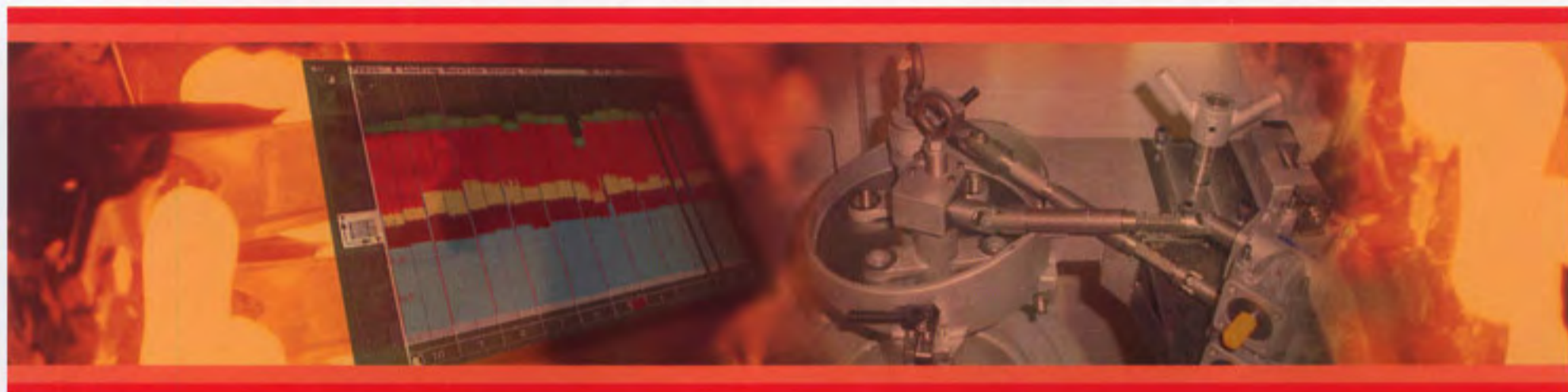


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Family machinery supplier builds global brand

Argentina's forming equipment specialist, Máquinas Argentinas del Vidrio SA* is becoming increasingly well-respected in international glassmaking circles, as the company's installations become more widespread. A family-owned business, MAVSA concentrates on forming and associated machinery for tableware and container production.

There are many independent suppliers of forming machinery, components and mould equipment around the world but few offering the full diversity of products and – to the best of our knowledge – only one in Argentina. Run by the Fuentes family, Máquinas Argentinas del Vidrio SA is building an enviable reputation for the quality both of its engineering and its customer support... and not just in South America. In recent years, MAVSA has gained a number of impressive references in Algeria, Egypt, Cuba, Mexico, India, the Ukraine,

