

Agosi Celebrates 125th Anniversary

On June 3, 2016, many guests were welcomed to a festive event on the company's premises in Pforzheim, Germany.

Looking back on 125 successful years, Agosi can be proud of the company's achievements. In 1891, eleven Pforzheim jewellery manufacturers decided to establish an independent refinery for precious metals bearing production scrap. What the founding fathers had in mind was a customer-owned facility, therefore the model of a joint-stock company obviously was the most suitable way to achieve this first basic step. In the following years, Allgemeine Gold- und Silberscheideanstalt AG (Agosi) implemented the newly patented Dietzel technology for the electrochemical treatment plus Moebius equipment to complete the technical set up of its refining processes. Right from the start, Agosi headed for big volumes of refining material - indeed one of the reasons for its formation was the then fashionable novelty of 'double' jewellery, where a layer of gold alloy is adhered to a base metal sheet, thus allowing the mass production of comparatively cheap jewellery. Mass production results in greater amounts of scraps from stamping and Agosi, as a pioneer in this field, was technically well equipped to treat and refine this new double compound material, as well as jewellery scrap from silver, which had also gained a fair share of the jewellery market. Agosi's early beginnings already mirror its overall programme: to serve the precious metal cycle by recovering precious metals that had already been used in various products and by re-introducing them into the manufacturing processes as fine metals or semi-finished products, a true secondary raw materials approach.

To this day, Agosi has kept up with the ever faster pace of technological development in all the precious metal consuming industries. It is not only the ongoing improvement of refining processes that has ranked Agosi amongst Europe's major refineries, but also the company's ability to integrate new production methods for the ever changing facets of semi-finished precious metal products that are required by a huge variety of applications ranging from the automotive to the electrotechnical or the engineering lines of business. The classic portfolio of strips, sheets, blanks, wires, rods and tubes

is complemented by highly specialized turned, milled or EDM parts, made individually according to customer specifications.

A further milestone is marked by Agosi's introduction of continuously cast Good Delivery Silver Bars with the LBMA in 2012. When Agosi was granted accreditation by the LBMA for its gold and silver bars in 1989 and again in 2008, expensive manual casting was still used. As a large-scale manufacturer of silver products, Agosi had experience of an extremely efficient continuous-casting facility, with machinery for cutting processes, a well-trained staff and all the know-how needed. The new technique was presented to the LBMA and approved – a first in the LBMA's history.

When Umicore, Belgium, became the major shareholder of Agosi in 2003, its core concept of the precious metal cycle fitted perfectly into the Umicore principle of creating "materials for a better life." At the core of the Umicore Business Unit Jewellery & Industrial Metals (BU JIM), Agosi is home to the unit's headquarters. In this function Agosi also coordinates the activities of the Umicore subsidiaries in Toronto/Canada and Sao Paulo and Manaus/Brazil. Being a part of Umicore, Agosi has direct access to its affiliates world-wide. Nowadays Allgemeine Gold- und Silberscheideanstalt AG is a group of companies offering the full range of services for the precious metals cycle around the globe. Agosi has subsidiaries in Pforzheim, Vienna, Amsterdam, Bangkok and Schwaebisch Gmuend. Direct sales offices are in Switzerland, France and the United Kingdom. At its RJC-CoC certified sites in Pforzheim, Bangkok and Vienna, Agosi can offer CoC-conform, responsibly produced precious metals of conflict-free and certified origin.

All in all, the company's development has proven that the original plan, dating back to 1891, is not only well on track but also well beyond the vision that the founding fathers may have had. Surely, they would be proud to see what has become of their initiative: a sound and well-balanced employer, a staff of 400 at the Pforzheim location alone, a renowned company that combines commercial success with social responsibility and commitment to environmental protection.

