



AGC FLAT GLASS EUROPE SA

- **PRESIDENT & CEO:** Jean-François HERIS
- **SECTOR:** flat glass
- **FOUNDED:** 1961 (Glaverbel, former name)
- **LOCATION:** Europe with HQ in Brussels
- **NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES:** 10 600
- **ANNUAL TURNOVER 2007:** around 2 billion euros
- **EXPORTS:** more than 90%

Innovation is yours with AGC glass

Unlimited possibilities

With over 100 glass production units and a worldwide sales network, AGC Flat Glass Europe (formerly Glaverbel) is a leader in glass for façades, interior design and specialist sectors. Firmly rooted in Europe with headquarters in Brussels and its Research & Development Centre in Wallonia (Jumet), AGC confirms its role as the leading innovator in the glass industry.

Recent examples include the AntiBacterial glass (gold medal for innovation at the Batimat international

building fair in Paris - 2007) and the environment friendly mirror Mirox 3 G, (Belgium Environment Prize - 2007). Most recently, AGC developed Glassiled, a laminated glass including LED (Light Emitting Diodes) with no visible wires for both façades and interior design applications. Glassiled capitalises on all the advantages of LED technology: long life, intense light and the possibility of varying the colours (RGB). The colour and number of LEDs as well as the type of glass used can be varied, allowing the

product to be customised. "This latest innovation captures both natural and artificial light in its own magic transparent way. It also immediately captured architects and interior designers' imagination when it was first showed at Batimat last year where its highly personalised way of using light, during the day and at night won the gold medal for design" says Jean-François Heris, President & CEO of AGC Flat Glass Europe.

When used as a partition, Glassiled can communicate specific messages, guide the public and subtly draw attention to specific features. In shelves or showcases it can attractively light the



XYLOWATT SA

- **FOUNDED:** 2001
- **LOCATION:** Charleroi
- **BUSINESS:** production of biomass-fueled cogeneration plants
- **2008 TURNOVER (PROVISIONAL):** 1.8 million EUR
- **WORKFORCE:** 25
- **MARKETS:** Belgium, Germany, India, Italy, Great Britain, France
- **WEBSITE:** www.xyLOWatt.com

XyLOWatt: Sustainable Energy

Technology born from uni

Alternative energies like wind turbines and solar panels are a growth area, but the innovative technology is often imported. However, biomass gasification is bucking the trend: a Walloon technology that is developing on the export market. XyLOWatt is a company based on a bold idea: to produce energy autonomously from wood, a raw material that is plentiful in Wallonia and the neighboring countries.

XyLOWatt is in the fantastic position of being no less than the European market leader! All thanks to a technological advance perfected at the beginning of 2008. The company, which specializes in the design, installment and maintenance of gas-producing installations, has been growing constantly since it was set up at the beginning of the decade. The history of this spin-off from the Université Catholique de Louvain is a perfect example of the transformation of an environmental constraint into a business opportunity. By producing heat

and electricity from biomass, it is also able to add value to the waste products of sawmills, joinery shops and other forestry-related businesses. "Less than a year ago, the company perfected its Notar reactor, so-called because it produces no tar. A brilliant sales argument!" says CEO Gilles Barchman.

Its wood-powered cogeneration plants can supply energy and heat to meet the needs of a village, a community, or for industrial usage.

The guiding principle of the business is sustainable development. With its range of projects producing between 300 kWe and

offered by glass

products on display and adds that special touch to attract customers' attention to a key product or service. When used in a façade (houses, industrial sites and office/apartment buildings), Glassiled is the perfect way to combine the potential of LEDs with the technical specifications and aesthetics of glass. Glassiled is a dynamic light source, bathing buildings in light and colour and creating new landmarks on the urban landscape.

And Jean-François Heris to conclude "Glassiled is a wonderful example of the unlimited possibilities offered by glass in never before expected applications. It insulates, protects, reflects, adds comfort, is energy efficient, can produce energy, can integrate light, wellbeing, health and design aspects ... the added value is immense. With our R&D Centre in Jumet, we are today more than ever committed to further pushing the boundaries of glass applications, glass functions and glass technologies to create the best possible glass products." ■

After the lawn mower comes the Ballpicker® Belrobotics: robots for green spaces!

What does the Kremlin have in common with Italian soccer clubs? Or more specifically, what do the Kremlin's lawns have in common with the fields of top Italian clubs? A piece of Walloon technology that grows more popular by the day: robot-mowers from Belrobotics. Now the company's latest product, a robot that collects golf balls, gives it a niche market all to itself.

Since 2002, Belrobotics has stepped up a gear thanks to its export sales. The result is a jump of over 80% in its sales figures for 2008. A third of these derive from the Belgian market, while two-thirds are exported to the four corners of the world. The robot mower is the company's first product.

From industry to golf clubs, sports grounds, private properties and soon public services (for mowing parks and edges of highways), the robots developed by Belrobotics are aimed at all markets. The beauty is that they work entirely automatically, to the extent that they even return to recharge when they sense a reduction in capacity. The next development will be a solar power supply for the recharging stations. This would save a metric ton of CO₂ per year for each robot! With its sonar system, the robot can avoid any obstacle in its path. Environmental friendliness, autonomy, efficiency, silent operation... this box of technological tricks has everything going for it. Depending on the model chosen, the mowers can autonomously tend lawns of up to a hectare in size.

If you already have expertise regarding wide-open green spaces, it makes sense to leverage your technology. This was the inspiration behind an even cleverer version



BELROBOTICS SA

- **FOUNDED:** 2002
- **LOCATION:** Wavre
- **BUSINESS:** design and marketing of robot-mowers and "ballpicker" robots
- **2008 TURNOVER (PROVISIONAL):** 1.8 million EUR
- **WORKFORCE:** 20 FTE
- **MARKETS:** international: Belgium, exports inside and outside the EU

of these mowers: the Ballpicker®, a machine that scours driving ranges to collect the players' balls. Once it has finished its round, it returns to its base to drop off its harvest. With its electric motor, the Ballpicker® is able to collect balls in perfect silence, and the light-weight design stops it from pressing the balls into the ground. When you think that some golf courses lose up to 25,000 balls a year... It also saves on staff, as the machine collects the tens of thousands of balls that customers go through on a good day. The machine is constantly collecting, meaning that opening hours can be extended, and allowing for faster ball rotation. The club therefore has to buy a lot fewer balls. All in all, these robots can save a lot of money! ■

iversity research

10 MWe, Xylowatt is able to replace annual oil consumption of 55 million liters and cut out around 250,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions per year!

After Belgium, the company has its sights on Germany, a country where this advanced technology, which outperforms all its rivals in terms of electricity yield, appears to have a huge potential. Xylowatt is in an excellent position to take advantage of the wave of green energy projects in Europe and the markets for access to energy, "both in the emerging economies and the developing countries". Gilles Barchman believes that "the company is giving itself the means to do this: the best proof of this is that we have decided, in spite of our small size – 25 people – to send one of our commercial engineers to spend a year looking at prospects in India. This should allow us to prepare for business in 2010, 2011 and beyond."

Thanks to its constant investment in research and development, Xylowatt is now in a position to effectively process biomass containing pollutants. ■