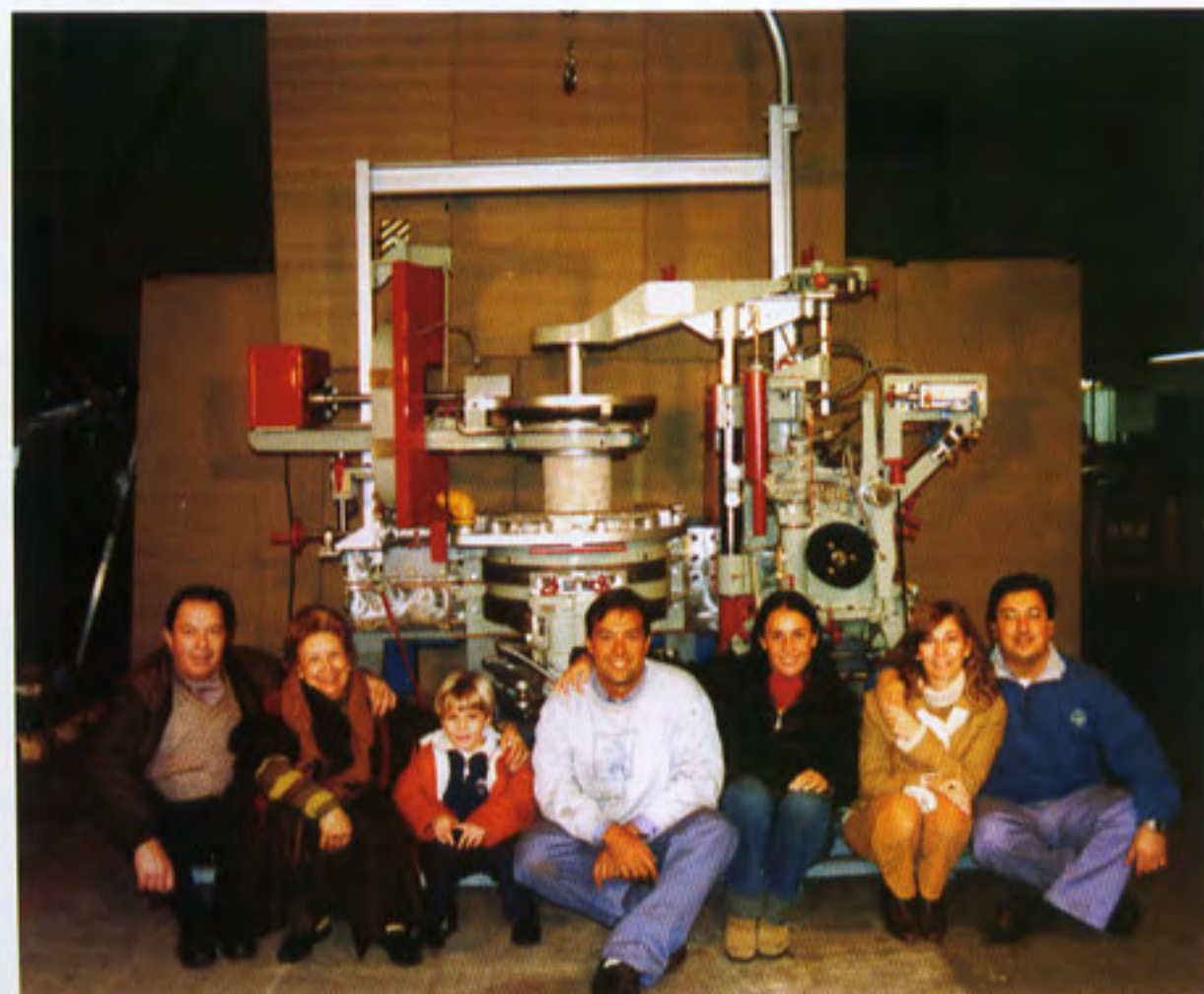
Russia, Belgium and Italy, for example, building on the company's longer-term success stories throughout Latin America.

Manuel Fuentes has actually supplied moulds and equipment to the industry since the early 1970s. His big break came in 1971, when employed by tableware producer SARIC in Buenos Aires, managing the company's moulds and spare parts manufacturing and maintenance workshops. SARIC's owner was very supportive of Manuel, offering financial investment and encouraging him to set up an independent business, to provide similar products and services to other Latin American glassworks.

Cristalerías Hartinger in Peru and Cristalerías Andividrios in Ecuador quickly became important regular customers of Metalúgica Buenos Aires (MBA) for presses, fire polishers, mould equipment, spare parts etc. Soon, Manuel Fuentes took over full control of the business, on the understanding that all of its tableware moulds and equipment would be exported to glassmakers outside Argentina. A dedicated workshop was acquired in 1974 and this facility continues to operate today.

When the owners of SARIC sold their glass business; Manuel Fuentes was able to offer his services to Argentine glass producers as well.

The Fuentes family proudly presents a type 81 feeder mechanism, built for a customer in Russia in 2005. From left to right: Manuel, Irma (Manuel's wife), Francisco (Diego's son), Gustavo, Laura (Gustavo's wife), Stella Maris (Diego's wife) and Diego.



Separately, strong business relationships were established with Nadir Figueiredo in Brazil to build their presses, while valuable long-term contracts were established for new machines, moulds and associated equipment with Vidrios Domésticos SA (VIDOSA) in Venezuela, part of the Envases Venezolanos SA group.

In November 2006, the company supplied a complete 6-section IS machine production line to VIDOSA to produce bottles and jars, an installation that came on stream in January 2007. The Venezuelan glassmaker also produces tableware on two MAVSA press lines. Elsewhere, in Brazil, good examples of MAVSA's development efforts can be found at the Saint-Gobain tableware factory in Sao Paulo. Within the past 18 months, an oxy-gas servo fire polisher has been developed to produce square and oval bowls and installed together with two electronic presses (MDP 24-30 and MDP 16-38).

