

## Age Intrade — 30 years of excellence



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With nearly 30 years of expertise, Age Intrade LLC has established itself as a name to reckon with in the steel trade in the UAE. "We provide materials for a variety of construction projects — from building bridges, oil rigs, commercial warehouses and shipbuilding to skyscrapers," says Asim Siddiqui, Managing Director of Age Intrade.

"We obtain structural steel from every corner of the world — South Africa, Russia, Ukraine, India, China, Japan, South Korea and Europe. The material is supplied to the local market as well as re-exported to countries such as Bahrain, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and other Gulf States as well as Asian countries."

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With the establishment of a sister concern in Jebel Ali, Age Steel in 2003, and a recent acquisition of 400,000 square foot of land in the Jebel Ali Free Zone, the

firm's total store yard capacity has touched a massive 700,000 square foot.

"Our stock is managed by a fleet of trailers, trucks and fork lifts to ensure smooth and efficient operations at all times. Inventory management and financial accounting are handled by a regularly updated software package run on Windows networked computer systems.

"Our staff are assigned very specific roles to handle all customer enquiries and ensure a hassle-free business environment. The management collectively has more than two decades of experience in steel trading. We are not only just committed to providing products at the best value but also to ensure a professional and efficient experience for all our customers," says Siddiqui, who along with his brother Raed and uncle, Misbah Siddiqui, runs Age Intrade and Age Steel.

With such meticulous attention to customer care and quality, it's no wonder that Age Intrade has a list of prestigious projects such as the Dubai Metro, the Palm Jumeirah and Jebel Ali, Burj Dubai district and the expansion of Dubai International Airport in its portfolio.

Asked how it all began, Siddiqui says, "Our company was originally a partnership firm, founded by my father Ghayoor Siddiqui and my uncle Misbah Siddiqui in 1979 after achieving huge success in the same line of business in Saudi Arabia through their company Arabian Gulf Establishment (AGE). "They set up a sister concern called Age Intrade and it was an important strategic move in the family business."

It has indeed been a progressively bigger march for the company ever since.

"More than 29 years of unmatched excellence in quality, reliability and financial standing have gained us a reputation of being second to none in the steel business," says Siddiqui. "Age Intrade was felicitated in 2001 by the then Dubai Ports Authority for showing a substantial increase in importing steel for the year. Subsequently, we have also been awarded the ISO 9001 quality certification" he says.

The company's turnover of 125,000 tonnes per annum not only reflects its rapid growth but also indicates its appetite for more, believes Siddiqui. "We stress reliability, on delivering

on time every time and assessing emerging market trends accurately. These have earned us a loyal and varied customer base," says Siddiqui.

Currently the company is expanding operations into Saudi Arabia by setting up a de-coiling and galvanising plant along with the regular steel trading activities. They have acquired 500,000 square foot of industrial land in Dammam and construction of the factory is in full swing hoping to be fully operational in Saudi Arabia by the end of the year. One cannot claim to be a regional player in the GCC without having a significant presence in the largest GCC market.

Global steel prices have risen by some 50 per cent since the beginning of the year on the back of high raw material and energy prices. Demand for steel particularly in the Gulf region is expected to remain high due to the mega projects and infrastructure development works that are under way or in the pipeline.



Asim Siddiqui, Managing Director, Age Intrade

The authorities need to facilitate the steel industry in every way to make sure sufficient supplies in the market which would help in controlling the high local steel prices.

Inflation continues to be the number one threat to the region's ambitions and goals and will need to be checked by the concerned authorities to sustain economic activity. A stable and healthy labour market will also be essential in driving the



engine of growth in the economy.

On future plans, Siddiqui says: "Our vision is to be a regional player and cater to the large GCC market. We have plans to set up in Qatar and Bahrain by the end of the year. Our main market is Dubai itself, and as Dubai grows, we also grow.

"We are very happy to play a crucial role in the phenomenal growth of Dubai and the development of the steel industry as a whole in the UAE."

## Arminox, taking care of the future

The RTA is the first authority in Dubai to have chosen to reinforce its new interchange bridges with stainless steel reinforcement.

Arminox has just finished delivery of 450 tonnes of high-grade duplex stainless steel reinforcement to the first of ten new interchanges being built by the RTA. According to Torben Krebs, General Manager Arminox Gulf, this shows Dubai's, and especially the RTA's commitment to build a world-class and durable infrastructure.

By using stainless steel reinforcement in critical parts of the bridge structures, where corrosion occurs, these bridges are now maintenance-free for 100 years.

This will eliminate the need for future closures, required for repair and maintenance as is seen in many other places.

According to Krebs there has been a dramatic change and an increased awareness of durability aspects and environmentally sound solutions, especially since His Highness Shaikh Mohammad Bin Rashid Al Maktoum,

Arminox has supplied stainless steel reinforcement to RTA Dubai, Shaikh Zayed Bridge in Abu Dhabi, Sitra Causeway, Bahrain and a number of oil and gas installations in Ras Laffan in Qatar

Vice- President and Prime Minister of the UAE and Ruler of Dubai, launched the campaign last year to make Dubai and the Emirates a greener society.

"We are pleased that the clients and the consultants are now increasingly looking into environmental and durability issues, and we must compliment Shaikh Mohammad for his foresight, which will bring Dubai in line with the most modern practice," says Krebs.

The inclusion of life cycle cost calculations, has clearly forced a change in the combination of materials, and has proven that, over the lifetime of a structure, stainless steel reinforcement is the most economical and durable solution.

Arminox has recently, apart from the stainless steel used by the RTA in Dubai, supplied stainless steel reinforcement for the Shaikh Zayed Bridge in Abu Dhabi, Sitra Causeway, Bahrain and a number of oil and gas installations in Ras Laffan in Qatar.

Arminox has chosen to establish its overseas headquarters in the Jebel Ali Free Zone, where the world's largest and most modern processing facility for stainless steel reinforcement was opened four years ago.