

A European view on the global steel market

The world steel production is ever increasing and the very symbolic level of 1 billion t of hot metal per year should be reached soon. Over the last 25 years, the global efficiency of the steel industry has sustained continuous progress in terms of productivity and quality that implies drastic business and through-process reorganization, not to mention social aspects. A limited number of large multinational companies have been created by the merging of former local steel makers. The best available technologies are continuously implemented in the steel plants, based on the results of dedicated R&D programmes and on the innovative experience of pilot production units.

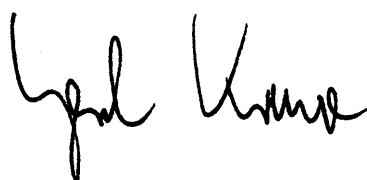
To sustain this progress it is essential that cogent technical information is effectively available to steel makers, in a form that they deem most appropriate. Indeed, the general trend is for a smaller staff to deal with ever more intricate technical issues.

Technical and scientific journals have always contributed to the diffusion and exchange of knowledge in the steel industry. Prominent among them are *stahl und eisen* and *Revue de Métallurgie* that have been appreciated not only in the countries they originate from but also in the rest of the world. The contribution of the two journals to the diffusion of knowledge has been very effective in Europe and it has attended to the creation of the new large European steel makers. To achieve this, the two journals have to adapt continuously to the various demands of their readers. The published information must be innovative, concise and easily available. Another issue to be addressed is the language that would be preferred for publication: Either the original national languages of the journals, respectively French and German or basic "European" English as a more appropriate idiom for technical exchanges through large multinational European companies.

Therefore, it appears that the technical staff of the European steel makers may favour the publication of one major European journal dedicated to the steel industry that would effectively present them with up-to-date information in their particular field of interest.

Such a European journal could be initiated by *stahl und eisen* and *Revue de Métallurgie*. Many benefits could be expected from this operation in terms of editorial quality and publication costs. Furthermore, taking advantage of the strong convergence of their editorial lines, the two journals could join their particular strengths, such as larger audiences respectively in the Nordic or Latin countries.

Strongly supported by their respective managements, the editors of *stahl und eisen* and *Revue de Métallurgie* have agreed to publish in August 2004 an issue of the two journals mainly based on common technical papers that they have selected from their respective editorial programmes. The editors will appreciate it very much to receive the comments of their readers on this first test of a common publication. If encouraged to go on with their cooperation, *stahl und eisen* and *Revue de Métallurgie* will make further steps with a view to offer a unique European Journal to the steel industry.



Gerd Krause
stahl und eisen



Louis Devillers
Revue de Métallurgie