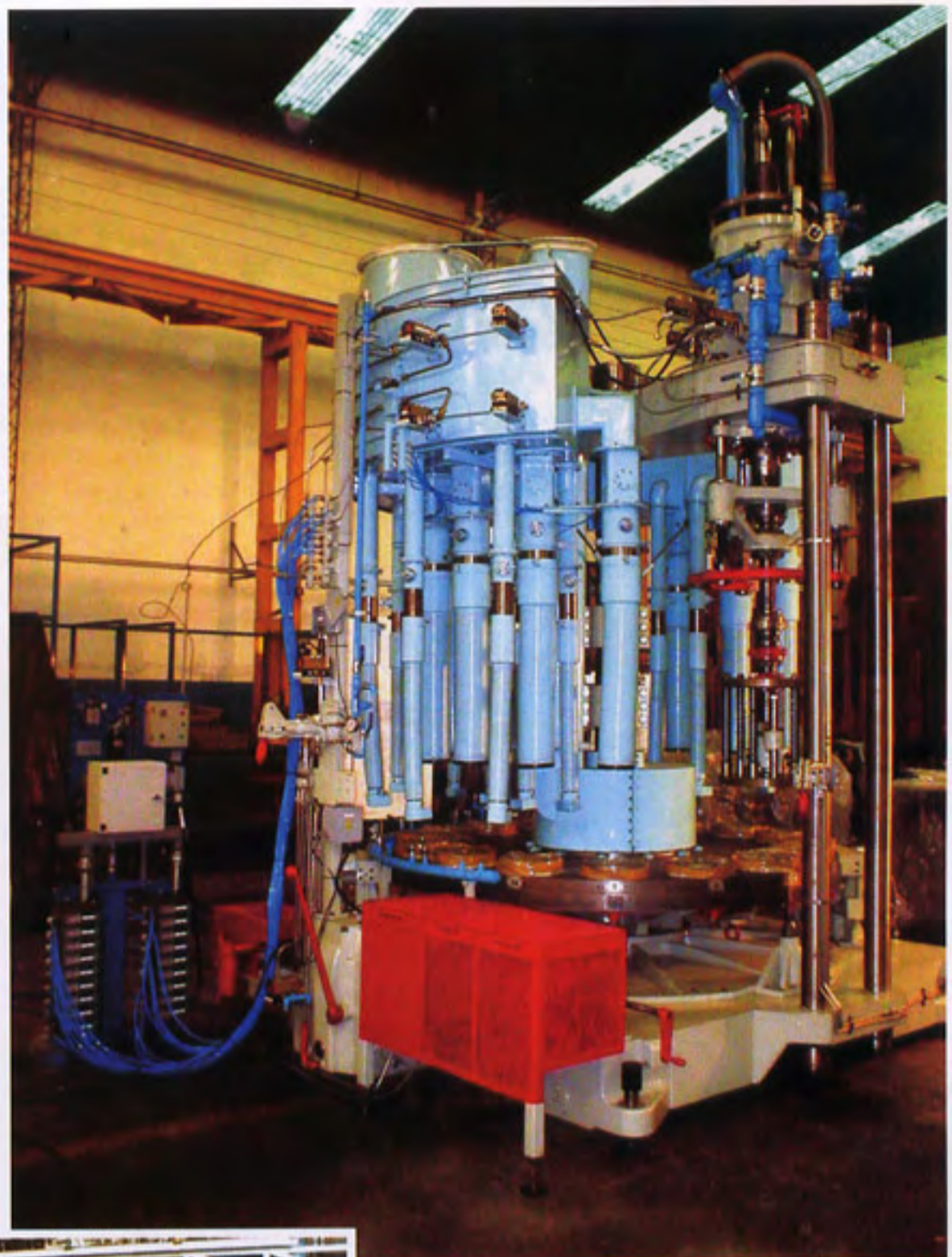
Diversified activities

Over the years, as business expanded, the need for more production and assembly space increased, so in 2002, a second factory was opened in Buenos Aires and the company known as MAVSA was born. Brothers Diego, 35, an electronics engineer and

