

British Chamber// Interview Questions for Win Theingi – MD George Win Maung Oo

Objective of this interview: To feature a Myanmar Company who is interested in partnering with UK companies/organizations.

- Tell us about your company and your businesses?

Win Thiengi Engineering Company is a trading and engineering company founded in 2001. Win Theingi has been working in this industry for nearly 16 years, working with foreign companies and manufacturers for different projects. We work as an agent for distributing their products into Myanmar local market. We specialize in four key areas 1). Machinery, spare parts and consumables supply to cement industry 2) Machinery and parts for sugar industry, 3). Machinery to manufacture packaging materials and 4) Flavor and fragrance for different industries. Especially, we support “one stop solution” for cement industries.

- Win Theingi has worked on a list of government/ministries projects in the past. Can you tell us more?

We have worked on a variety of projects in the collaboration with the Ministry of Industry. In 2002, we worked with them to launch the very first tomato paste manufacturing factory in Myanmar. That project includes tin can manufacturing line as well as gable top box filling machine at Taunggyi Ayetharyar Industrial zone. Then again, we also have experience for the supply and installation of plastic printing machines and plastic packaging machines for Kha-Paung cigarette factory. Then in 2004, we were engaged for another project; we supplied and built storage silos of 15.2 m dia with 21 meter height for raw corn storage for integrated corn products factory where manufacturing of edible corn oil was part of our scope of supply. We have also collaborated with Myanmar Economic Corporation for the supply of plastic sewing thread making machines. We also have established a PP Woven bags manufacturing factory to Myanmar Economic

Holdings Ltd at Kyaukse with the production capacity of 17 million cement bags per annum.

- Win Theingi works with a couple of international partners. Would you mind share your experiences in working with them?

When we work with international companies especially European companies – technical issues are not a problem, however we do have to go through a negotiation process relating to the payment terms mainly related to banking issue and systems in Myanmar. This was as a main barrier for us to do business in ensuring our partners understand the challenges as the practice & systems are different from country to country. The other issue is pricing and durability. Our Myanmar market is mainly superseded with Chinese products; which offer a cheaper price regardless of durability compared to European products where as the European products cost, sometimes even 10 times higher. The awareness of the concept of durability in Myanmar market still need to grow but there will be a gradual changes in the customer's mindset to think about quality, durability compared to pricing.

- What are the 5 key considerations for UK companies entering into a partnership with a Myanmar partner?

Three key considerations are

1. Know-how of general business nature and understanding of the market environment issues (such as challenges with banking facilities, labour concern issues and flexibility).
2. Market demand for the product/services those are going to providing to Myanmar market, to double check whether they are fit to the nature of our market demand.
3. Pricing structure & sales system also to be seen whether these are relevant to Myanmar market or not.
4. Having a flexibility mindset is one of the key factors in partnership with Myanmar companies.

5. Expectation of coming across with reasonable labour cost in Myanmar.

- Do you have any plans to expand your business and collaborate with other UK companies in future?

We haven't had come across with the opportunity to work with UK companies yet. We would like to connect with UK business people. UK companies and their products are perceived to be high in quality. If a proposal from UK companies match with our capabilities, we would be more than happy to enter into partnership.

(British Chamber note on author: this interview has been edited for length purposes).