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UDYOG UTSAV 2025: FORGING THE FUTURE

The 3rd edition of the Festival of Manufacturing – Udyog Utsav 2025 – celebrated the visionaries, innovators, and changemakers driving growth, efficiency, and sustainable excellence.

BRAND SPOTLIGHT

WIKUS INDIA CELEBRATES A DECADE OF REDEFINING THE BAND SAW INDUSTRY, BLENDING GERMAN PRECISION WITH INDIAN AMBITION UNDER MD **MUKUND P BHARADWAJ'S** VISIONARY LEADERSHIP

FACILITY TOUR

AS PART OF ITS SKILLING INITIATIVE, ET NOW MACHINIST HOSTED TWO PLANT TOURS UNDER THE FESTIVAL OF MANUFACTURING, OFFERING HANDS-ON EXPOSURE TO INDIA'S DYNAMIC INDUSTRIAL LANDSCAPE.

CHAMPIONING INNOVATION & QUALITY

Blending German precision with Indian ambition, WIKUS India marks a decade of revolutionising the band saw industry. Under the leadership of **Managing Director Mukund P Bharadwaj**, the brand has championed innovation, quality, and customer-centric solutions to power industrial transformation. Bharadwaj reflects on the company's remarkable ten-year journey and shares his vision for the road ahead.

In the world of precision cutting and sawing technology, few names command the kind of trust and legacy that WIKUS does. Speaking with Mukund P. Bharadwaj, Managing Director at WIKUS India Pvt. Ltd., one gets a clear sense of how the brand has seamlessly blended German engineering excellence with Indian industrial aspirations to become a leading force in the country's band saw industry.

"WIKUS as a brand has been in India since the 1990s," Bharadwaj begins. "It was one of the first band saw manufacturers to enter the Indian market, and many customers here began their band sawing journey with WIKUS blades." But it wasn't just early entry that cemented WIKUS' place in the market. As India's economy began to blossom—and with the advent of the government's 'Make in India' campaign—the brand saw a perfect alignment with its own philosophy of being closer to customers and bringing the latest technology right to their doorstep. "That vision—of proximity, of partnership—was a key driver for establishing our 100 per cent subsidiary in India."

As WIKUS India celebrates a decade of operations, Bharadwaj, reflects on a journey that's been anything but ordinary. "It's been a very eventful ten years," he says. "Even though we were early entrants, the first-mover advantage was beginning to wear off by 2014. Competitors

were entering, and our distribution network wasn't where it needed to be." The first goal, then, was consolidation. The next: expansion. "We aimed to introduce the wider WIKUS portfolio to the Indian market—not just to sell, but to help customers upgrade their entire sawing process, to make it more productive and cost-efficient."

What sets WIKUS India apart, Bharadwaj emphasises, is its commitment to technical depth and customer-centric problem solving. "We've built a large and technically strong sales and service team that now spans the country. What we do

differently is this: we don't just sell what the customer asks for. We study their process, go into the details, understand what they truly need—and then we recommend what's best." This application engineering-driven approach, he believes, has built trust and long-term relationships, helping WIKUS earn a reputation not just for quality, but for value. "Our products are expensive, yes. But they're cost-effective. Once we prove the benefits, price becomes secondary for our customers."

Navigating the Indian market wasn't without doubts. "Back when we started, we were often told that Indians won't pay for high-end products, that only price sells here," Bharadwaj recalls. "But over the years, we've proven that as long as you can show value—real, measurable benefits—customers are open to paying for quality." That belief is now echoed by many customers themselves: "Price is secondary, tell me what my benefits are."

Being the first European band saw manufacturer to set up a wholly owned subsidiary in India gave WIKUS a unique edge—but also came with its share of challenges. "The brand was known, so that helped," Bharadwaj says. "And I came from a tooling background, so I understood the industrial landscape. The band saw segment itself was somewhat neglected, and that worked in our favour—it meant there was room to innovate."

Bharadwaj also eminently



Mukund P. Bharadwaj, Managing Director, WIKUS India Pvt. Ltd.



pointed out that innovation remains at the heart of WIKUS' offering. "We bring a technological edge that few can match. Our product range is unmatched—bimetal blades, carbide-tipped blades, grit technology blades including tungsten carbide, diamond, and CBN, and even PVD-coated variants. These blades can cut everything from ferrous and non-ferrous metals to graphite, concrete, rubber, composites—and now even wood."

And it's not just about variety. Precision and quality are embedded in WIKUS' DNA. "The same manufacturing equipment is deployed globally to ensure consistency, and our technicians are regularly trained to meet the same high standards. Our assembly process here in India mirrors our global best practices, and every step is documented and quality checked."

Interestingly, WIKUS India has not relied on partnerships or collaborations. Its growth has been organic, built on the strength of its technology and service. "We've never needed external partnerships. Our model works because we are close to the market and listen to our customers," Bharadwaj says.

When asked about the role of innovation, Bharadwaj speaks passionately about staying ahead



of the curve and carving a niche as technology leaders. "We were the first to introduce carbide-tipped blades and coating technology to the Indian market. Innovation isn't a buzzword for us, it's embedded in how we think." A prime example is the launch of Maradur, a carbide-tipped blade developed specifically for India. "It's compatible with all kinds of machines and designed for all metal applications. It's a game-changer for customers wanting to upgrade to performance sawing without changing their existing setup."

Over the past few years, Bharadwaj has observed a clear shift in customer expectations. "Post-COVID, industries are struggling to find skilled manpower. To compensate, they are investing in quality machines and tools to reduce human dependency. That's where our high-quality blades come in. They make automation and process consistency possible."

Looking ahead, WIKUS India has no plans to slow down. "We are expanding our sales and distribution

network to match the industrial boom in Tier 2 and Tier 3 cities," he says. Pune remains the hub of operations, and thanks to robust logistics, customers across India are being served efficiently.

When asked about balancing local needs with the global vision of WIKUS Germany, Bharadwaj puts it simply: "We live by 'Think Global, Act Local'. The global footprint gives us insights into diverse customer needs, and that helps us innovate. But we know business is local, and our German management respects that. They give us the flexibility we need to adapt."

As India's manufacturing ecosystem evolves, WIKUS is poised to play a critical role in shaping its future. "Sawing is one of the first steps in the value chain," Bharadwaj notes. "If high-end equipment is being used downstream but the cutting process is outdated, the entire system suffers. We see a shift coming, where upgraded technology in sawing will no longer be optional—it will be necessary." 