

Top-Quality Drilling Rigs from Germany

The development of a new oilfield or gas exploration site is an immensely complex, costly project, which is highly dependent on reliable suppliers and service providers. Remarkably, the world's only oil rig manufacturer that has been capable of continuously meeting deadlines over the past few years is *Bentec GmbH Drilling & Oilfield Systems* of Bad Bentheim, Germany.

The history of Bentec harks back to the late 19th century as the German drilling contractor DEUTAG, complete with its own engineering and repair departments, was founded by engineer Heinrich Lapp in 1888. The enterprise soon evolved into an internationally active oilfield exploration venture, with projects in Russia, Spain and Yugoslavia.



One of our interview partners, Managing Director Norbert Gebbeken



As a result of the Second World War and the subsequent division of Germany, DEUTAG lost all of its oil rigs in the GDR and Russia. In 1946, the vastly shrunk enterprise moved its remaining assets to Bad Bentheim where the management saw sufficient opportunities for gradual expansion in the nearby oil and gas fields. Within five years, it had regained its former stamina and began re-developing its international position, being awarded contracts in Spain, Greece, Turkey and Spanish-Sahara throughout the 1950s and 1960s. In 1963, DEUTAG began its offshore activities as a founding partner of

Transocean Drilling Company Ltd; further growth ensued, especially in the Middle East, Far East and Africa, with projects in Qatar, Brunei, Pakistan, Thailand, Gabon, Nigeria and India.

In 1990, DEUTAG was acquired by Preussag and in 1994 its engineering and manufacturing activities were transformed into an independent division called Bentec GmbH Drilling & Oilfield Systems. Within the shortest period of time, Bentec became synonymous with first-class rigs and drilling equipment.

The Scottish Abbott Group plc took over Bentec in 2001, but Bentec remained an independent business under the group's

umbrella. Further growth ensued - the company opened offices in Baku (Azerbaijan), Almaty (Kazakhstan) and Bentec Russia was formed in Moscow in 2003. Two years later, a Bentec subsidiary was founded, IDTEC Oman, a repair and maintenance partner for customers in the Middle East. 2007 witnessed another key event in Bentec's history: The company invested more than twenty million US dollars into the construction of a new manufacturing facility in Tyumen, western Siberia, that will employ some three hundred and

fifty people by the time it gets into full swing.

At the time of writing, Bentec employs approximately four hundred members of staff, three hundred and fifty of whom work at the Bad Bentheim headquarters. The Russian subsidiary has thirty-five employees. Bentec's 2008 turnover reached almost one hundred sixty million Euros.

NOMADTM represents Bentec's latest state-of-the-art mobile desert rig. It is the result of a joint engineering effort by the company's engineers and decades of profound oilfield experience accumulated by the original operator. Together, they have designed one of the world's most cutting-edge rigs, whose modular construction allows for customised solutions that meet the specific requirements of any arid-climate operator.



Bentec's EURO RIGTM complies with the European Union's environmental protection and safety regulations

Bentec's EURO RIG™, a box-on-box-type rig, has been designed for small and sensitive locations and complies with the European Union's environmental protection and safety regulations. Its modular construction provides maximum flexibility, high mobility and efficiency, as well as full ATEX conformity. The containerised substructure, vertical lift mast, modular drilling units allow moving the rig within five days; it moves in around sixty-five truck loads, including four generators, pipe racks and diesel tanks.

Bentec also offers a wide range of GOST-certified drilling rigs designed specifically to operate in the challenging climatic conditions of Arctic regions. Such rigs require sophisticated design concepts: The Bentec Cluster Slider™, available in several versions, provides superior drilling performance and a safe, high-quality work environ-

ment at the same time. All its components are mounted on a rail track, which makes moving the rig from one location to the next a breeze. The Cluster Slider™ features a derrick with a hook load capacity of 250 or 320 mt. Additional equipment such as mud separation systems, tank systems, mud pumps, air compressors and heating are installed on trolleys, winterised by isolated sandwich panels.

Our first interview partner for this article, Managing Director Norbert Gebbeken, relates: *"On average, the construction of a complete rig system takes between twelve and eighteen months. We completely believe - and are renowned for - German engineering quality; our customers know that we develop innovative, reliable products."*

Bentec Marketing Manager Jürgen Rüggen, continues: *"We are also well-known for meeting delivery deadlines; in fact, Bentec*



The Cluster Slider™ - a drilling rig designed specifically to operate in the challenging climatic conditions of Arctic regions

has been the only company in the past few years that has delivered its rigs on time. In addition, our customers appreciate the very fact that we react to their servicing and replacement part needs quickly and efficiently. All this has led to some very long-term relationships with our customers."

The Bentec customer base is squarely made up of exploration service providers, national exploration companies, the large oil corporations and specialised drilling companies. *"Our export rate fluctuates between 90% and 100%,"* explains Norbert Gebbeken. *"Russia is one of our most important market, followed by Europe, Middle East and the oil regions along the shores of the Caspian Sea. Latin America is*

emerging as a new, lucrative market."

The construction of a new production site in Tyumen, a city located the heart of Siberia's oil region, paves the way for further growth in the Russian market. *"This plant has only just opened; we are going to hire some three hundred additional staff for this site within the next few months,"* closes Jürgen Rüggen.

Bentec participates in trade fairs for drilling systems and equipment, for example in Moscow and Houston, and publishes brochures and flyers. All the company's literature, as well as its informative website, is available in English and Russian.



Bentec's production site in Bad Bentheim, with four rigs under construction

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