounded with people who are open to progress, creative and take into consideration a global approach to our ventures.

Self-development and raising qualifications are essential in our branch of industry. Having knowledge is one thing, another is the ability to translate this knowledge into the technologies we are creating. Particularly important is to be open to innovations and have the ability to commercialize them. I am fully convinced that our team is a strong, well-integrated team which is continuously marching forward.

**What would you like to change in your company?**

**Kędzierzyński:** The market forces us to unceasingly aspire to perfection and competitiveness. And this is precisely what our company is doing. We have been in the market for over 25 years. That was the time of numerous changes. We know what a crisis is and we know how to work to turn regress into good ideas. Remix is a perfect example of such an attitude.

Remix has been in the market since 1990. Throughout that period the company experienced numerous transformations and restructurings. Started in a small workshop on the outskirts of Świebodzin, after 1999 it became one of the leading Polish manufacturers of quality heat treatment and foundry equipment as well as galvanizing plants.

What changes should we expect in the future? Increased sales efficiency, soliciting new customers, continuous growth and new, innovative technologies.

**How much does your company invest annually in new technologies?**

**Kędzierzyński:** The key of success is not to look how much money we spent on new technologies but what kind of effect it brings. What is important, however, is how these technologies influence the reliability or quality of the equipment we provide. Our specialists are constantly working on new solutions; we implement new technologies and improve the existing ones so that our products can meet the requirements.

**What ethical values are of special importance to you?**

**Kędzierzyński:** I was raised in a large family. From the earliest years, our parents taught us that family is



*“Proven technology, reliability of equipment and skilled and dynamic personnel are decisive factors in creating reputation”*

the most important; and being a father today I pass these values to my child. I know how important it is to respect another man, his opinions and his experience. A true value for me is the ability to assume responsibility for one's deeds, and in particular for one's words.

**How do you manage to get time for yourself?**

**Kędzierzyński:** It can be difficult as I work a lot. But despite an intensive professional life, I am trying to find, first of all, time for my family and my passions. This is a guarantee of my strength's quick recuperation.

**Who are or have been your great inspirations?**

**Kędzierzyński:** I was brought up in the times when finding authority or inspiration wasn't a problem. I was lucky enough to have been surrounded by people who shared with me the wisdom and experience of their lives. From my earliest years, I found inspiration in my parents who, in times of economic crisis in Poland, had the courage to raise and educate their children. They showed me that belief in God, family, reliable and honest work may drive you to your chosen goal. In my professional life I have had many mentors – it would be rather difficult to mention all of them by name here, but I can say that they were people who taught me that in the world of big business you not only have to stand up for your convictions but to think rationally as well.

**How were you brought up and educated?**

**Kędzierzyński:** I was brought up in the spirit of principles and tradition, with respect to work and other people. From childhood, I was aware that by my hard work I could achieve a lot. I had always been interested in the surrounding world and the changes therein. My father used to say that there was time for everything in life, that you had to go through certain stages of life to acquire wisdom, that I had to be open to experience and learn how to listen to others. I think that I owe the place where I am now to my work and the people I have met on my way.

**What would you wish the next generation?**

**Kędzierzyński:** Life wisdom, humility and respect for both the bygone and what is still ahead of them. Additionally, an ability to ask themselves the right questions, to choose

goals and make the right decisions in life. Carlos Ruiz Zafon once said: "If you don't know where you are going, you won't go anywhere". I sincerely hope that among those daily pursuits the next generation will also regard the other man.

**What is your motto in life?**

**Kędzierzyński:** It is what Carlos Ruiz Zafon once said: "If you don't know where you are going, you won't go anywhere".

**What character traits are important for you?**

**Kędzierzyński:** I appreciate people who are ambitious, hardworking and who have a goal in their life. Those who welcome challenges, are full of courage to act and to go beyond their limitations.

**What three words describe you best?**

**Kędzierzyński:** I would like people that who meet me to see me as a person full of passion for work and curious about the world and, above all, genuine.

**What was your dream job when you**

**were a child?**

**Kędzierzyński:** Maybe this is surprising, but since childhood, I had claimed I would be an engineer, and it came true as you can see. I was brought up in Świebodzin. My father, like the fathers of many friends of mine, worked at Elterma, so I was acquainted with the subject of industrial furnaces. I listened to the stories about how they were made with great interest and a school trip to the manufacturing hall was a frequent attraction. I had dreamed to create such things in the future myself, to get the knowledge how to do it.

**How do you see yourself in ten years time?**

**Kędzierzyński:** It might look that ten years is a long time, but then I notice how quickly the last decade passed. Speaking about my career plans, I believe that I will still be able to open many a door and realize the goals I mentioned above.

**Mr. Kędzierzyński, thank you for this interview.**

*“There is also a place for small and medium businesses, which have an opportunity to expand onto global markets”*