



Sunil Newatia, Chairman
Suretech Infrastructure Private Limited

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Sunil Newatia, Chairman, Suretech Infrastructure Private Limited, shares his views with **Sandeep Sharma** about the key takeaways of the recently concluded Intermat India 2022 event in Mumbai, products showcased and buyer's response during the event. Apart from this, he stresses the need for educating the customer about the latest innovations, and finally, he shares insights on the reasons and solutions for avoiding project cost and time overruns in India. Edited Excerpts:

What are the key takeaways from the Intermat India event?

Firstly, Mumbai, being the financial capital of India, desperately needed such an event since Bauma Conexpo moved out to Delhi. Unfortunately, the timing of the event was not suitable due to the unexpected prolongation of the monsoon. Low visitor turnout deprived the exhibitors of much mileage. However, not much should be expected from the first edition of such an event. We are confident that it will get better with time.

Can you share with us details about the products launched or showcased during the Intermat India event?

We primarily focused on our core products, viz., Vibratory Hammers and RCDs in foundation engineering solutions, and Spider Excavators, Skid Steers, Backhoe loaders, Graders, and Attachments. No new products were showcased at Intermat.

How was the buyers' response to your products & solutions during the event? Based on your interaction, do you see demand building up exponentially in the near to medium-term for your offerings?

The low turnout did not allow us much interaction with customers. Nonetheless, whoever came was upbeat and is expecting a major turnaround after the monsoons. The construction equipment industry has been witnessing negative growth over the last few months, and we feel the turnaround is inevitable considering the number of new projects being announced and the ones already in the pipeline.





Team Suretech @ INTERMAT India 2022



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What's your take on the need for the deployment of new and efficient technologies on the ground so as to build a sustainable infrastructure? Could you tell us about the initiatives taken by your organization on the technological front?

We have always been pioneers in the latest technologies and have introduced several new products in India. Indians are resistant to change and averse to altering something that has been working for years. Educating them on new technologies and how they can improve productivity and reduce costs is a big challenge. At our level, we have been putting a lot of effort into making customers aware of the latest innovations. Social media has been a big help in our initiatives. If India has to execute projects fast and still keep them economical, it will have to adapt to new technologies. Also, the growing shortage of skilled manpower is hastening the need to adopt mechanisation. Suretech is engaging itself in educating and making contractors aware of the methodologies they can adopt to overcome such challenges.

Most of the construction and infrastructure projects in India are facing cost and time overruns. In your opinion what needs to be done by all stakeholders so that the project execution cycle meets the defined timelines?

The government itself is lackadaisical when it comes to adherence to timelines. The delay in the project starts right at the tendering stage, which is followed by improper planning by the project awardee. These are the main causes of time and cost overruns in projects in India. Customers start negotiating for equipment right from the time they fill out the tender but are ready to order only after they get the work order. It's too late by then. The COVID pandemic and the Ukraine war have changed the logistical dynamics. Products that were easily available in 2-4 weeks now take 16-20 weeks. The delays in receiving the equipment affect the commencement of the project. Further, ever escalating steel and raw material prices and forex volatility have drastically raised the equipment prices, which in turn has raised the project execution costs. It's a catch-22 situation! Both the government and the industry need to apply their minds to work out a solution.