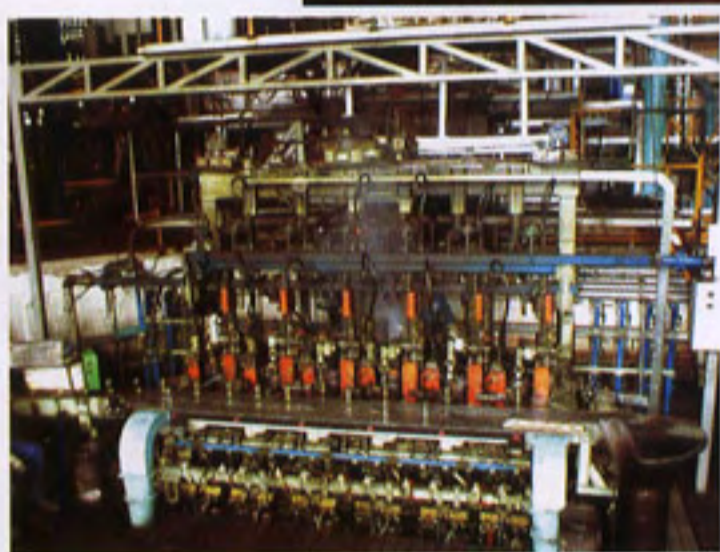
Gustavo, 33, an electronics technician, joined the family enterprise in 1990 and 1993 respectively. While Manuel, 68 this October, is the acknowledged glass industry expert and driving force behind the company, his sons have brought technical and management

strengths. Furthermore, their English and French language skills have helped the company to exploit opportunities outside of Spanish-speaking Latin America.

Today, the original MBA business, with its staff of 10, concentrates on the production of moulds and spare parts, while MAVSA (also with 10 employees) specialises in the construction of new machines. The equipment portfolio has grown considerably over the years and while tableware continues to represent an important market,



▲ The supply of tableware production lines represents a key part of MAVSA's business. Shown here is an MDP 16-38 tableware press.



◀ This 6-section IS machine was installed at VIDOSA, Venezuela in January 2007.

increasingly, MAVSA is also achieving success in the more diversified glass container sector.

"Generally, our target customers are small-to-medium-size players", suggested Gustavo Fuentes. "We offer a cost-effective, single source for complete lines, from the forehearth to the lehr entrance, for both container and pressed glass production." For customers without the technical

continued »

infrastructure to resolve problems themselves, this 'one stop shopping' approach can provide a good solution. Customers in Algeria, Egypt and Venezuela are cited as good examples of putting the principle into practise.

For the tableware producer, MAVSA's offerings include a range of automatic presses to make tumblers, plates and bowls (with free press technology) etc, together with fire polishers, specialist ware loading mechanisms and spare parts. A diverse series of IS machines is manufactured for the container sector, including semi-automatic mono-section equipment, as well as 2-, 4-, 6- and 8-section mechanically-timed or electronic IS machines, featuring Lenze electronic motor drives. Also available are forehearths, feeder mechanisms, hot glass

conveyor systems, lehr stackers, IS machine parts, mould equipment and refractory parts.

Some of these products are available via MAVSA's representation of selected international brands in Argentina/South America. For example, the company sells Putsch shear blades, Pennine hot end conveyors and Interglass mould lubricants. In addition, forehearth expendables from local company, Materiales Refractorios Especiales are marketed to the international glass industry. And wherever possible, MAVSA employs all or at least some of these items in the equipment manufactured.

Future aspirations

Attention to detail is described by the Fuentes family as a key reason for their company's success in recent years, along with the quality of its products, the level of customer service provided and a genuine passion for the business, its products and for the glass industry generally.

"Our main target is to ensure that we do not lose or put at risk our good name" commented Diego Fuentes. "Ultimately, that is the most positive attribute of every successful company and it should not be jeopardised, especially relationships with glassmakers like Nadir Figueiredo and VIDOSA, both of whom have been our customers since 1977."

In serving the glass industry, MAVSA is constantly striving to be better, to improve its technology, as well as its customer service. Currently, the engineering department is being improved, via the introduction of a generation of young graduates with new ideas to work alongside older, experienced engineers.

While investment in the younger generation is deemed essential to help take the business forward however, Manuel's position at the head of the company is considered pivotal. Diego and Gustavo describe their father as the company's 'motor'. "He's an artist who decided to build machines" they claim. It is apparent that some of Manuel's enthusiasm and his artistic attitudes have been shared with his sons! ■

***Máquinas Argentinas del Vidrio SA, Argentina.**

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